

AN FOCAL

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Official Paper of the University of Limerick Students' Union

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FREE

Floods cause chaos on campus

By Jason Kennedy – Chief News Correspondent

FLOODING in Limerick caused road closures and water cuts in the University last week. Throughout Week 12, sandbags were left around at risk areas, including Thomond Village and the Health Science Building.

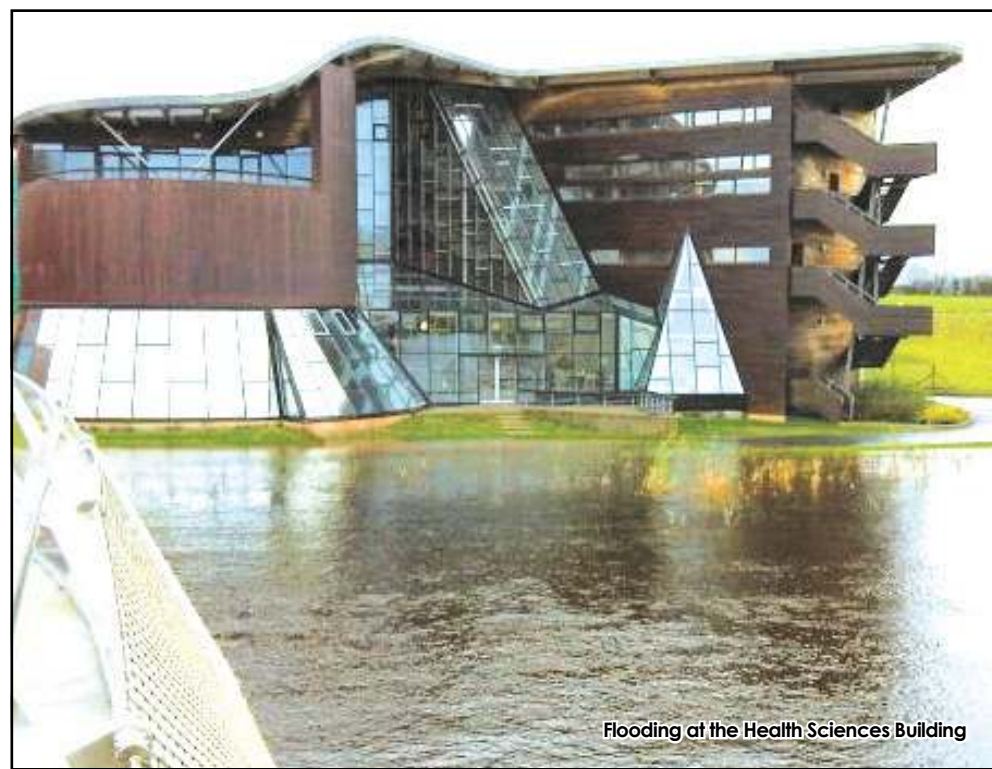
In Thomond Village water services were cut following the flooding. Students living in Thomond were provided with shuttle bus services to and from the Arena every 30 minutes in order to shower. Each apartment was also given a five litre bottle of water that is refillable in reception. John O'Rourke, Manager of Plassey Campus Services LTD said that a number of water fonts were installed in Thomond reception, so students could refill their bottles.

"The villages weren't flooded, they never have been and they won't either. The villages have been designed to handle increasing water levels from the river Shannon." Mr O'Rourke also praised Thomond Village Management for dealing well with the situation. "Village management have worked around to clock to ensure that the situation is dealt with

well." Some students showed their anger at the situation on the ULSU Facebook page. Ciaran O'Connell said: "Seriously lads, you might want to consider bunking with people in other villages." Adrian Stanley claims that the whole thing was blown out of proportion. "For crying out loud. People need to relax.

We don't have water, but that's the only thing we don't have. Stop acting like we're living in poverty." Wood Technology Student, Chris Doughan claims that it's annoying to have to keep going down to the arena for showers. "It's an inconvenience more than anything. It's pretty bad as well that we can't even flush the toilets and have to keep going down to reception to get water." ESB had released a level of water to ease pressure from Ardnacrusha Dam.

Following this, all areas downstream of the River Shannon were on flood alert. During Week 12, Dromroe roundabout became flooded which ended with the closure of the road for a night. Water levels also reached the top of Plassey Bridge, also known as the Black Bridge, leading to its closure.



Flooding at the Health Sciences Building

Parking fines issued off campus

By Aoife Ní Raghallaigh – Editor

STUDENTS may have been repeatedly informed that double yellow lines would be painted on the roads in the estates during the next dry spell but the SU has since learned that fines have been issued to any car parked on the roadside during the last month despite the absence of double yellow lines in some areas. Previously a parking ticket would be placed on a car parked illegally to notify the owner

that they have received a fine but a change to a computer based system means the car owner will not know that they have incurred a fine until it is received in the post. The fine will be issued to the address at which the car is registered and is set at €75. If this fine is not paid within 28 days it will increase to €112.50. If the fine is still not paid within an extra 28 days court proceedings will begin.

The practice of issuing parking fines began due to increased congestion in both College Court and Elm Park. The increase in cars causing an obstruction came from cars parking

illegally due to a number of students driving from nearby estates, such as Courtyard, Brookfield or Briarfield, and parking in Elm Park and College Court before walking the rest of the way into college. This issue is only exasperated by the fact that student households sometimes have three or four parked outside. The Students' Union has noted that students who are resident in the estates have nowhere else to park but they are urged to park their car on campus and avail of the free Nitelink to get home. Students living in Courtyard and Brookfield are also urged to get the free

shuttle bus in to college in the morning rather than drive. Students on a whole are asked to consider carpooling, cycling or walking to college to ease obstructions in and around the University. As the fines were being issued throughout November it is feared that students may have incurred a number of fines without realising. Anyone who has parked illegally in College Court or Elm Park during November is urged to contact the address at which their car is registered to ensure they have not received a fine. They are also asked to refrain from parking in the estates in future.

An Focal Digest

In Brief Some Christmas cheer

Students give generously

Students have been donating generously to charities since the semester began. Welfare Officer, Derek Daly, has reported that over €250 was donated to the Raising and Giving Charities from people taking condoms. The Raising and Giving Charities are Mid-West Simon Community, Limerick Youth Service, Make a Wish Ireland and the Irish Heart Foundation.

Students also donated generously to the UL Movember Campaign. The Movember Madness Bash, which was held on Thursday, Week 12, raised nearly €500. In total the UL Movember Campaign raised over €1500 for Action Prostate Cancer. Congratulations to all the Mo' Bros and Mo' Sistas who got involved during the month.

Staff and students also raised over €2000 for Milford Hospice through the coffee mornings which were held throughout the University earlier this semester.

Spaces available on working groups

Spaces are still available for any student wishing to join the Communications Working Group. The Working Group will work with Communications Officer, Aoife Ní Raghallaigh, to develop communication between the Union and the student body.

The group will look at ways to improve the use of the website, Twitter and Facebook as well as looking at improving An Focal.

Anyone interested in getting involved or looking for more information can email Aoife on sucommunications@ul.ie or call in to the office.

Staff see right to withdraw publications in Trinity

By Jason Kennedy – Chief News Correspondent

Staff in Trinity College Dublin are making efforts to introduce a controversial clause, giving the Senior Dean power to remove student publications from circulation.

The clause is being strongly opposed by student bodies after a working group, attended by the Senior Dean, Junior Dean, Dean of Students and the College Secretary.

The clause was added at the last minute. Trinity College Students' Union President, Cónán Ó Bróim expressed concern at the clause and claimed he feared it would lead to censorship, but that they would be willing to fight it.

I LOVE Christmas. It's my favourite time of the year and I get so excited for it. I'll listen to Christmas songs all day long, I'm up at an ungodly hour on Christmas Day and I'm as hyper as a five year old through the whole month of December. In short, nothing makes me as happy as Christmas. I just get completely lost in event.

Yet a lot of people I know really take on a whole "bah, humbug" approach to Christmas. I've heard countless people complain about there being a recession and they can't afford presents, or that when they go shopping the streets are so packed it takes you ages to find anything. Then I hear people complain about the stress of trying to find presents for everyone, and the stress of seeing family

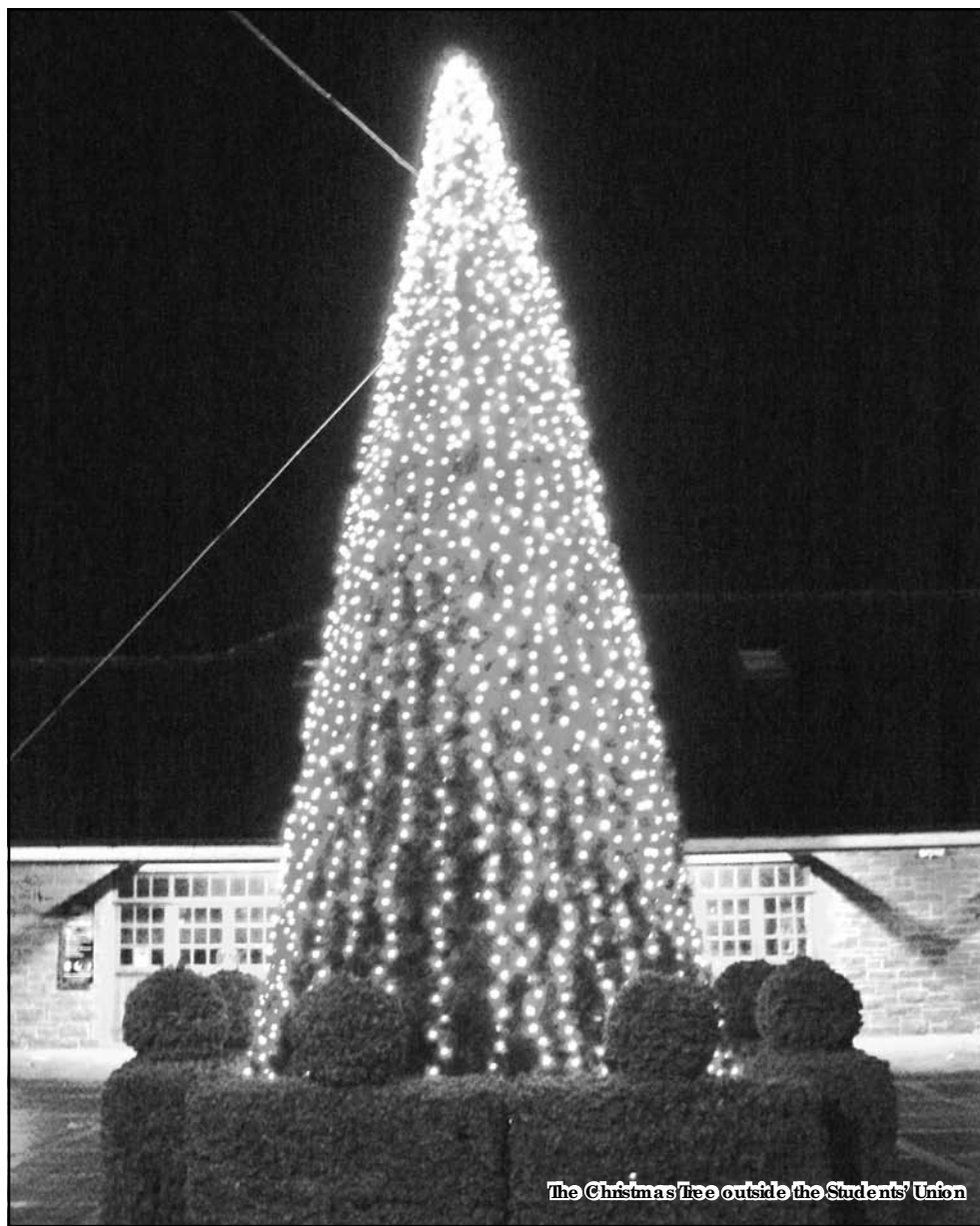
and the stress of cooking dinner and so on. Basically, some people don't see any of the joy at Christmas at all because, as they put it, "the magic from when you were a child is gone".

That is completely fair, and I'm not going to deny that Christmas isn't a stressful time of year, but I believe that you just have to focus on the good things for it to be magical again. I've long stopped believing in Santa, which did take a lot of the magic away, but instead of hoping I'll see Santa I hope I'll see snow. Every year I hope that this will be the year for a White Christmas in the same way that as a child I always hoped it would be the year to meet Santa. One of the deciding factors of going on Erasmus to Glasgow was because it

might snow (it didn't, it started snowing literal minutes after I left for Ireland again).

I also delight in giving Christmas presents. The harder it was to get the present, the more I enjoy seeing the look on someone's face when they open a present. See, I'm not a "here's a book and some socks" type of gift buyer. I love going to the ends of the World to get that extra special present. Failing that I go for the novelty approach.

I'd rather spend €2 on a gift that someone will always remember than €20 on CD that they'll put on their iPod and forget about. Our childhoods may be gone now but that doesn't mean that the magic of Christmas has to go with it. You create the magic; you just have to figure out how!



The Christmas Tree outside the Students' Union

And thanks to...

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Richael O'Brien	Liam Togher
Nicole Ní Riordain	David McMahon
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...and anyone else I've forgotten

Next An Focal deadline is Friday, January 15 for Opinion/Features/Columns/Arts/C&S and Sport. News deadline is Monday, January 18.

Email submissions to
sucommunications@ul.ie

Quotes of the Fortnight

"Don't puke on the Christmas Tree!"

Campaigns and Services Officer, Fergal Dempsey, issues a warning to Class Reps

"Now I can touch students appropriately"

Education Officer, Aoife Finnerty, on the benefits of a Facebook page.

"Can we just get in him?"

Class Rep Triona O'Sullivan.

"Now there's no room for tiny messages"

Written on Communications Officer, Aoife Ní Raghallaigh's white board after Finn McDuffie vowed to leave a tiny message on it every time he visits

"The kayak club will be delighted, their dream goal of paddling to class if finally being realised."

Gearóid Ó Cóigligh comments on flood pictures on the ULSU Facebook



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Marketing the Union



Members of the winning team with President Ruán Dillon McLoughlin and Secretary General Tomás Costello

THE Students' Union recently asked 4th year Marketing students to undertake a project which would see them examining ways to market the Union to the wider student body. The students were asked to market the Union in such a way that every student would know what the Union does in terms of representation and services and that the Union is working exclusively for them.

ULSU President, Ruán Dillon McLoughlin, explained that the Union decided to ask the Marketing class to take part in the project as it was an "ideal opportunity to utilise the facilities available to us within the college". He also stated that asking students to market the Union was the most effective way to "get ideas from students about the best ways they could see to interact with the Union". The project also allowed students to tell their Union exactly what they wanted.

Nine groups made presentations to the Sabbatical Officers and Secretary General, Tomás Costello, on Monday of Week 11. Overall the officers were very happy with the projects. Mr Dillon McLoughlin stated that he

thought the projects "were very good with great ideas coming from all groups. Ideas brought forward were diverse, ranging from large scale projects to simple, but effective, steps." Communications Officer, Aoife Ní Raghallaigh, said "we could take something from every group.

I know I will definitely be using many of the ideas developed by the groups to improve my office." In the end the officers were forced to choose a winner from two groups.

The winning group, which was comprised of Carol Keegan, Neil Fennell, Elaine Crosse and Orlaith O'Brien, was chosen because their ideas were the most easily implemented and also because they had a wide range of ideas. Mr Dillon McLoughlin stated that the ideas from the project would be implemented as soon as possible with the officers hoping to examine the ideas in more detail over the January period.

The Union would like to thank all the students for their hard work during the projects. Mr Dillon McLoughlin also stated that he was "delighted with the outcome of the project and how the students engaged with it."



UL votes against strike action



By Finn McDuffie – News Editor

THE UL section of UNITE, the UK's largest trade union, voted against participating in the Irish public service strike day on 24 November. Following a ballot on 13 November, the Union informed UL management there would be no industrial action at UL on Tuesday 24 November and anticipated "no disruption to the normal operation of the University" on that day.

At the time this article went to print, up to 250,000 civil and public servants were taking part in the national strike. In an email sent by UL's HR department, it was stated the national dispute was "not directed at any particular employer." Unions urged a shutdown of public services around the country on 23 November. However, emergency and essential services were still provided and flood affected areas were exempt from the strike.

UCD was among those Universities affected by the industrial action, where students had to cross picket lines to get to classes. Buses, cars and even cyclists were being refused entrance to the University on the morning of the strike action.

It was reported students supported the action by part-taking in the picket lines. UCD Students' Union, an affiliate of the Union of Students Ireland (USI), supported the strike in line with the USI. LIT was also a victim of the

strike, with many students disappointed that such action would take place around the exam period.

Chairman of the ICTU, Peter McLoone, indicated the strike would cause hardship to people who depended most on public services and that members regretted this. But he believes the Government forced public sector workers into a strike that nobody wanted.

The strike targeted Government plans to cut pay which could result in schools' closure. Telephone services operated by Government departments, schools, the Revenue Commissioners, the Passport Office, the Courts Service, the Seanad, the Dáil, hospitals and local authority offices were among those affected by the industrial action. Also at the time this paper went to print, trade unions had announced plans for a second national strike in public sector in week 13 if no pay deal agreement was reached following talks with the Government. A provisional date given for the second strike day was 3 December.

Discussions between trade unions and the Government on an alternative plan for cutting the public sector pay bill without reducing actual pay levels took place the day after the first strike. The Government had intended to cut €1.3 billion from the State pay bill prior to the first strike day.

Tension mounts in UCDSU

By Aoife Ni Raghallaigh – Editor

UNIVERSITY College Dublin Students' Union (UCDSU) has been shaken by recent allegations of unrest and tension amongst its officers. The claim came after it was alleged that Communications and Campaigns Officer, Paddy Ryan, was not an official Students' Union member at the time of his election and thus was not eligible for election.

The tension was added to when the five Sabbatical Officers brought a motion of no confidence against Postgraduate Officer, Kimberly Foy. The University Observer in UCD reports that a motion of no confidence in Ms Foy was brought to Union Council by the Sabbatical team. It was stated, amongst other reasons, that Ms Foy had never sought election to the postgraduate seat on Governing Authority, as she was mandated to do by the UCDSU Constitution. However it later came to light that Ms Foy had contacted Mr Ryan to find out the details of the election but he had never replied to her with the information. Ms Foy has since resigned from her position despite the motion of no confidence being withdrawn. Allegations have also been made that Mr Ryan

was not an official member of UCDSU during the academic year 2008/9 which meant he was not eligible for election. The Internal Appeals Board (IAB) is able to grant membership to any student who was previously registered as a student but has taken a leave of absence from their studies, as per the UCDSU Constitution. As Mr Ryan did not formally apply to his department for a leave of absence for the year it was claimed that such membership could not be bestowed upon Mr Ryan.

As such a dispute arose as to whether or not Mr Ryan was eligible for election earlier this year. Although he was awarded membership of the Students' Union in advance of the election, it has been stated that such membership should not have been bestowed on Mr Ryan as he was not on an official leave from his studies. The IAB has since stated that they stand by their original decision to grant membership on Mr Ryan and as such, he was eligible for election.

The University Observer also reports that the UCDSU Executive, minus Mr Ryan, are planning to meet to discuss Mr Ryan's performance in the job and what action should be taken.

"Green Tree" Blues in Limerick

By Finn McDuffie – News Editor

RECENT raging floods of the river Shannon felled Limerick's 100ft, eco-friendly Christmas tree, which was to be moored mid-stream for the festive season. The tree was swept away as it was being positioned in the middle of the river, shortly before the official switching on of Limerick's Christmas lights.

Made entirely of recycled steel, it was carried downstream where it crashed into Shannon Bridge. Repositioning of the tree was prevented by strong currents, which caused it to tilt at 45 degrees. Shannon Bridge was later closed to traffic.

Frantic efforts were made to salvage the tree and to prevent further damage. The "Green Tree" was made from recycled steel from Thomond Park and the Shannon Tunnel project

and would have been the tallest Christmas tree in Ireland this year. The tree would have run on low-energy lights and would have contributed to Limerick city's 4,000 low-energy LEDs.

Mayor of Limerick Cllr Kevin Kiely said prior to the incident that "all the main features of the city's beautiful Christmas decorations are powered by low energy, low voltage bulbs, which represents a huge energy saving."

The massive flooding hit Limerick in late Week 11.

The army was called in to Clonlara to erect sandbag barriers, where damage was caused to farms and homes. A special interagency group comprising emergency services, local authorities and ESB Ardnacrusha collaborated during the flooding to advise local communities.



The tree after it collided with Shannon Bridge

Supporting one another

By Finn McDuffie – News Editor

STUDENTS have been asked to look out for, and support each other, in the approach to exams and Christmas. As the evenings get darker and the weather worsens the feelings of stress and loneliness associated with exams and the holidays can worsen, especially if you feel like you have no one to turn to.

Every student will feel the pressure of exams and the loneliness of the dark nights but for some students these feelings can be much stronger to the point where they begin to suffer from depression.

If you are feeling down yourself there are a number of services to help you in UL. The Counselling Department

runs a drop in centre from 11am – 12pm and 3pm – 4pm at CM073. There are also a number of great websites including www.pleasetalk.ie or www.headsup.ie. Both websites provide excellent resources for dealing with stress or depression.

All of the officers in the Students' Union are also happy to listen and are available to talk confidentially either in person, on Skype, or on the phone.

Many people from all walks of life may suffer from depression at one point in time and it is important that such people have

someone trustworthy they can turn to in a time of need. It is also important to be a good support to your friends at times like these.

If you think a friend of yours may be struggling with the pressure of exams or just finding things hard in general there a number of ways you can help. If they are stressed about college work make sure they get a break from studying. Bring them for coffee or a walk and help them relax. If you are in classes together you could see if you can help them with assignments or studying.

The most important thing is to let them know that you are there to listen and support them. If someone in your class has nowhere to go for Christmas it

would undoubtedly mean the World to them if you invited them home with you. This is particularly true for Erasmus and Study Abroad students who may not be able to afford the flights home for the holidays. A simple gesture can make the World of difference to someone else. Never underestimate the power of a small act of kindness.

Feeling down or depressed is nothing to be ashamed about. The most important thing is to talk to someone before things get too much for you. Talking is a sign of strength, not of weakness.

'Feeling down or depressed is nothing to be ashamed about.'



TD: “Students are being fleeced” by registration charge

By Finn McDuffie – News Editor

A SIGNIFICANT portion of the registration fee paid by students of Trinity College Dublin (TCD) was not used for student services, the Oireachtas education committee has heard. Accounts, brought to the attention of the committee by Trinity's Students' Union (TCDSU), show much of the registration fee was used to make up for cuts in the Higher Education Authority (HEA) grant.

The third-level registration charge, which was increased from €900 to €1,500 in most institutions this year, is supposed to be specifically reserved for student services, exams and registration.

TCDSU has released estimated accounts of the student service charge for last year, which showed that some €310 of a €900 registration charge was being put to alternative uses. The union has claimed that just one-third of the registration fee was spent on student services this year.

Fine Gael TD, Brian Hayes, said the accounts highlighted “fees through the back door” and showed a substantial amount of the charge was directed to alternative uses. He said this

was “direct evidence that students are being fleeced and the charge is not related to student services”. Oireachtas education committee chairman and Green TD, Paul Gogarty, noted a lack of clarity as to how registration fees were assessed in colleges, but said this was not fees by the back door.

ULSU President, Ruán Dillon McLoughlin has been in contact with other Universities on the issue. He also said the ULSU has been investigating the issue and will continue to do so. According to an Irish Times report, he urged a reduction of the registration fee or enhanced student services.

He also said the committee is to forward the accounts to Minister for Education Batt O’Keeffe asking for an urgent response before the budget. Mr Hayes has written to the Comptroller and Auditor General asking for immediate investigation of how the registration charges were spent at the seven Universities and institutes of technology.

TCD claims it has fully complied with the requirements of the Department of Education’s circular since the charge was introduced in 1996.

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Stokes Institute researchers earn UL a potential \$5m

By Finn McDuffie – News Editor

SENIOR UL researchers have developed new technology which will see the University receive millions of dollars in royalties. The technology, developed at the Stokes Institute, is for cooling computer devices.

The University has already signed two commercial agreements for the new micro coolers, which will use less power, cost less to make, and offer improved performance. UL's micro-cooler has taken five years to develop and will be smaller and quieter than its seemingly obsolete predecessors. The technology, which is patent pending, uses a combination of specially arranged cooling surfaces and a new fluidic phenomenon.

Semiconductor giant, AMD, has been granted a development licence to customise the technology for next generation AMD products. Further, Asia Vital Components (AVC), global supplier of coolers for central processing units (CPUs) and micro-chip modules (MCMs), has signed a worldwide, non-exclusive, licence to make and sell the micro cooler.

The University stands to receive more than \$1 million in licence revenues from the agreements, under which up to 50 million of the micro coolers will be required initially.

But, reportedly, Dr Jeff Punch and Dr Edmond Walsh of the Stokes Institute have said the agreements are non-exclusive, which means

hundreds of millions. Talks with mobile phone manufacturers as well as AMD's interest in evaluating UL's newer technologies could

to spread to laptops and handheld devices like today's graphics-hungry mobile phones. The research was funded by Enterprise Ireland.

as a genuine 'smart economy' but, without EI support, it would be difficult to keep many of these projects going," said Mr Dillon.

Director of UL's Technology Transfer Office, Paul Dillon, expects further pioneering innovations from the Institute. He said the international endorsement of research expertise and market awareness that the licence agreements represented could be used to establish a new high potential start-up company in Ireland to bring these innovations to the market.

Sales Director at AVC, Steve Huang is excited about the new technology. "[We are] moving towards smaller sizes and greater power efficiency. The team at Stokes Institute has designed a cooling technology that can make a huge impact on the ability of manufacturers to deliver these attributes at reduced cost".

AMD Fellow, Dr.Gamal Refai-Ahmed said, "[AMD] works with a broadrange of ivy-league institutions, and we were particularly impressed with the quality of research and the market awareness that the researchers in the Stokes Institute in the University of Limerick have delivered." He also commended UL's "professional approach" to licensing its intellectual property.



the micro coolers can be brought to other firms and industries under potential new agreements. It has also been said the volumes of units required could eventually exceed

potentially yield over \$5 million in royalties.

The exciting, new micro-cooler will be used initially in devices such as desktops, but is expected

"It's essential that this backing is maintained over the coming years and beyond. Research carried out in the universities has the potential to help promote Ireland internationally

New paintings unveiled on campus

By Jason Kennedy – Chief News Correspondent

A SELECTION of new paintings has been unveiled in the Bourn Vincent Gallery in UL. The medical art collection was opened by Professor Desmond Leddin of Dalhousie University, Canada, who gave a talk on 'The importance of humanities in medicine'.

A total of 20 new paintings were added to the already well established Medical Art Collection in the University.

Included in the collection is a painting, entitled "The Sick Bed" from John Butler Yeats, father of Nobel laureate William Butler Yeats and renowned Irish artist,

Jack B Yeats. The Collection also includes a series of five self portraits by Jill Baird, which document the artist's recovery from Acute Myeloid Leukaemia. The paintings, called "Becoming the Tree" were published in 1996. Now practising as an Art Therapist, Jill finds the paintings relevant not only to those with cancer, but also in the area of mental health where she has been working since 2003.

Speaking on the founding of the collection, Foundation Head of the Graduate Entry Medical School, Professor Paul Finucane said: "The UL Graduate Medical School

aims to enhance students' knowledge and understanding of peoples' experiences and emotions in relation to health and sickness through study of the arts, including the visual arts. The Medical Art Collection was set up to bring together works that explore the experiences of patients, doctors and the human condition."

Prof Leddin said; "The Graduate Entry Medical School mission clearly reflects the societal need in Ireland. While students are of course expected to be knowledgeable, competent, and clinically skilled doctors, they are also expected to be empathetic and

intuitive with patients, knowledgeable of the diverse influences on patient and population health, sensitive to the social and cultural environments in which patients live, and understand how they impact on the health of their patients.

"The humanities are academic disciplines, which study and raise questions on the human condition - the distinctive features of human existence.

Doctors are intimately involved in this cycle of birth, growth, and death, and it follows, therefore, that the humanities should have a significant role medical education."

President praises top teacher

By Finn McDuffie – News Editor

UL LECTURER, Dr Helena Lenihan, has been honoured with a National Excellence in Teaching Award. The award was presented by President of Ireland, Mary McAleese at a ceremony hosted in Dublin Castle. The celebrated researcher is Assistant Dean and Senior lecturer in Economics at the Kemmy Business School.

Commending Dr Lenihan, UL President, Professor Don Barry, noted her reputation as an internationally recognised researcher and scholar in her field of expertise and congratulated her on using that reputation within the classroom. He noted her ability to instil “learners with the enthusiasm and curiosity that comes from being engaged in high level research within her discipline.”

The awards honour “exemplary teachers” who are also “innovative researchers”, acknowledging academics who have successfully united the two roles. They also recognise teaching accomplishments and promote celebration of the teaching profession. This year nominations increased by 80%. 14 of Ireland’s higher education institutions

took part. Winners of the five awards were nominated by senior managers within their institutions and selected by a committee which included international representatives as well as representatives of the Irish University Association, the Institutes of Technology Ireland and the Union of Students in Ireland. The committee was chaired by Prof.

Áine Hyland, Chair of the Academy’s international advisory board. President McAleese presented the awards highlighting the significant role of integrating research, teaching and learning in the recovery of a sustainable economy. She encouraged teachers to lead by example and to provide innovative and creative teaching and learning opportunities in our higher education institutions. She added that the National Awards were a significant and welcome development in Irish Higher Education.

Michael Kelly, Chairman of the HEA closed the ceremony. “This morning I was inspired and inspiration runs throughout the approaches adopted by the award winners which make for attention-grabbing teaching”.



President Mary McAleese and Dr Helena Lenihan

Dance archive launched at UL

By Finn McDuffie – News Editor

UNIVERSITY of Limerick has announced that Ireland’s first national dance archive will be based at the Glucksman Library.

The Dance Archive of Ireland will be launched thanks to €140,000 in funding from the Arts Council.

The archive was developed as a result of research carried out by the Dance Research Forum Ireland, which was set up in 2003 by Director of the MA Ethnochoreology and MA Irish Traditional Dance Performance at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, Dr Catherine Foley. In 2008 the Arts Council awarded the Dance

Research Forum Ireland the opportunity to carry out research on the establishment of a national dance archive in Ireland.

Dr Foley said “Following years of effort, the National Dance Archive of Ireland is now becoming a reality; it is a historic moment for all dance in Ireland.

Dance Research Forum Ireland owes an enormous debt of gratitude to the Arts Council for the awarding of this seed

funding” The report, which was written by dance historian Dr Victoria O’Brien, established that a large amount of archival dance material is available but, to date, it had been difficult to gain access to such objects.

‘Following years of effort, the National Dance Archive of Ireland is now becoming a reality; it is a historic moment for all dance in Ireland’

Since the publication of the report, Dance Research Forum Ireland, together with the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, the Glucksman Library at the University of Limerick, and the Arts Council have worked together towards the establishment of an accessible dance archive.

Commenting on the announcement, Professor of Music and Director of the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University, Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin said:

“The establishment of the Dance Archive of Ireland at the University of Limerick, is a direct follow on from the inspired and inclusive vision of Dance Research Forum Ireland, across ballet, contemporary, traditional, popular and world dance genres.”



Professor Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, Davide Terlingo, Dr Catherine Foley, Maeve Felton and Alan Fox at the launch of the Dance Archive of Ireland.

Union Debrief

Postgrad News

Hello folks! Here's your fortnightly fix of postgrad news.

Thursday, 19 November became 19 MOvember for the PSA MOvember Madness Bash in the Stables. With two great bands, Nugget and The Funeral Suits, and our resident DJ's for postgrad events, the two Dave's, the party kept going until 2am (in the Stables at least). There were prizes, goodies, promos and moustaches, lots and lots of moustaches! The exact amount raised for Action Prostate Cancer will be available on the website as soon as I work it out but it looks like a small fortune, which is great since its going to such a worthy cause. Raising money was only part of our aim – the other being raising awareness of men's health issues, and that too was very successful. If you want more info then go to <http://www.campus.ie/health/health/mens-health.html> to find out more.

It was a big night with a massive crowd and a lot of people helped to make it possible, you know who you are but very quickly thanks to Finn, Pa, Laura, Jen, Martha and everyone else for all their effort. There will be more events like this next semester so watch this space.

Following on the success of the Kids Halloween Party, the PSA and SU will be holding the Annual Children's Christmas Party in December.

Preregistration is essential so please keep and eye on www.postgrads.ie/news for more information closer to December. There may also be a mulled wine reception held in the Common Room closer to Christmas, this will be the last event of the semester so watch [www](http://www.postgrads.ie/news).

postgrads.ie/events for more info. Exams are approaching, the SU will be handing out exam packs and I'd like to remind everyone that the clean desk policy means CLEAN DESK. Any writing on your hands or anywhere else, no matter how benign, could get you done for breach of academic regulations. Best of luck to everyone and if you need anything then please get in contact.

Recently I have been asking myself about the future of the PSA, where will it be in five years time, will it still exist and would anyone miss it if it was absorbed into ULSU forever? To answer some of these questions I am going to visit Trinity College Dublin where Irelands only other postgrad representative body, the GSU, has been in existence for some years now. I am going to see how they do things there and compare and contrast to see our strengths and weaknesses.

After this I am opening it up to you to tell me what you want and what you don't want through meetings in January and by the time of our UGM in Feb/March we should have a proposal for a policy driven 5-year-plan to chart the future for the PSA for future presidents that will benefit them and postgrads in the future greatly.

If you have suggestions as always please let me know, my email is psapresident@ul.ie.

Check out the photos of the Bash on our facebook page and check the website for more news.

Best of Luck in exams!

That's all for now,
Michael

Ruán's Rundown

Well, I'm going to start of by wishing everyone Happy Christmas! I know it's hard to think of Christmas when you have exams on the horizon but I think it's important to sit back from time to time and remember that they are just exams and that Christmas is waiting for you at the other side.

The majority of us at this time of the year feel the pressure. We are all trying to do the best we can and usually trying to play catch up for work we should have been doing all along. This usually leads to stress and in turn leads to our bodies and mind's suffering but also leads to our work effectiveness suffering as well.

"When we are under high levels of stress, rational thinking and decision making go out the window. Runaway stress overwhelms the mind and body, getting in the way of our ability to accurately "read" a situation."

The ability to read a situation is critical in an exam. The ability to read and understand exactly what question is being asking can make or break your exam. Its natural to get stress at these times but its recognising that you are stressed and then dealing with it properly that's important.

Signs that you may be stressed:

- You feel drained and depleted
- You can't concentrate or think straight
- You feel nervous and keyed up

- Your stomach is upset
- You're having trouble sleeping
- Your muscles are tense

Well we all deal with stress differently so I would advise you to take a look at the [headsup.ie](http://www.headsup.ie) website and see what are the best techniques for you. <http://www.headsup.ie/stresstech.php>

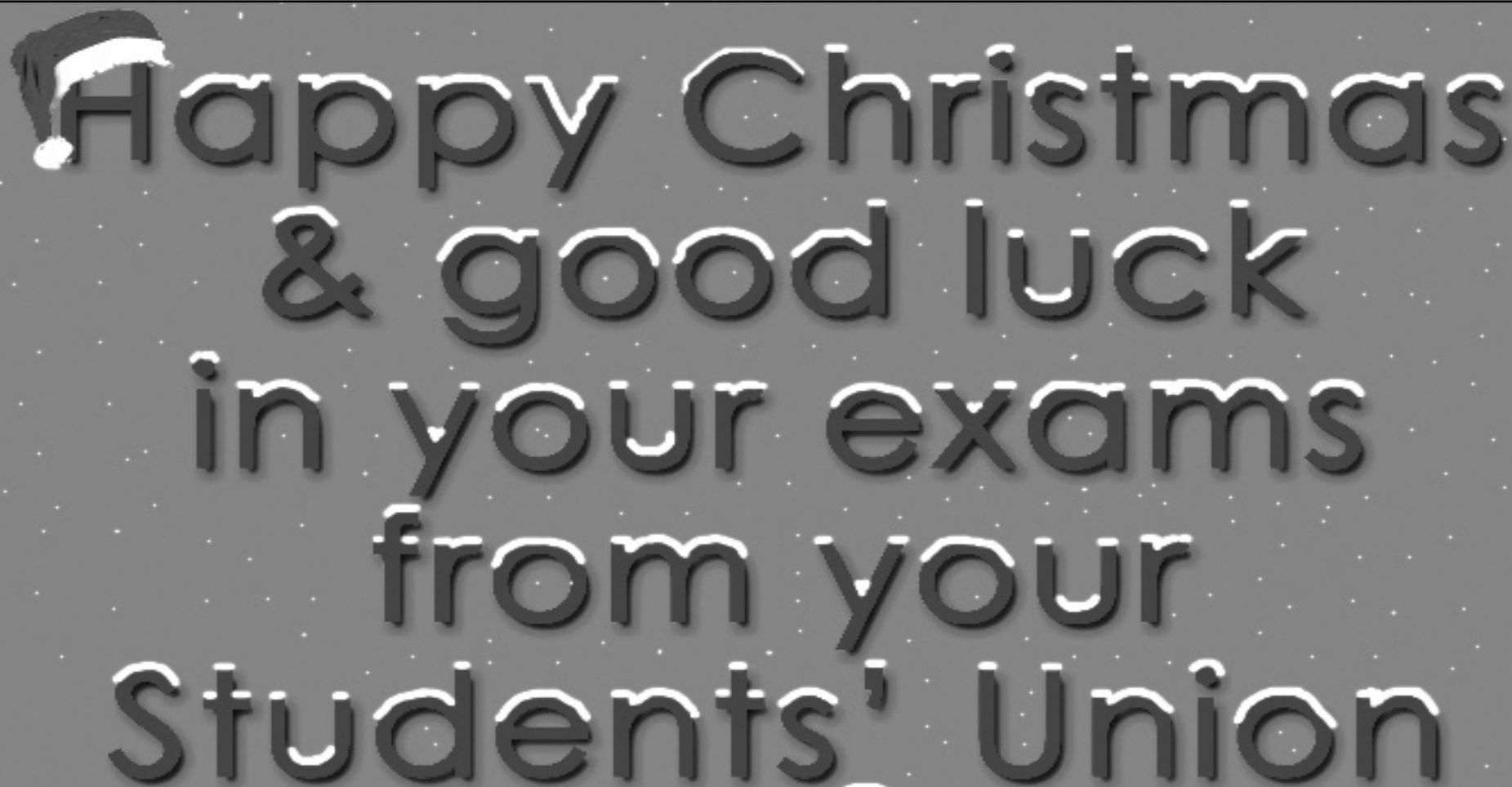
As well as looking out for yourself also look out for others. Be a bit more understanding of people where possible. Give people a little more time. Who doesn't feel good inside when someone goes out of there way to help you. Why not pass that feeling on. Whether it be holding the door open for someone, giving up your seat or just being polite...your grandmother will be proud of you! It's these Random Acts of Kindness that might just make someone's day.

If any of you are finding the pressure that little bit too much, then just call into the Students' Union and talk to one of the Officers. Feel free to give one of us a shout.

To find out more about stress check out www.headsup.ie. Also check out www.pleasetalk.ie

We all love the auld internet at this time of the year to keep ourselves distracted, here's one to keep you spirits lifted.... <http://www.elfyourself.com/>

Best of luck in the Exams!


**Happy Christmas
& good luck
in your exams
from your
Students' Union**

Council Corner

Clubs and SoCs Council

CLUBS AND Societies (C&S) council met for the sixth and final time of the semester in Week 11. Representatives from the different Clubs and Societies who were present at the meeting passed a number of proposals which had been discussed at the Council previously.

The first motion passed was the Vehicle Protocol Proposal. This motion was passed with 34 votes in favour of the proposal and 1 against.

The vote against was with regard to a point within the motion which stated that Clubs and Societies would each get an allowance of 1000km and would be charge at 15c per kilometre driven over this allowance.

Next the representatives present voted to approve proposals made in relations to improving the Clubs and Societies Recruitment Drive which takes place at the beginning of Semester 1. This proposal suggested ten improvements which could

be made to the drive including providing overhead power to laptops, having a technician on hand for laptop support and allowing C&S to set up earlier. An exclusion zone by the main entrance was also proposed to remove the bottle neck of traffic entering the Arena.

Thirdly the members voted in favour of creating a new administrative staff member who would provide support to Clubs and Societies Development Officer, Paul Lee. The news staff member will be hired at the beginning of Semester 2 and, amongst other things, they will manage bookings of C&S vehicles and rooms, act as secretary for the C&S meetings and administering the C&S budget.

Finally the C&S administrative budget was presented to the Council and was approved by the members. C&S Council will meet again at the beginning of next semester.

Class Reprs Council

Class Reprs Council (CRC) met for the final time this academic year on the Tuesday evening of Week 12. This was the first Council of the year which did not have quorum which meant that any policies brought before Council could not be passed. Reprs present were asked to please ensure they were emailing the correct Aoife as Communications Officer, Aoife Ní Raghallaigh, was receiving a lot of emails regarding Class Reprs which were intended for Education Officer, Aoife Finnerty.

Each of the Working Groups also made a report to Council. The President, Welfare, Ents, Class Reprs, Class Reprs Office and Communications Officer Working Groups all reported to Council on what they had been doing during the semester. It was also stated that there are still spaces available for students who wish to join the President, Welfare, Ents and Communications Working Group. Anyone who is interested can contact the relevant officer. Reprs were also informed that a student from the Health Sciences

faculty was needed to fill the position of Health Sciences Officer which is currently vacant. Nobody put themselves forward and as such the election will be deferred until the next meeting of Council. An election also took place for the KBS Faculty Officer as the current officer, Mark Brennan, has had to resign as he will be on Co-Op next semester. Jennifer Cleary was elected in his place. The Equality Officer, Gina O'Brien, has also resigned due to Co-Op and her position will be filed at the first Council of next semester. Students were also informed that a new position, Fundraising Officer, would be created next semester. Finally students were asked for ideas on fundraising for Raising and Giving Week and were informed that without sufficient fundraising the week may not go ahead. It was stated that although €20,000 was raised for charity last year, this only amounted to €2 per student and the cost of clean up was nearly three times the amount raised. Anyone with fundraising ideas can contact any of the SU Officers.

ULSU Nite link

Time table for Academic Year 2009/10

Route A 19:00, 20:30, 22:00,

- Stop 1: Dromroe Village
- Stop 2: Thomand Village
- Stop 3: Cappavilla Village
- Stop 4: Plassey Village
- Stop 5: College Court
- Stop 6: Groody Student Village
- Stop 7: Courtyard Student Village
- Stop 8: Brookfield Hall
- Stop 9: Parkview Hall
- Stop 10: Park Mews (Clancy's)

Returns to UL via Flag Pole Entrance

Route B 19:45, 21:15, 22:45,

- Stop 1: Kilmurry Village
- Stop 2: Elm Park
- Stop 3: Oaklawn
- Stop 4: Kilmurry Lodge
- Stop 5: Brierfield (Back of the Estate)
- Stop 6: Woodhaven
- Stop 7: Annacotty (Synotts)
- Stop 8: Spar (at University Court)
- Stop 9: Courtyard/Brookfield
- Roundabout

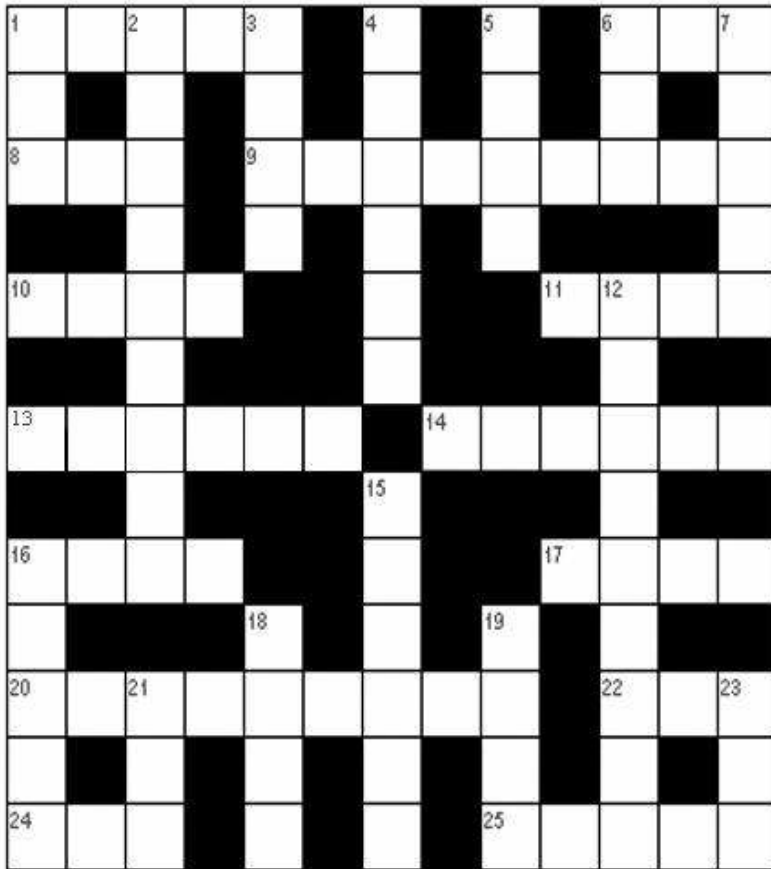
Returns to UL via East Gate entrance

Route C 23.30 Only

Route A+B Stops on Request
Drop off only

Fun Page!

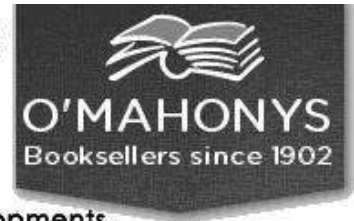
Crossword



Across

- 1. Round green or red fruit
- 6. Violate a moral law
- 8. The organ of sight
- 9. Financial considerations
- 10. ____ vera, a plant
- 11. Felling of intense anger
- 13. Images occurring during sleep
- 14. Poke or thrust abruptly
- 16. Shaped mass of bread
- 17. Emit light
- 20. Celebrity photographer
- 22. Provided with artificial light
- 24. Health resort
- 25. A copy of a magazine or paper

Sponsored by:



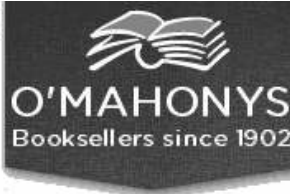
Down

- 1. Instrument for chopping
- 2. Remarkable developments
- 3. Make even or straight
- 4. A type of whiskey
- 5. Prepare food
- 6. Move over snow
- 7. To be offensively curious
- 12. They shield from rain
- 15. A lightweight, single breasted jacket
- 16. Chronic skin condition characterised by ulcerative lesions
- 18. Slang for tea
- 19. A fuzzy brown egg-shaped fruit
- 21. A small green vegetable which comes in a pod
- 23. One of the digits on the foot

The lucky winner will receive a €20 voucher to spend in
O'Mahony's Booksellers
 or online at
www.omahonys.ie
For all your college needs
 Submit entires with name & ID number to the entry box in SU reception

Sudoku

Sponsored by:



	8		9			6		
	7		1	2				8
		4	8			3		
9	8		3					5
5			9		7			3
		7		1	5			
1			3	4		8		
	3			9		7		

Instructions:

The objective of the game is to fill all the blank squares in a game with the correct numbers. There are three very simple constraints to follow in a 9 by 9 square Sudoku game:

- * Every row of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order.
- * Every column of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order.
- * Every 3 by 3 subsection of the 9 by 9 square must include all digits 1 through 9.

The winner will receive a €20 voucher to spend in
O'Mahony's Booksellers
www.omahonys.ie
For all your college needs
 Submit entries with name & ID number to entry box in SU reception

In Numbers

24
 Days until Christmas!

8ft
 The height of the Christmas tree in the Students' Union Courtyard

45.72 metres
 The length of the longest ever Christmas cracker

503
 The number of rooms in Thomond Student Village that went without water during the floods

440AD
 The first time 25th December was celebrated as the birthday of Christ

UL EnviroCom
Twitter

UL Environmental Com
 is now on twitter
<http://twitter.com/ULEnviroCom>

What makes Christmas so special?

By Eoghan Cannon

ISN'T Christmas the best time of the year? It's a time for giving and sitting around playing board games with the family. Fat chance, literally.

It's a time to get fat. Gathering a mountain of wrapping paper from all those unwanted presents, sleeping the day away after stuffing our faces with turkey and chocolate, and partying all night long with annoying family members who are that bit more bearable with a few mulled wines in us. Funnily enough we still love it when it's here, and yet we can't wait until it's finally over.

I asked a few people what made it officially Christmas for them. There were the obvious ones like seeing the Coca Cola advertisement on the television, hearing Christmas songs on the radio, and when the Christmas bumper edition of the RTE Guide comes out. One person said when the newspaper Nollaig Brough came out, which I didn't have a clue about, while another simply said it was December. I guess what makes Christmas for me is buying my first Christmas present, or maybe it's picking out the Christmas tree with the rest of the family, which has to be a real tree because it has the best smell ever, or perhaps a packed Christmas Eve mass. There's just too many to choose from to be honest.

Then there are the family traditions which really are what makes some people's Christmas even better. I know that many families, mine included, do Kris Kindle at Christmas, which is a brilliant idea for saving money and buying great presents for one person rather than buying rubbish ones for a few people. Another tradition that my family has is making home made potato croquettes for Christmas dinner.

It may sound strange, but I have to wait a whole year to have them again. I'm salivating now thinking of them. They're so good.

Then there's the argument over which is the best Christmas song. Everyone has a favourite, whether it's The Pogues, Mariah Carey or Wham, someone will most definitely disagree with your choice. I suppose that's one way of passing time on Christmas day. Movies are just as debatable. I really can't decide which my favourite is, but I'd say movies when I was younger like the first two Home Alone movies and A Muppet's Christmas Carol are high up there for sure.

The build up to Christmas is probably better than Christmas Day itself. You see shops and towns decorated brilliantly, you get to buy presents for people, including yourself, and everyone is in a great holiday mood. Christmas Day can be a little boring, but it's a day that we all look forward to none the less, because we get to sit on our arses, eat until we can't move, and spend time with family and friends. It's a great feeling when you wake up in the morning and a big smile is plastered across your face because you know that today means two things; presents, and a massively grotesque dinner.

In spite of all this talk about Christmas, it definitely isn't the same as it used to be.

There's one reason for this: Santa Clause. Remember way back when you used to get up at 6 or 7 in the morning to see what the big fat man in the red suit had brought you the night before and run into your parents bedroom to tell them what he had brought you. Oh, what a horribly brilliant lie that was.

Merry Christmas.



Letting it all out



By Garion Backen

I AM not exactly sure why I'm writing this. I think the idea was that the article would be so useless and pretentious that it might almost qualify as art. Don't get me wrong, I'm not really the cynical self pitying type usually. But for some unknown reason I find myself wallowing in self pity a lot these days. Or maybe it's self loathing; it's something along the lines of feeling like a bag of shite.

Sound familiar? I hope so; nothing lifts the spirits like knowing everyone else is suffering too and I suppose they are. What the hell is with the weather at the moment? They should make a department of weather so we could at least moan to someone about it officially. The everyday filler conversation about how pathetic Limerick's meteorological system is not doing it justice, so please do me a favour and save it up. Come to me on a Friday and let it all out in one blast. I'm serious I want to hear strong language in a loud tone of voice, this moaning isn't enough. It's getting me down how half

heartedly people take this grievance.

It doesn't help the amount of work they're giving us. I won't unload my personal vexations upon the page. That's for cornering friends in a weird drunk mood with a sustained rant some time, somewhere soon. But is it too much to ask for a little communication between departments when it comes to assignments, tests and practical stuff that have to be handed up? I mean the minimum is done. A timetable at the start of the year is all that I can see that's put into making everything flow together.

In fact the only thing not poking at my inner irritable old man these days is the economy. It's fantastic for someone with very little living costs. If you're a student who's getting a grant, no car, no smoking habit, a social life that's got an acute case of rigor mortis, and you're living in a dive in College Court, getting by can be done very cheaply. Which is something that brings a smile to the wallower's face.

Rant over.

Merry Christmas mouse

By Emma Hayward

“Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.” Most of us don’t want to hear any creature stirring in the house after we’ve gone to bed.

Everyone knows that a mouse in the house is a problematic thing. We lay traps for them, violent and unforgiving spring-traps that squish the mouse to death. We keep cats to kill them, inside and outside the house. Sometimes we even do the job ourselves, if we happen to stumble across one during the day.

But why should we hate them so much? Why are we traditionally so afraid of the little mammal which is akin to the beloved hamsters that we keep as pets? Some people even keep mice as pets. So is it just a love-hate relationship?

For years, mice have been

depicted in cartoons, stories and drawings as cute, little, intelligent critters, always outsmarting the cat, like in Itchy and Scratchy and Tom and Jerry. Not forgetting Mickey Mouse of course, who is arguably the most famous mouse of all time. There are even mice that are superheroes, like Dangermouse and Mightymouse. The mouse is always the hero. But it appears that this heroism does not translate to real life as we make a good effort ensuring that mice do not survive anywhere near where we do.

In Ireland the Long-tailed Field-Mouse, also known as Wood-Mouse, is most common. The House Mouse is, of course, a well-known face as well. The Wood-Mouse lives outdoors, in fields, hedgerows and bogs and does not hibernate.

The House Mouse lives in outhouses, barns, sheds as well as indoors with us. Mice are an important food source for other animals such as badgers, foxes, owls and other birds of prey. Not to mention Whiskers, when she turns her nose up at the expensive tinned cat food you’ve given her for the third time this week. The House-Mouse tends to move indoors during the winter because of the cold, to most people’s displeasure. They generally don’t live too far away from humans, as they are not good competitors with other rodents in the wild. They have a life expectancy of around a year and they do not hibernate. The tell tale signs of a resident mouse are usually the scratching, pitter-pattering sounds heard in the walls of the ceilings after dark and also their droppings that look like little black grains of rice. Nobody is exactly pleased to discover this evidence though as mice can carry diseases

and nobody wants a mouse in the food cupboard either. For the most part, we consider mice as a nuisance, but on a brighter note the mouse is also associated with Christmas.

Perhaps this is partially due to the fact that the house mouse comes indoors more often during winter to escape the cold. There are countless Christmas books, plays and paraphernalia with a mousey theme. ‘The Christmas Mouse’ is one story to remember. Let’s face it; the little rodents are a part of the Christmas holidays, even though they are here all year round. Perhaps it’s the one time of the year when we can give them a break. There must be a soft spot for mice somewhere deep inside us all. Why else would they be our superheroes and our favourite children’s cartoons? It’s time to embrace the mouse, that is, as long as he stays outside.

Season’s squeakings everyone.



A common house mouse

So you’re going on Erasmus

By Colette Sexton

SO THE destination is chosen, flights are booked, goodbye drinks are arranged and it’s time for to head off on Erasmus. Europe is your oyster for the next five months and you plan to enjoy every minute of it. As someone about to complete my period of Erasmus here are a few practical tips.

1. Set up a Facebook page. It does not matter if you are a computer whizz kid or technology illiterate, you’ll need a Facebook to keep in touch with people at home and to connect with your new friends.
2. Check if your phone works in your destination of choice. Believe me, going without a phone in a foreign country is not easy. If you have a spare phone then unblock it and you’ll just have to buy a SIM card when you arrive in your host country.
3. A bit of Googling does not go astray. Research how to get from the airport to your new house, check if your plugs are compliant with that of your destination and find out what the weather will be like during your stay.
4. Email fellow students who have gone to that university on Erasmus before you. They are the best source of information you have especially regarding where to live, how the host university is organised, where to go and where to avoid.
5. Your host university will be different to UL. It might be stricter or it might be ridiculously unorganised. There may be times when you praise UL’s administration facilities. There’s no two ways about it, you’re just going to have to get used to the way things are organised in your host university.
6. Make an effort to get to know people from other countries. It’s very easy just to stick with

the Irish but by doing that you defeat the whole purpose of Erasmus. Making friends all over Europe leads to many potential excursions in the future.

7. Try out the food and drink of your host country. Cook for your international friends and have them cook for you. Sure, octopus is nothing compared to your Mammy’s bacon and cabbage but at least you’re expanding your palette and you may be pleasantly surprised.
8. Accommodation; Research. Research. Research. Don’t agree to the first place you see. Make sure your accommodation is near shops, clubs, bus routes and, obviously, the university. Don’t pay high rents if you can avoid it. The majority of European countries are cheaper than Ireland, so expect to pay less than you do at home. Check that quilts and cooking utensils are supplied in the house. Buying all those practical things could cost a small fortune and eat into your drinking money.
9. Travel as much as possible. Ryanair provide cheap flights and friends on Erasmus in other countries are great tour guides and can also supply free accommodation.
10. Don’t spend your Erasmus pining after someone at home. Of course you’ll miss your boyfriend or girlfriend or whatever, but they’ll be there when you get back. Homesickness happens. You can quit Erasmus and go home but what’s the point? Erasmus is a once in a lifetime opportunity, if you leave you will regret it.

All in all Erasmus is a fantastic experience and one I’d definitely recommend. The settling in period can be intimidating but my advice is just to roll with it. You’re about to set off on the most incredible five months of your life. Enjoy it!

Fighting the Christmas Blues

By John Rainsford

AS THE days shorten and our thoughts turn inevitably to Christmas there is an understandable tendency, for some people at least, to feel the blues. If the feeling persists for longer than two weeks however the problem may be one of depression.

Mary McGrath is the Western Regional Executive Officer of Aware, the national organisation providing support and information to individuals and families affected by this illness. She said: "Aware was founded in 1985, with one support group in Dublin.

The services have now developed to include groups throughout the country as well as a loCall Helpline, open 365 days a year. The services provided are in addition to, and not designed as a replacement for, other treatments."

Ups and downs are certainly part of the human condition and a natural reaction to life events. Depression however is a chronic condition marked by an overwhelming sense of hopelessness, despair and isolation from family and friends. The illness can vary from mild to severe, and while lifestyle changes and monitoring can work for milder experiences, treatment might be needed in some cases so it's important to seek expert advice.

Depression can occur as a result of genetic or environmental factors. Significant life events like bereavement, unemployment, childbirth, ending of a close relationship, financial problems, lack of social support, or alcohol/drug dependency can all act as a trigger, while for others; there may be an inbuilt tendency towards depression. The organisation estimates that more than 400,000 people (one in every ten) in Ireland experience depression at any one time. Every year there are about 10,000 admissions to hospital due to depression and around 500 people die by suicide. Experts suggest that as many as 80% of suicides can be traced back to depression.

In addition there are upwards of

11,000 cases of deliberate self harm presented at accident and emergency departments annually. One in three of the general population will be affected by depression at some time in their lives, either directly or indirectly. More people die by suicide each year than die on our roads and the human cost of this silent illness can never be fully measured. Depression can affect anyone and few people do not

Aware would like to reach out and support those affected and to end the stigma."

Mary's own involvement with depression came through voluntary work. Having initially studied psychology at university, Mary has worked with Aware for five years, a job she clearly loves. "I find it to be a very rewarding job. With a background in psychology and youth work I was involved

launched a new support group in Limerick. The group offers an opportunity to learn the coping skills necessary to minimise the impact of depression, and also to provide a safe space for people to explore their life options. Both our groups and our helpline are confidential," she continued. Aware is a voluntary organisation that depends on public support in order to survive. Their services are provided mostly

taking time out in order to maintain good mental health. These can also help where someone is suffering from depression, although it can be difficult to find the energy or motivation when you are trying to cope with the condition. "Exercise, watching your diet and getting a good nights rest are all very important aspects of minding your mental health," she states.

Depression has a marked social cost. There is an economic burden to society from health and social problems, decreased production and premature death, particularly where the issue is not addressed. Although women outnumber men in terms of susceptibility to the illness more men will attempt suicide (Parasuicide) in the age group 25-44 years old. Perhaps this is because men are more reluctant to seek help for their symptoms or to talk openly about their feelings. Clearly this is a problem which Aware can help to change.

Today many Irish people, of widely differing ages, social background or economic circumstances, feel that their quality of life has been diminished by depression. By talking openly however we may one day see it as little different to the changes that mark the passing of the seasons. A problem shared as the old saying goes is often a problem halved.

For further information please contact Mary at the Regional Office on (090) 663 4984. A lo call helpline is also available at 1890 303 302, to provide a listening service for sufferers, their families and friends.

The helpline is available Monday-Wednesday 10am-10pm and Thursday to Sunday 10am-1am. The University of Limerick Medical Centre also offers students a confidential counselling service.

You can also contact the UL Counselling Department by dropping in to the office (CM073) between 11am – 12pm and 3pm – 4pm or calling 061 202327. You can also visit www.pleasetalk.ie or www.headsup.ie.



know at least one person affected by depression and/or suicide.

Mary explained: "We make people aware of depression and this is very important for society. We want to break down barriers and offer help and support. We have great examples of success and recovery from depression but stigma is a big issue in Irish society. Although the situation is improving all the time

with suicide issues right from the outset. I first started working with Aware on their 'Beat the Blues' programme in secondary schools. This is important as it helps young people to recognise the symptoms of depression in themselves and others, and crucially how to get help to cope with it," she stated.

"As an organisation we are growing all the time: In fact we have just

by volunteers and supported by donations and fundraising activities which account for over 80% of the organisation's income.

The organisation holds its chief fundraising event "Daisy Days" each September and a 10K Christmas Fun Run is organised for the Phoenix Park, Dublin each December. Mary also reminds us of the importance of exercise and

Delamere's Delivery of Another Deliciously Devilish Performance to UL Students

By Sonja Eisenberg

On 10 November, Week 10, Neil Delamere's sold out gig played to a full house in the Jean Monnet. The lecture hall was buzzing with anticipation for the man from the Midlands; but before we got to see the man we'd all come to exercise our stomach muscles to, his support act had to "warm us up".

I would have to say that his performance was, in the least, somewhat lukewarm. He practically told one girl in the front row that there was no chance of her getting a job after she graduated. I know, I know, but we don't want to be reminded of the doom and gloom at a comedy concert. He then proceeded to whine about the rut his four year relationship had gotten in to. The female students in the hall weren't particularly impressed with this guy's wish to become part of the single scene again.

It was also noticeable that it wasn't just the female, but also some of the male audience, that didn't appreciate his opinion of long term relationships versus the slutty single life this guy seemed to long for. Not exactly the most entertaining of supporting acts I've ever had the joy of having to sit through. My view on the former teacher-cum-comedian was supported by the lack of enthusiasm shown by the audience when he arrived back out on stage to introduce Mr. Delamere himself (i.e., not one person clapped). I think he might have known we weren't his biggest fan.

Almost as soon as the torture of the supporting act was over the little man himself graced us with his presence. He soon discovered that we were an audience that consisted almost purely of UL students and no Erasmus or Study Abroad students, whatsoever. Nonetheless Neil managed to select his target for the night, and I must say he shot with utmost accuracy, as a Woodwork Teaching student basically handed him his material for the rest of the night.

Between jokes about the actual existence of PJ's girlfriend and his attraction towards any good piece of woodwork, Neil hit the nail

on the head and I think would have stayed chatting to us for the rest of the night if he'd had the chance. The future woodwork teacher, who donned the real typical "Irish style" cap, took every piece of stick Neil gave him in his stride and even seemed to be enjoying the attention he was getting from the entire audience.

He engaged especially directly with the audience when he began demonstrating how he had recently been examined by his female GP. This was particularly embarrassing for the targeted Business student, who I believe might have wished the ground underneath him would open up and swallow him whole. This audience participation continued with the question as to the texture of a particular male body part. I'll never look at satsumas quite in the same way after that gig.

Neil closed with another quiff at his favourite person of the night; the man from Monaghan, PJ himself, and didn't forget to plug his latest TV appearances on "Republic of Telly" and "The Panel", and his latest DVD, "Crème Delamere".



WANTED



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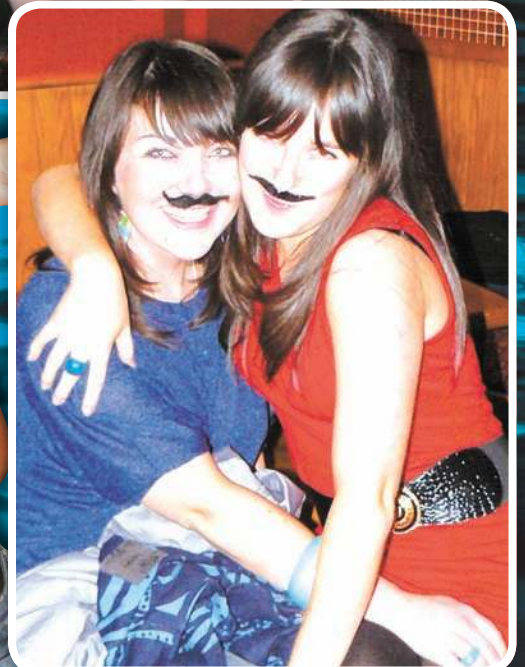
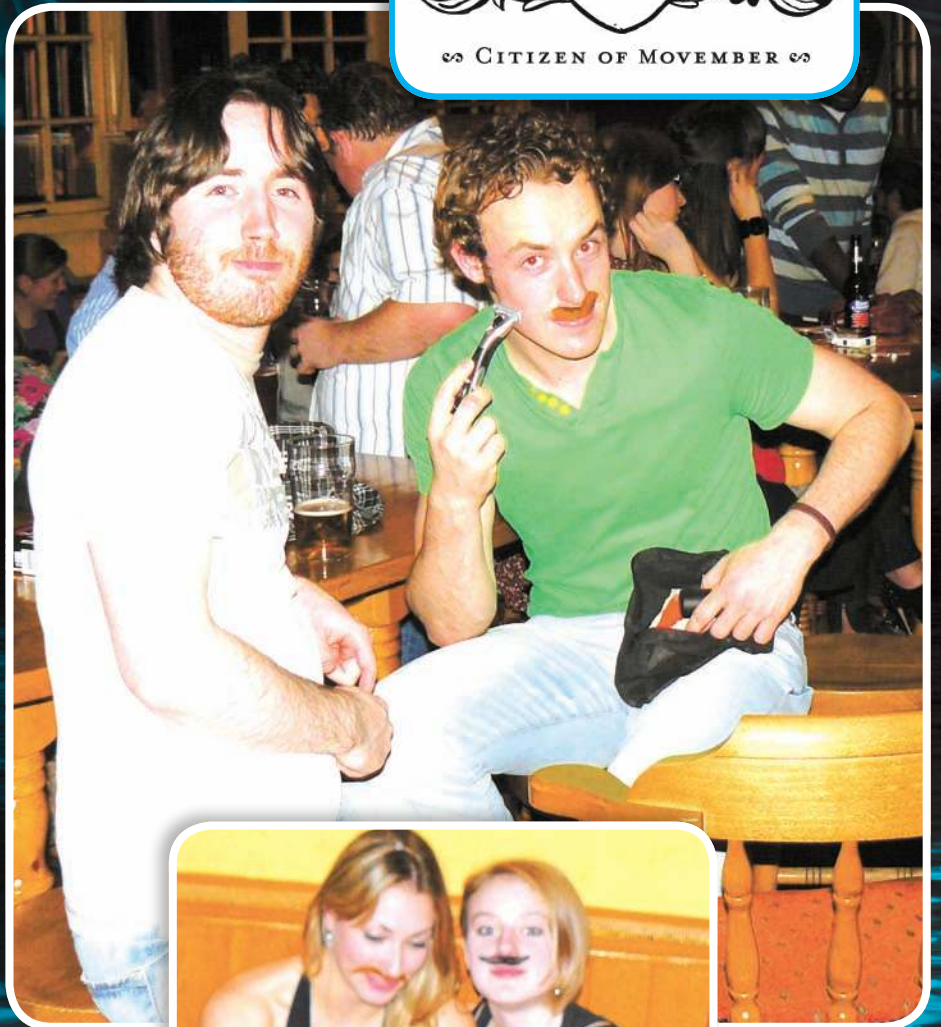
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∞ CITIZEN OF NOVEMBER ∞



Bring Back... Mass emigration

By Richard O'Brien

THE situation in this country is critical. The Celtic Tiger inspired a confidence and feeling of self importance in us, never seen before. Right now, we've got a serious PR problem. I don't need to spell it out for you but a certain high haired duo are reeking havoc on our reputation abroad. The Jedward phenomenon has gone too far.

Ireland has been renowned for its contribution to world music, and we were never so fruitful as during times of mass emigration. Poverty forced our best and brightest to up sticks and move to the UK and America. From there, these talented musicians and poets would pine for their homeland and compose tear-filled laments which we now cherish. Art is suffering, and this was certainly the case for all the emigrants of the 1840s right up to the most recent mass emigration 1980s. It was from this dark and lonely place that we got songs like 'The Fairytale of New York', 'Galway Bay', and 'A song for Ireland' Emigration gave us the likes of the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem, and the Pogues, to name but a few. We owe a lot to this loneliness, for these artists inspired future generations, which included, U2, the Cranberries, and many many more.

What is remarkable about Ireland, is that we've had such a large influence on world culture, given our size. I have no doubt that

if someone were to measure it; Ireland would have the highest creativity per capita in the world. For some crazy reason unknown to me, no one seems to have conducted such a study. But before we get carried away with all our greatness, let's remember the cause for concern; Jedward.

Don't tell me that this is our latest gift to the world? Times are bad enough without belittling ourselves any further. Jedward are a product of complacency. The Celtic Tiger came, and made us believe that our only purpose in life was to make money, and this image of a successful economy was all we wished to portray. It's not something we wish to draw the world's attention to presently, but unless we can come up with something better than the Grimes twins, we're going to be in trouble.

So here's the solution folks, come summer time, when livin' is not so easy on the Emerald Isle, strap on the guitar and bodhran and seek pastures new.

From there you can write the great songs and poems that will inspire generations of Irish artists. This is the only way, we can restore our national pride, and safely oppress any notion of grandeur that pre-pubescent teenage boys from Lucan may have. The future of our nation is in your hands.



Twilight with a vengeance

By Nicole NiRiordan

WHY is the Twilight Saga so relentlessly popular? The movies have been panned by critics, the books have been dismissed by more experienced authors and Stephanie Meyer's writing style has been heavily criticised, yet the series remains as successful as ever.

With over 85 million copies of the four books sold worldwide and record breaking sales for the first two films, Twilight is the biggest success story since the Harry Potter phenomenon. In fact, in the first three months of 2009, one of every four books sold in America was by Stephanie Meyer.

The books are centred around the relationship between regular teenager Bella Swan and the perpetually youthful vampire, Edward Cullen. They meet when Bella moves from Arizona to a little town in Washington called Forks and fall in love almost immediately. The series follows the couple as they struggle to stay together, in the midst of evil vampires who lust for Bella's blood and packs of werewolves who want to drive the Cullens out of Forks.

The series is specifically targeted at the young adult audience. Fans of the books, often called "Twi-

Hards", are generally teenage girls. Twi-Hards have a reputation of being very opinionated and borderline obsessive.

There have been many reports of hardcore fans stalking male stars from the film, such as Robert Pattinson and Taylor Lautner. Kristen Stewart, the actress who plays Bella Swan, has also allegedly received much hate mail and threats from female fans claiming to suffer from OTD, or "Obsessive Twilight Disorder". Symptoms of "Obsessive Twilight Disorder" - also called "Obsessive Cullen Disorder" - include over-identification with fictional characters, confusing actors with the characters they portray and defensiveness when someone criticises the series. A member of one fan site commented to another, self-proclaimed OTD, member, "If Edward read your mind, he would just hear "Twilight, Twilight, Twilight", over and over".

While Meyer has been repeatedly slatted by critics for her heavy-handed work, one must admit that she knows how to appeal to her target audience of teenage girls- the books are a sexier, more alluring version of Disney's "Beauty and the Beast".

The troubled man who cannot be tamed, except by the love of his life; it's the sappy, romantic plot of such great works as "Jane Eyre" and "Gone with the Wind", along



with pretty much every Mills and Boon novel ever written. Versatile and captivating, this romantic theme works because everyone loves a good love story, whether we admit it or not. Likewise, fans

of the book cite the idealisation of men as one of the main reasons they love it so much. Edward Cullen is widely recognised as the perfect boyfriend by Twi-Hards; protective,

loving, intelligent, good-looking and considerate. Never mind the obsessive and domineering behaviour Edward demonstrates throughout the series. While parents worry about the influence Mr. Cullen will have on their daughter's decisions in future, Twilight fans proudly displayed their "Team Edward" and "Mrs Cullen" t-shirts and banners at the recent UK premiere in London.

Another reason for Twilight's continued success, according to critics, is the incorporation of the supernatural into everyday life. Fans of the series feel they can identify with the characters, settings and events described in the novels. Stephanie Meyer has repeatedly claimed that she wanted to portray the protagonist as an "average girl", and also insists that she based much of Bella's experiences in Forks on her own transition from high school to college. The basis in reality makes the supernatural elements plausible, if not entirely believable. This

fascination with the extraordinary everyday can be seen in other pop culture phenomenon such as Harry Potter, Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Charmed.

Although clearly works of fiction, they all lie on the chasm of reality due to the fact that they are based firmly in the real world, often in a high school setting.

However, not everyone is as enamoured with Twilight as book sales and Twi-Hards would lead us to believe. Websites such as www.theantitwilightmovement.webs.com, with the tagline "Because Real Vampires Don't Sparkle", condemn the books as "poorly written and promoting ideas young girls shouldn't take to heart".

Celebrated author Stephen King has similar feelings for Meyer's writing skills, stating that "Stephanie Meyer can't write worth a darn." in an interview featured in 'USA weekend' last February. While everyone seems to either love or hate the Twilight series, there can be no denying that it has been extremely successful. Can 85 million people be wrong?

Perhaps, but, regardless, Meyer will continue to reap the rewards of a romance novel with which the modern reader can identify.

Student Speak

Now that the lectures for 2009 are almost done, **Jason Kennedy** takes to the Students' Centre to find out what you love about Christmas.

"The Decorations and spending time with my family. I get very chesey around Christmas."



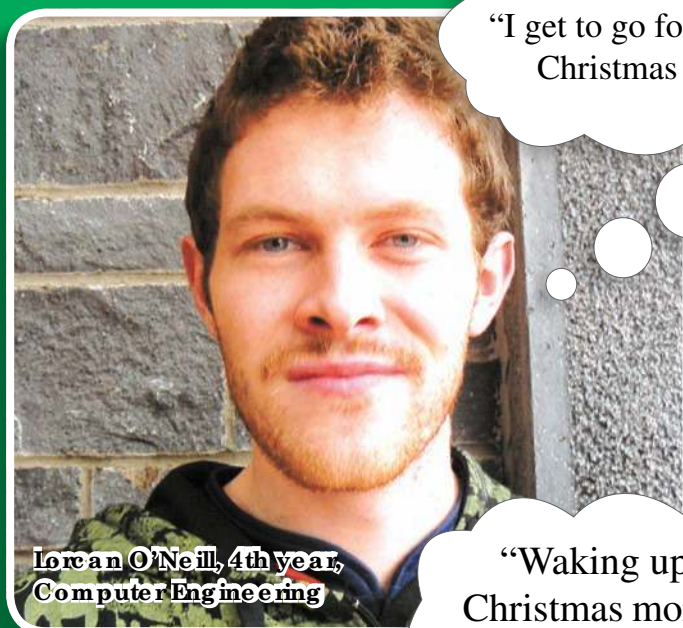
Sophie O'Gara
Multimedia and Computer Games,
3rd year

"I get to go for pints on Christmas Day."



Sacha Corcoran
Multimedia and Computer Games, 2nd year

"Mrs Clause"



Lorcan O'Neill, 4th year,
Computer Engineering



Shane Quaid
2nd year, Business

"Waking up on Christmas morning. You never get too old for it."

"Bah Humbug."



Gearoid Harahill
BA Joint Honours, 3rd Year.

"I love getting presents and watching the Toy Show."



Dean O'Meara and Robin Hutchinson
2nd year, Business and 2nd year
Industrial Biochemistry

"All the pretty lights"



James Cooney and Stephanie Clohessy

Advice Bureau

Welfare Corner

Well this semester has just flown. It seems like only a week ago I was worried about what I was able for and if I could manage with students around, but you've been great in general. It's been great to get to know a lot of you since Week 0. I won't re-hash all the same stuff again; the old An Focal issues are about for that.

Condoms are going well and SHAG week was quite the success with over 2,000 condoms gone out. The donations box with the condoms has raised €235 so far for the Raising and Giving Charities so keep on the safe sex route with ULSU and support the charities. We're still looking for ideas on how to raise money and the Irish Heart Foundation has been in to us about some stuff they can run as one of the charities. There'll be lots of volunteers needed so get in touch on SUGetInvolved@ul.ie to help.

Look out for yourselves, and each other

This time of year with the stress of exams and thinking about Christmas and family can get some people down. Check out www.pleasetalk.ie and follow the UL link for some details of the services available online and on campus. If you feel down or think a housemate or friend might be, ask them, and ask for help. It might seem trivial to you to ask, but each problem has its own solution and there's someone somewhere that can help overcome it. There are a lot of resources available online from the UL link on www.pleasetalk.ie that can help you to help a friend in need, so have a look.

During study and exams take some time to relax, take a walk in a group (if it ever stops raining), head for a coffee (keep up the caffeine if you're not allergic) or just do some general activity that isn't study and won't drive you nuts!

Grants

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and Dublin City Council are piloting a new method of grant payment that means they will pay the 30 of you affected by direct transfer rather than paying the University. You will have to register for your modules each semester as usual so that the University can confirm to the councils that they should pay you. This should result in a more efficient system and work to expedite the. For the moment this won't affect any of the rest of you unfortunately, though some councils are piloting similar schemes in other universities.

I'm going to be pushing this with a number of other Welfare Officers in the other universities to see how quickly we can get it rolled out in all the councils and VECs. I know a number of people are still waiting on payment 1 and I'm hoping to have a full list of those grant authorities this week so that I can spend some of early January hassling them!

Well done to Student Academic Admin for getting in on this scheme.

Have a great Christmas and good luck with exams!!

LET'S TALK SEX

Condoms are great. Not only do they stop you from getting pregnant or from contracting a painful STD, but they can also be a great way to inject fun into the bedroom. By that I don't mean by making balloon animals from them. No, I'm talking about all the different varieties condoms come in.

As you all know by now, you can pick up condoms in the Students' Union for a small donation to the Raising and Giving Charities. These condoms, which are made by Mojo, come in three different varieties. For the ones who like to feel everything we have thin skin condoms. For those who wish to try something new, we have two other types. The purple box contains ribbed condoms which, unsurprisingly, feature raised ribs on the outside of the condom. These will provide more pleasure for your lady friend. The condoms in the blue box are both dotted and ribbed. Like the ribbed ones, these condoms feature raised ribs and dots which provide even more pleasure.

Durex also supplies a variety of condoms from fruit flavoured condoms (which never taste like anything but latex) to warming condoms. In total Durex offers 12 different types of condoms; that's a lot of experimentation! Like the Mojo condoms, Durex's Pleasurmax condoms have

raised ribs and dots, the Sensation condoms feature over 500 raised dots and the Ribbed brand, well I'm sure you can figure out what they do. Durex also does a thin skinned condom, called the Elite. Similarly the Fetherlite condom is advertised as the thinnest condom on the market.

As previously mentioned Durex also offer banana, strawberry, orange or kiwi flavour condoms in their Flavours box. Those of you who like an extra sensation can try out the Tingle or Pleasure Warming brands which, shockingly, create a tingling or warming sensation when used. Finally, Durex also provide the Performa condom which is designed to help you last longer for when you want to go all night, the Comfort XL condom for those well endowed men, and the Extra Safe condom which is slightly thicker than other condoms.

While you may not be willing to go crazy in the bedroom, condoms are a great way to spice up your sex life and engage in some experimentation. They may also give you the confidence to experiment with other things, but until then why not call into the Union and pick up some ribbed or dotted condoms for that bit of extra pleasure. Don't forget to make a donation to the Raising and Giving Charities though!

Ed's Education

Welcome to week 13! For those of you, who have had the time to read this, let me say one thing; Stop procrastinating and get back to work!! (Don't worry, I'm joking)

There's a two page section on exams on pages 19 and 20 of this An Focal, which deals with I-Grades, study tips, relaxation tips, and exam regulations, etc, so have a read and you might learn something. Because of that, I thought I'd dedicate this column to wishing you all the

very best of luck with your exams. To all first years, don't worry they're not as scary as they seem and to fourth years, smile because this is the (second) last set of exams you'll ever have to do!

If anything does go wrong however, I'm here to help, advise and listen to rants. My contact details and mug shot are at the bottom of this column, so if you need me, you know where to find me. Best of luck again!

Email: Aoife.Finnerty@ul.ie
sueducation@ul.ie

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/SearchforULSUEducationOfficer>

Website: www.ulsu.ie

Phone: 061-213491
086-0435302

Office: SU Building
Turn right at reception
Last Office on the left



Aoife F. Education Officer

Campaigns and Services
Well lads/lasses that semester fairly flew by.

In the run up to exam's can I wish all of ye the best. Exams are a bitch. There's no two ways about it but they only last 3 hours max. All you can do is write down what ya know and pray to God it's right! Hope they go well for ye anyways.

Before ye go into exams make sure to wash off any writing on your hands as anything at all can be described as "unauthorised material" and could make you look like you're cheating when you're really not. We've had too many cases of people appearing in front of discipline because of a note on their hands and it's cost students their exams. Please be careful.

Once the exams are over it's easy street and a few weeks off for Christmas. Hope ye enjoy it. Travel around a bit to other colleges and see how good ye have it down here in UL! To those of ye lucky enough to be going on

Co-Op, fair play on getting jobs firstly, and secondly have a blast. Co-Op was one of the best times of me life in college. When you're not used to making money getting an injection into the bank account each week is a welcome change! Remember to keep a few bob for when ye come back to UL in September, ye'll need it! Cheers lads, and thanks for all the help throughout the last semester. Hope ye had as much craic as I did. Hopefully we'll have a few better acts on campus next semester and a Charity week to be proud of! If anyone has any thoughts on how to improve the Raise and Giving Week activities could ye send them on to me at sucso@ul.ie

Nollaig Shona Daoibh Go Léir!

Ferg

STRESSBUSTERS - Exam Help

The *honest* guide to studying

- 9.00** – Alarm goes off. Decide it's better to be well rested and go back to sleep.
- 12.00** – Wake up, shower and get dressed.
- 12.45** – Get breakfast/lunch/brunch because you can't study on an empty stomach.
- 13.25** – You're downstairs so you may as well watch Home & Away.
- 13.55** – Time to study!
- 14.00** – Clean your room because you can't study in a messy environment.
- 14.40** – You need snacks to sustain yourself so head to the shops before you start studying.
- 15.10** – Return from shops. Time to study!
- 15.15** – Organise notes by subject and topic. Colour code them for easy reference.
- 15.45** – Check email and Facebook.
- 15.55** – Check student email in case lecturer sent on any extra notes.
- 16.00** – Check Facebook again and chat with friend about how studying sucks.
- 16.20** – Time to study!
- 16.25** – Print off past exam papers for all subjects.
- 16.40** – Try and find pattern in past exam papers.
- 16.55** – Fail to find a pattern. Start doing exam question instead using colour coded notes.
- 17.45** – Start an exam question.
- 18.00** – Time for a break!
- 18.30** – Watch Home & Away in case you missed anything earlier.
- 19.00** – Time to study!
- 19.10** – You can't study without a timetable so you make one.
- 19.30** – Finish colour coded study timetable.
- 19.35** – Check email and Facebook. See roommate/neighbour/friend is online.
- 19.40** – Visit roommate/neighbour/friend to bitch about studying.
- 20.10** – Time to study!
- 20.15** – Complete two exam questions.
- 22.30** – You need an early night so you can study well tomorrow especially as you're going to do loads.
- 22.35** – Check email and Facebook quickly.
- 01.00** – Sign off Facebook and go to bed.

What if I can't sit my exams and it's not my fault??

If a student is sick, bereaved or in poor mental health during exams, then the University can grant an I-Grade. I-Grade stands for "Incomplete Grade". It has the effect of deferring a student's exam(s) or coursework, until the student is able to take it/them on, often until the repeat period the following August.

I-Grades are only given in severe circumstances, however this should not deter you from applying, if you feel you really need one. If you don't know how to go about applying for an I-Grade, read on...

Illness:

If you are ill and have been seen by your own GP, medical certs from that doctor must be presented to the UL Medical Centre for applications and approval. Alternatively, if you present at the Medical Centre with symptoms, your I-Grade application can be processed there. Once you appear there or contact the centre, the staff can talk you through the steps

necessary in order to obtain an I-Grade. The Medical Centre can be contacted on 061-202534.

Mental Health:

For mental health issues, contact Student Counselling on 061-202327. There is an application process, which can be explained to you on arrival/contact. I-Grades will not be given for exam-related stress, but for diagnosed mental health issues.

Bereavement:

For bereavements contact Fr. Koenraad Van Gucht. As with all I-Grade applications, there is a process, which Fr. Koenraad can talk you through. He can be contacted on Koenraad.vangucht@ul.ie or on 061- 202180 (on-campus) or 061- 330268 (off-campus).

Only apply for an I-Grade if you genuinely need one. Abuse of this system only makes it harder for genuine cases.

Exam Regulations – the basic bullets:

- The University is very strict when it comes to what's called *authorised* and *unauthorised material*.
 - Essentially, **authorised material** is anything that students are permitted to have during an exam.
 - For example authorised materials would be the exam script and rough work paper, which are given by the invigilators. It could be non-programmable calculators (if necessary) and anything else that the lecturer has cited as necessary for the exam, including dictionaries, reference texts, books, etc.
 - There **cannot** be any writing on authorised materials, unless expressly permitted by the lecturer.
 - Students are not permitted to write anywhere other than on the exam scripts, rough work paper or the question paper.
 - Unauthorised** material could include notes of any kind, writing material that has not provided by the invigilators (even if there is no writing on it!), **writing or markings** on any part of the body or clothing, electronic devices including mobile phones and any extra material that has not been expressly permitted by the lecturer.
- So to avoid being accused of a breach in regulations, which could amount to cheating**
- WELD:**
 - Wash** your hands of any marks or writing
 - Ensure** that your calculator and other materials are compliant with regulations
 - Leave** your phone off in your bag or by your desk
 - Don't have anything** on your desk that hasn't been expressly permitted by your lecturer or the invigilators
- Best of luck from ULSU!**

The Famous 5 to avoid Failure:

5. **Eat a small meal before your exam**
It's very difficult to concentrate on an exam with no food in your system. According to all those Kellogg's ads a couple of years back, the children who had eaten breakfast had much better concentration than those who hadn't. So listen to the corporate propaganda (and some scientific studies!) and have a snack. For those of you who find it tough to eat because of nerves, try having very small amounts regularly.
4. **Check how long your exam is**
It sounds stupid but thinking you have more time than you have, happens to so many people each year. So be smart because there's a big difference between two hours and two and a half!
3. **Make sure you have your student ID card**
Each year, countless students are seen sprinting through the corridors of the Main Building in an attempt to make it to SAA and back before their exam starts. If you don't want an added layer of stress going into your exams, don't be one of them!
2. **Wash your hands**
Not only can it help you to avoid Swine Flu, but it can also help you to avoid an appearance in front of the University Discipline Committee for breach of Academic Regulations (formerly Academic Cheating). Take a look at the photos and other articles for more information.
1. **Attempt everything**
Teachers said it in the Leaving Cert and it hasn't really changed all that much; you're a hell of a lot more likely to get marks for writing something than you will for a blank page!
Even if you think you know nothing, you might know something.
So if you're not as prepared as you thought you were, take a breath, think back and do your best to write something relevant.
Even if you think you're waffling, you might be doing ok.

Study Tips:

- **Start small**

If you find the amount of study that you have to do overwhelming, then start at the very beginning. There's no sense trying to learn the most complicated elements without knowing the basics.

- **Eat regularly and healthily**

It can be really tempting to eat take aways and microwavable meals when you're studying because you don't have the time to cook good food, but often the quickest food is the worst for you and your concentration. So start planning early!

If you've a bit of time this week cook a couple of meals and freeze them. Most things freeze and it's just as easy to microwave a home-cooked meal as it is to microwave a shop bought one. As well as that, if you

live in a house/apartment with a couple of people, take turns cooking dinner. Things like omelettes and pasta bakes with loads of vegetables are a really good foods to keep you going during exams and they're very easy and quick to make.

- **Study in groups**

If you and a group of your friends want an easy and relatively fun way of studying, then study together. You can pick up loads of tips and information from

- **Take regular breaks**

It's really important to take regular breaks during study. The human brain can only take in so much, so if you've had that feeling that "nothing is going in", now you know why. Breaks that include brisk walks, a short jog,

or any form of exercise are the best as they increase blood flow and alertness. So if nothing is going in, go out

- **Identify your learning style**

Identifying whether you study better by listening, reading or kinesthetics (moving, touching, writing and doing) can really aid your study. There's no point trying to force yourself to learn in a way that doesn't suit you.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning offers a quiz that will help you figure out your learning style on their website. So for example, if you learn better by listening, then why not record yourself speaking your notes – ok you'll feel a bit silly but it could really help your learning!



Contact sueducation@ul.ie for more info

TaeKwonDo 101

By Elena Stavenschi

I HAVE always been fascinated by martial arts and how discipline, respect, training and motivation can create a strong individual who can face tough challenges with confidence.

Enrolling at the University of Limerick gave me a chance to join many martial clubs, but I chose TaeKwonDo mainly because my brother does it and it looked like loads of fun.

When the training begun, honestly, I was not prepared for all the laughs, the rush of adrenalin or the long work outs! However, the satisfaction you get from feeling the aches next morning from all the stretching & training, I must say is very rewarding!

No pain, no gain!

All the training & work-outs build up a good fitness level, enabling the person to execute the TaeKwonDo techniques with ease, confidence, power and speed.

Exercises vary from the usual push ups, pull ups & Hindu squats to the slightly more exotic and funny exercises: the duck walk, caterpillar crawls and frog hops, to name but a few.

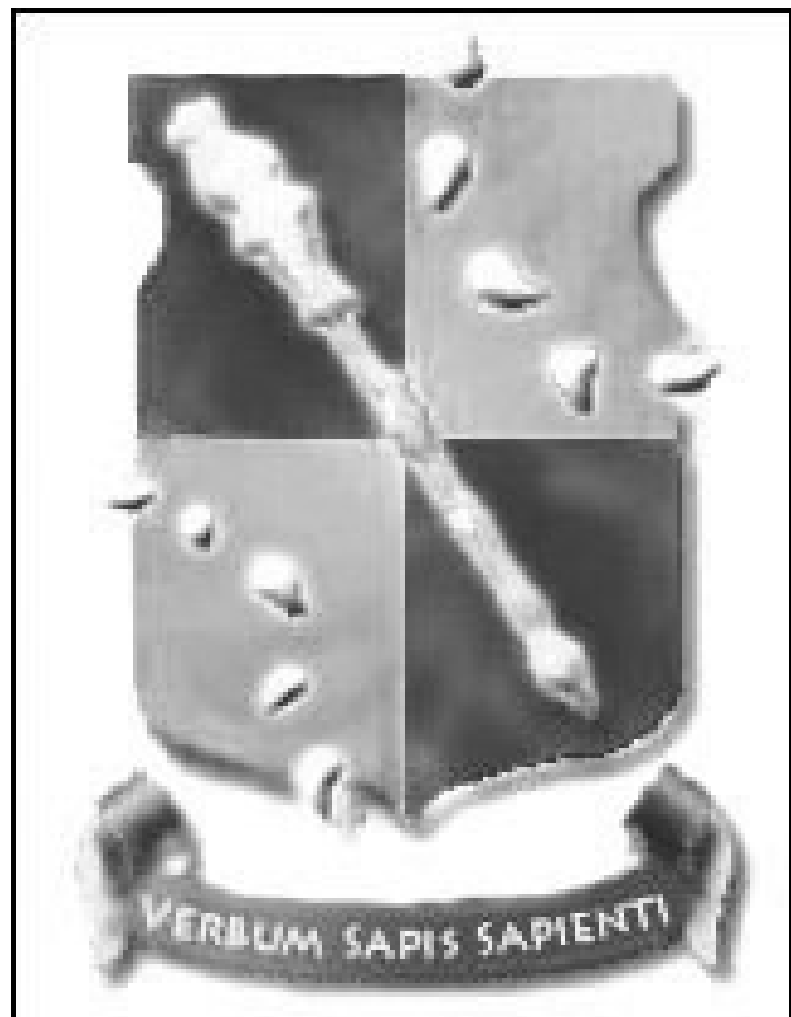
This is typically followed then by some more stretching where the moans start to crack even our trainers' attention. Who would not at least giggle in this situation? This is usually followed by the

martial arts stuff; kicking, boxing, pad work, traditional technique, sparring, ground fighting or indeed whatever is the flavour of the week.

However, back to business, the club will have a grading shortly with the beginners grading for their yellow belts. The testing will cover all the material on the curriculum for the members, including the execution of a 19 move hyung (pattern) called "Chonji", which means "Heaven and Earth" in Korean.

But, there is more excitement to come for the TaeKwonDo club. There is a trip planned on 6 November to Glasgow to train with Master Kirkwood and his club in Blantyre over that weekend. In addition, UL TKDO have a proposed trip to Korea during Easter next semester which I have to say, everyone is very excited about! Tae Kwon Do club has been a joy to attend for many reasons, new friends, fun, improving fitness level, self defence and showing off to the lads that girls can kick ass!

UL TaeKwonDo Club train in the gym in the PESS Building 3 nights a week: - Monday at 6:45pm, Wednesday at 9pm and Thursday at 6:45pm. Beginner members are always welcome. For more information, contact the club at ul.taekwondo@gmail.com.



De b U d i s c u s s t h e f u t u r e o f S e a n a d

By Stephen Byrne

Jonathan Swift theatre recently played host to the long awaited debate on the future of Seanad Éireann, hosted by the University's debating union.

Guest speaker Daniel K, Sullivan, a former Seanad Candidate and current political blogger, made an appearance to bring his vast knowledge in the area to the fore.

A mixture of student and guest speakers spoke on the night, including Mr Sullivan and Ógra Fianna Fáil member, Eamonn Quinlan, who spoke on the opposition side.

The debate opened with some fiery rhetoric from the first

speaker on the proposition, Darragh Roche, who condemned the "jobs for the boys" nature of the second house of parliament. Maurice Cotter opened the case for the opposition with his more laid back attitude, followed by Mr Sullivan who proposed a reform of the house.

He also suggested that the Seanad was necessary for prolonged debate on legislation and for the representation of certain groups; be these social interest groups or "The Vintners association".

Another notable moment of the evening was student David Hartery's speech which was

spoken with such passion, and raised many interesting points.

Mr. Hartery noted that the freedom of the press and the Dáil were themselves sufficient for debate and there should be no economic reason to hold on to the Seanad.

There were some excellent speeches from UL students such as Eamonn Quinlan and Lorcan O' Neill and some great questions and discussion when the Union's auditor Ms. Una O' Grady opened the motion to the floor.

A good evening was had by all.

DevSoc members meet United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Members of newest society on campus, UL Development Society, travelled to Dublin on Friday November 21st to attend the Department of Foreign Affairs Annual Forum on Human Rights.

DevSoc aims to raise awareness of development, global justice and human rights issues by creating an objective forum for their exploration and debate. In addition the society hopes to encourage students to actively contribute to the local and global community by volunteering. So the forum was a brilliant opportunity for students to hear government officials, activists

and leaders of NGOs (non governmental organisations - usually charities) speak out about the current challenges in promoting human rights at home, abroad and within the UN system. Speakers included leading members of Amnesty International, Dignity International, Trocaire, Human Rights Watch, Irish Aid and Frontline.

The keynote address was given by Ms. Pillay, U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights whose distinguished career included acting as an attorney for anti-apartheid protestors and a spell in the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Following the forum, members

enjoyed a meal out and the film "Welcome" which deals with the issue of the treatment of illegal immigrants in France. The trip was also used to establish links both with Suas, a charity providing opportunities for Irish students to volunteer abroad, and with other development societies from Galway, Dublin and Cork.

DevSoc meetings are held on Mondays at 6pm in room ERO008. Forthcoming projects include microfinance (great experience for Business Students!), Fair Trade, debates, film nights, human rights (Come on Law students!) and opportunities to volunteer

locally and abroad (for students with a taste for adventure and a desire to make a difference!).

So get involved, meet new people from all walks of life and do something you can be proud of, whilst picking up valuable skills for when you hit the real world!

If you are interested in finding out more on development, human rights and global justice our contact details are:

Email: uldevsoc@gmail.com

Twitter: UL DevSoc

Facebook: DevSoc University of Limerick

Google page: google.com/profiles/uldevsoc

Cork Open 2009

By Shane Austin

ON THE weekend of Saturday, 31 October and Sunday, 1 November, University College Cork Ultimate hosted the first major Irish Ultimate Frisbee Tournament of the season. Being an open tournament 24 teams representing clubs and universities from all over Ireland and Europe descended on Cork for a huge weekend of ultimate and partying alike.

UL's team, known as the Ninjas, took a semi experienced development team of 15 players to Cork. With only five of the squad having ever represented the university in a full tournament the hope was to gain some invaluable experience for the improvement of the whole team.

In the first match U.L came up against an experienced team known this year as "Jerk Factory". For the beginners in the team this was their first taste of high level competitive ultimate and it didn't disappoint. In a very tight game where UL were at one point trailing 5-7 the team showed great resilience to come back and win the first game 10-7.

The next match was against a strong Belfast based team named "BUG". This was always going to be a tough match and even though UL scored first Bug turned on the style and came out 2-13 victors. It was a little disappointing that the score was so one sided as it did not represent the full run of play. UL had a chance to pick themselves up in the next game against the Trinity 2nd Team. Even though the match got off to a slow start UL began to dominate and came out with a conclusive 13-4 win.

This left UL placed 2nd in the group and their crossover match brought them up against a Belgian team named "Gentel". This was a must win game in order to be in the running for the plate to be competed for on the Sunday. This was a very long and tiring match with never more than 2 points separating the teams until the very end. There was great defensive play throughout the match with impressive D's by Noel Collins, Harry Miller and David Bermingham and this was matched on

offense with Patrick Hayden assisting 6 points and Niall McCarthy scoring 5. UL managed to edge ahead and came out 15-11 winners to cap off a very successful first day.

The next morning with sore heads and aching bodies after the first days play and Halloween festivities put on by the tournament organisers, UL took to a waterlogged pitch to play against DCU. In terrible conditions both teams struggled to find top gear but doggedly battling to the end U.L were pipped at the post to lose 11-9 unfortunately putting them out of contention for the plate. As the wind picked up the playing got harder and UL were up against an Italian Team named "Frasba Dal Lac". The match again could have gone either way trading point for point all game until in the end Frasba edged it with an 8-10 victory. This left the final match the 15th place play-off against the Irish based club team "Jabba the Huck". UL were in the driving seat for most of the match playing some strong Ultimate against a good team and took an 8-4 lead. Jabba changed their game plan and applied a very strong defensive strategy that UL found very difficult to break down. This proved to be very effective and Jabba got right back in the game to sneak an 8-9 victory. In the final Irish team "Broccoli" defeated Belgian team "Fuf" in a great match to win the tournament. Overall U.L finished 16th with Daragh Kelleher winning MVP. The improvement in the team over the weekend has been beyond anyone's expectations. With this the Ninjas have developed an excellent basis to make a real impact when it comes around to intervarsities. Well done to all involved.

Squad - Jim Heneghan, Patrick Hayden, John Walshe, Daragh Kelleher, Phil O'Duffy, Shane Austin, Brian Hoelting, Harry Miller, Max Vizard, Niall McCarthy, Noel Collins, David Bermingham, Conor Carey, Cathal Phelan and Patrick Moran.

N.B If you would like to know more about Ultimate Frisbee or join the U.L team visit: <http://ul-ultimate.110mb.com/main.php>.

Winning feeling for UL soccer

By Tomás McCarthy - Sports Editor

IN THE past fortnight both the men's and ladies' soccer teams have kept their seasons on track maintaining that winning habit on home soil.

UL 4-2 Colaiste Stiofan Naofa

The UL men's soccer team maintained their positive start in the Colleges and Universities Football League by defeating Colaiste Stiofan Naofa on 11 November on the ten acres pitch. It was an entertaining game with the Cork side showing plenty of ambition and skill despite their lowly position in the league. UL through injury, illness and also from players being in class only had a squad of 14 but in the end they just had too much class for CSN.

UL had slightly the better of the opening exchanges with John O'Leary and David McGrath looking lively. In spite of this CSN took the lead three minutes before the break. Some good work down the left wing and some sloppy defending allowed CSN striker Kenny O'Leary to tap home from a low cross. Almost immediately the home side responded. A cross from Jamie Richardson found the head of David McGrath who flicked the ball to the bottom corner of the net. Finally it seemed like UL were going to impose themselves on the game.

Instead they made a lazy start to the second half and CSN retook the lead on 53 minutes again through O'Leary. However, just like the first half, CSN lost their advantage within a minute. This time it was Paul Walsh with the header at the back post and UL were back level. CSN were stunned and UL compounded their misery moments later with a memorable goal. Paul Walsh took the ball down the left wing before finding Richardson at the edge of the box and he somehow flicked the ball through to John O'Leary who found a precision first time finish beyond the advancing keeper.

UL now looked comfortable but got a warning when CSN had a penalty appeal denied. The introduction of Cian Tobin

shored up a sometimes shaky defence and his partnership with Dan Goggin held firm. The win was sealed with another header eleven minutes from time. Brendan Daly swung in a free kick from the right for Richardson to head home.

UL found the gears when they needed to against the plucky Cork visitors but manager Trevor Lovell knows that this team can improve further and tidy up the weaknesses shown in this game.

UL Ladies 10-1 Sligo IT

The UL ladies soccer team sent out a strong message to their rivals by hammering Sligo in Week 10. It was a ruthless display in which the Sligo team were terrorised from first minute to last. UL lead 5-1 at the break and added another five in the second period. Six different players got on the scoresheet. Jenny Critchley fired a hat trick, Aoife Herbert and Richael O'Brien helped themselves to two as Kacey O'Driscoll, Karen Duggan and Julie Ann Russell also found the net.

Duggan's strike in the second half was the pick of the bunch and would not have looked out of place in a Premier League goal of the month competition. From 25 yards out Duggan launched a sweet strike into the roof of the net past the helpless Sligo keeper. At that stage, in the middle of the second half, it was already a rout but Duggan's goal sprinkled a bit of magic on it.

The UL work rate though was just as impressive as their attacking play. This was best exemplified by Aoife Herbert on the left side of the UL front three. The Mayo woman tracked back as eagerly as she went forward and made some solid tackles. Another noteworthy aspect was how comfortable every player was with the ball at their feet and also with the system UL adopt.

Even the subs that were introduced blended seamlessly into the side. Tougher challenges lie ahead but even at this early stage of this season the UL team seems more than capable of coping with them.

Match Reports

Senior hurlers ease past DIT

By Enda Dowling

THE senior hurlers booked themselves a place in the league semi-final after a hugely impressive win over DIT on pitch one in Week 11. UL showed complete dominance easing to a twelve point victory over a DIT team, which boasted such talent as Mullinavat's Willie O'Dwyer and Tullogher's Pat Hartley.

Despite hurling into a strong wind in the first half, UL started sprightly and raised the first white flag from an Andrew Quinn free. DIT drew matters level thanks to a great score from half forward Paul Schutez. The teams wouldn't be level for long as Seamus Hickey won possession out around the 45 and decided to take the DIT defence on. A great hand-pass to Michael Heffernan from Hickey and a magnificent shot on goal from the corner forward opened up a three point lead. DIT brought themselves back into the game, taking advantage of some poor short puck outs with points from Paul Morris, Willie O'Dwyer and a free from Declan O'Dwyer. Ultimately, DIT failed to make use of the wind in the first half, registering more wides than scores. DIT's short spell was ended by a great over the shoulder point from Andrew Quinn and a long range free from Brian Carroll.

Another pointed free from Declan O'Dwyer for DIT couldn't stop UL upping the gears. Jack Dempsey's short puck-out routine started to find it's rhythm on a tiring DIT forward line, and great individual points from Joe Brennan and corner back Brian Fox gave UL a 1-6 to 0-5 lead at half-time.

At the break Brian Carroll called for his fellow players to keep the intensity high and they didn't disappoint. Michael Heffernan continued to look lively and was the first to point for UL in the second half. DIT responded with another free from Declan O'Dwyer, and a great effort from Willie O'Dwyer, who

shook off two UL defenders before pointing. UL then started to pull away a string of unanswered points from Quinn, Hickey, Brennan and David Burke.

Two further Declan O'Dwyer frees for DIT rounded off his own personal tally of seven points before UL half back Kieran Joyce pointed from inside his own half. In the space of two minutes both teams traded goals with Jim O'Connell netting for DIT and Pdraig O'Murchu raising the green flag for UL moments after replacing Andrew Quinn.

DIT then concentrated on finding goals to get themselves back into the match but were denied on two separate occasions by James Dempsey between the posts, and gallant defending by Martin Walsh who gave a superb performance

at cornerback. Points from Carroll, Burke and two from impact substitute Ryan O'Dwyer topped off a great team performance by UL.

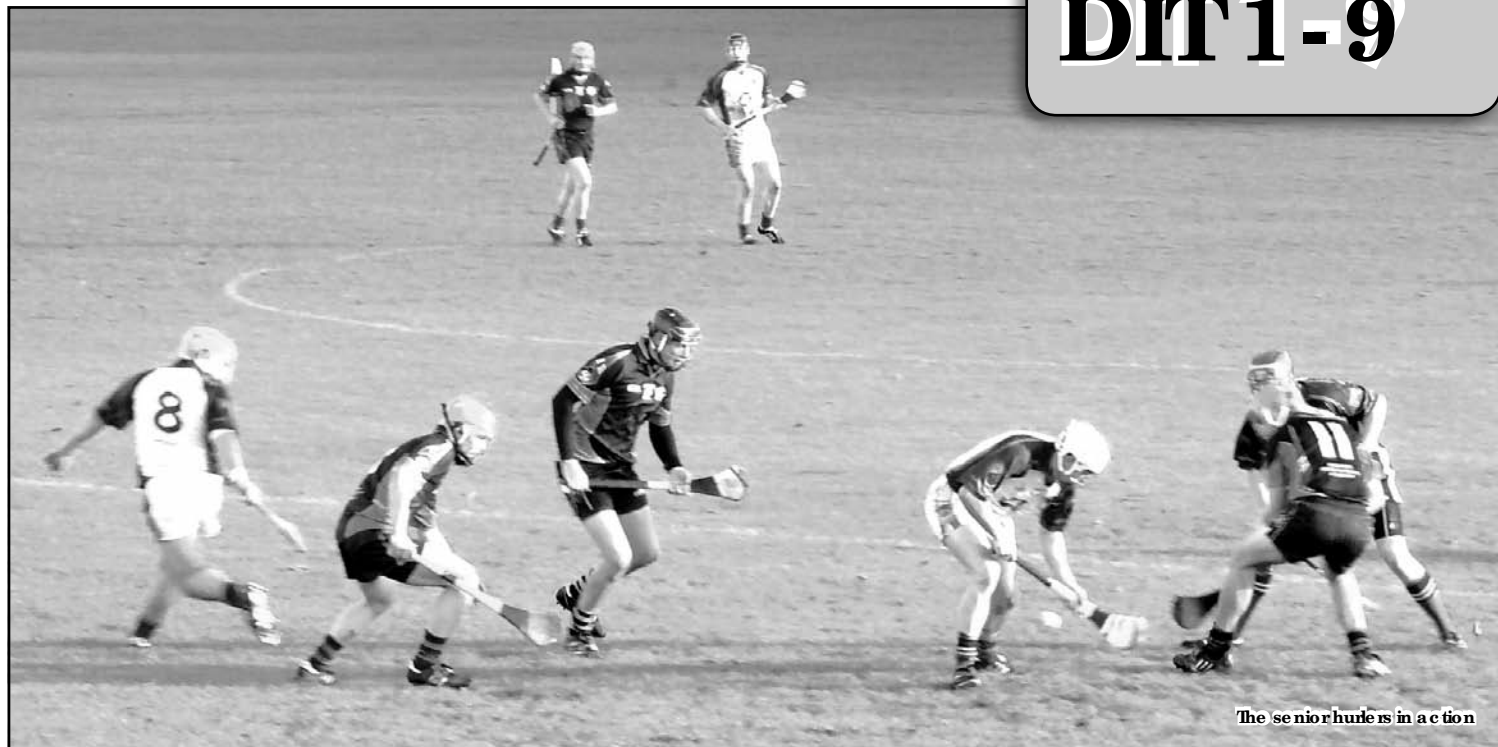
UL: James Dempsey, Brian Fox (0-1) Michael Malone Martin Walsh KieranJoyce (0-1) Lester Ryan Dylan Hayden David Burke (0-2) Brian Carroll (0-3 2f) Noel O'Murchu Seamus Hickey (0-3) Stephen Quinn Joe Brennan (0-2) Andrew Quinn (0-3 2f) Michael Heffernan (1-1).

Subs: Paddy Stapleton for Seamus Hickey 43mins, Pdraig O'Murchu(1-0) for Andrew Quinn 50mins, Kevin Fox for Dylan Hayden 52mins, Ryan O'Dwyer(0-2) for Stephen Quinn 30mins

DIT: Finn McCorry Paul Tansey Pdraig Donnelly James O'Hara Peter Kelly Pat Hartley Pat Lynch Eoin Costello Frank Cullen Paul Schutez (0-1) Willie O'Dwyer (0-3) Declan O'Dwyer (0-4 4f) Paul Morris (0-1) Jim O'Connell (1-0) Tom Maloney.

Subs: Ciaran Brennan, Martin O'Sullivan, Pdraig Phelan, David Tierney, Paul Ryan

UL 2-18
DIT 1-9



Limerick derby fails to fire

UL 1-17
LIT 0-17

By Eoin King

IN A game which lacked the bite of previous encounters, UL beat LIT by a goal in an entertaining and skilful game of hurling. LIT were without some big name players, such as Joe Canning and Seamus Callinan. Once again both teams offer huge promise for the Fitzgibbon competition.

Despite the familiarity these teams have of each other, the game remained free of any nastiness or unsavoury incidents. This game, however, should not serve as an indicator of

what may happen should these two teams meet in the Fitzgibbon competition. The intensity levels were well below the optimum.

For a November clash the pace of the match was as brisk as one could hope for. UL were quickest to the ball in the opening few minutes and registered the deciding score ninety seconds in when Burke swivelled and hammered the ball to the roof of the net after good build up play that began in the half back line. All good play in the first half usually originated from the stalwarts as Seamus Hickey dominated from centre back, and Brian Carroll linked up the play nicely from midfield. Quinn, who was steady throughout, finished a great move on the quarter hour after receiving a deft handpass from Carroll. LIT, however kept pace from then on, helped mainly by some monster frees from Gaffney. The scores were 1-09 to 0-09 at the interval as Hickey and Carroll got UL's final two points of the half.

LIT quickly came out in the second half to

reduce the scores after points from Dalton and O'Brien. However, UL answered back with three points in a row. Walsh, who was an integral part in keeping LIT at bay in the second half, put over the first after good play once more from Hickey. That was followed by tidy scores from Heffernan and Burke. LIT found little joy from their full forward line for most of the second half but were once more aided by Gaffney's free taking as he sent over three in quick succession to leave UL ahead by two with ten minutes remaining. It was quickly four points after Quinn tacked on his final two points. The final minutes never appeared frantic as UL had little trouble in holding out for the victory. The triangle of Fox, Joyce and Hickey stood up to the task in the final minutes. Walsh registered the final point for UL with minutes remaining with a great point from out near the sideline. All in all, both teams will be reasonably content with the displays. UL got a good tune up for their league quarter final

without hitting full throttle. And any win over LIT is a good day!

LIT: Matthew Ryan; Colm Nelson, Ronan Sherlock, Noel Quirke; John O'Riordan (0-01), Enda Harrison, John O'Keefe; Paul Browne, Adrian Ryan (0-02); Paudie O'Brien (0-02), Martin Duggan, Mark Earley (0-01); Timmy Dalton (0-03), Bernard Gaffney (0-07 5f), Eoin Sheil.

Subs: Brian Glynn, Ronan Mullane, Paul Murray.

UL: James Dempsey; Brian Fox, Kieran Joyce, Martin Walsh (0-02); Michael Malone, Seamus Hickey (0-01), Dylan Hayden; Brian Carroll (0-02 f), Patrick Cronin (0-02); David Burke (1-02), John Devane, Noel O'Murchu; Michael Heffernan (0-02), Andrew Quinn (0-07 2f), Daniel Currans.

Subs: Thomas Lowery, Shane Fenlon, Donagh Stack, David Lynch.

The Optimism Point

By Kevin McNamara

LIKE any Fourth Year student can imagine, the holiday period can be made or break time for an assault on the Final Year Project. Surrounded by a wall of books, Jstor articles and the endless list of 'To do's', there is always that moment where one argues with their soul about preparation, strategy or why you picked the bloody topic in the first place?!

Across the water, questions of this nature are asked every day by the managers and fans of Premier League clubs as Christmas marks a crucial moment in the title challenge at the top and intensifies the relegation dogfight at the bottom. Despite my colleague in the Gossip Department claiming there is

always a "bit of truth in a rumor", I would prefer to report on the full facts rather than the Utopian-style tales of Briarfield. The notion that each of the "Top Three" have at least five games to play in four weeks shows that many soft points can be won and lost in a short period of time and should bring to light the contenders for the Premier League crown. So for the Champions, four home fixtures and two away games to Fulham and Hull City should finely tune the team for the vintage performances that always seems to come after the holiday season.

On the other hand, Chelsea are in explosive form of late and look to strengthen their five point lead at the top of the table with possible

new signings in the January transfer window. With Ancelotti's team losing Michael Essien, Didier Drogba and Salomon Kalou to the African Cup of Nations next month, a golden opportunity cannot be missed to bring in players, especially with a lift in the transfer ban for the January sales. In the Arsenal ranks, Van Persie's trip to Belgrade for horse placenta treatment proves to all how desperate Wenger needs the star as his absence was duly noted in "The Gunners" first defeat in six to Sunderland at the Stadium of Light.

At the other end of the spectrum, the clubs fighting to retain Premier League status have history to battle with, as only one club has

avoided relegation in seventeen years when bottom at Christmas. However, with only eight points separating mid-table Fulham and rock-bottom club Portsmouth, few can predict how important the next couple of weeks will be with games such as Hull vs Blackburn and Wigan vs Birmingham going either way.

For those who are worried or anxious about the pending workload over the Christmas break, one has to look no further than "Tigers" manager, Phil Brown, for peace of mind as only three wins since last December has left even him wondering how he still has a job. Even with an FYP to do, sometime the grass is just greener on your own side.

Ireland look forward to Poland and Ukraine

By Daniel Bridge

ENGLAND fans have been complaining about it for 23 years now, and now we have one of our very own moan. By this I mean a massive sense of injustice from an official in a huge match after a handball from a world-class footballer.

By the time you get to read this, it will be at least two weeks since the match, but I'm writing this while the match is still fresh in my mind. To be completely honest, I'm absolutely raging. Not only because of Thierry Henry's shameful act of cheating, but the fact that the referee, Martin Hansson, seemed to be lacking a pair of glasses. On plenty of occasions he waved away clear free kicks. I'm not accusing him of going out to purposely do this but the thing is he probably did it subconsciously. That is understandable on a certain level but on another it is impossible to see how a professional referee cannot stay neutral in a game of such importance.

FIFA moved the goalposts. They changed the rules regarding seedings for the playoffs when they realised that "The Big-Boys" may just miss out on the World Cup and FIFA saw their cash cow rushing out of the barn. FIFA ran out to keep them in with the best shot of qualifying. France, Russia, Greece and Portugal were all saved, it seemed to FIFA. Now that Russia have been knocked out, FIFA's plan seems to have failed, but 3 out of 4 ain't bad, hey?

Had Ireland gone into Paris and gotten hammered and outplayed by the French, I wouldn't have minded so much as coming so close and falling just short. Under Trapattoni, we've seen plenty of dull, boring football. The French team was packed full of Champions League players while Irish players are mainly mid-table or relegation Premier League standard players, yet Ireland completely outplayed their opposition. So,

next up is qualification for the Euro 2012 in Poland and Ukraine, and the outlook is positive, especially if the same approach is taken by Trap in regards the new style of play. The main problem in this campaign was the omission of many good players and that poor players were chosen in squads. Players like Chris McCann, Owen Garvan, Stephen McPhail, Wes Hoolahan, Sean Scannell and Willo Flood could all have done a good job for Ireland while guys like Martin Rowlands and Liam Miller were picked.

The future looks bright with potential stars in the shape of Conor Clifford, Sean Scannell, James McCarthy and Barry Maguire. Ah and sure I haven't even mentioned Stephen Ireland yet!

Injuries have also been a part of this campaign, with Damien Duff, Steve Finnian and Steven Reid all being injury-stricken.

The next campaign could well be our best chance of getting into our first major championship since 2002. However, that opinion may be partly down to the wearing of green-tinted glasses.

Team for Euro 2012 qualifiers:

GK: Shay Given **RB:** John O'Shea **CB:** Sean St. Ledger; Richard Dunne **LB:** Kevin Kilbane **RM:** Liam Lawrence **CM:** Glenn Whelan; Steven Reid **LM:** Damien Duff **CF:** Robbie Keane; Kevin Doyle.

Team for World Cup 2014 qualifiers:

GK: Brian Murphy **RB:** Eddie Nolan/ Kevin Foley **CB:** Alex Bruce/ Darren O'Dea/ Sean St. Ledger; Richard Dunne **LB:** Stephen O'Halloran **RM:** Sean Scannell **CM:** Chris McCann; Owen Garvan **LM:** Aiden McGeady **CF:** Robbie Keane; Kevin Doyle



Irish Captain Robbie Keane

ULrugby beaten by the water and the IT

By David McMahon

THE elements conspired to ruin UL's plans from the very beginning on Wednesday of Week 9 as the much hyped return of UL rugby to the bowl was cancelled. Instead UL Bohemians ground in Annacotty provided the venue for this Division One match against Waterford institute.

UL started well in dreadful conditions and exchanged penalty goals with WIT in what was an excellent opening 30 minutes from the home side. An unconverted try by the visitors just before half time made the score 8-6 with UL still in touch thanks to another penalty.

WIT came out from the break with new vigour and proceeded to press the advantage gained in the first half. Their second try proved ominous as the visitors went through a phase of dominance. UL had a resurgence of sorts threatening the WIT try line a number of times and were unlucky not to come away with points. Excellent scrummaging from the Limerick pack kept the visitors under pressure and they failed to get a good attacking platform from the scrum. The already struggling Waterford scrum was given another blow when UL head coach Mike Storey made an appearance after 60 minutes.

The gaffer made his presence known in the front row and around the field.

An example of heart and determination was evident in every tackle as UL defended valiantly. It seemed to the 20 plus spectators that UL would have thrived in better conditions and this bodes well for the next phase of the season in the spring. Final score 39-6 to WIT with 5 tries (4 converted) and 2 penalties from WIT to 2 penalties from UL.

Cunningham planning for the long term



By Liam Toghher

UL SENIOR hurling manager Ger Cunningham expressed his delight with the team's progress after their resounding victory over DIT at Pitch 1 in the league quarter-final. A solid performance from the home team took the Limerick side into the last four and momentum is slowly beginning to gather ahead of a critical three months for the team.

"I must say I was quite happy with today's performance," said Cunningham after the match. "All we want to do is play matches. It was a huge surprise for us to be at this stage of the league because we only won one match in the group stage and we got through on score difference. We didn't even start proper training until this morning so the game was a bonus really. I wouldn't place any major emphasis on the result but we're still getting through."

Cunningham also alluded to the experimentation carried out by his management team for the DIT game, which included Seamus Hickey playing at centre-forward. "We're just having a look at a few lads. Obviously we have to be training them because we've lost a few lads from last year and we're looking to see if we can get more out of playing lads in different positions. We're using the league as grounds to experiment and now we're in a semi-final next week which we certainly hadn't planned on a few weeks ago".

However, Cunningham also knows that there were some glitches to sort out ahead of the bigger challenges to come. UL tried using quick puck-outs and a short hand-passing game that

looked iffy at times. "Physically we're a small team. We have light players and hurling is a possession game. That was the strategy behind our tactics.

I'm going to keep using it in the league games and I've the sub-goalie behind the goals to give our keeper quick ball. I want to instil some confidence in the lads doing this and when it comes to the championship, we will be able to do it. Conditions were terrible today, too, and to be fair, running the ball from our full-back line would be kamikaze stuff."

Cunningham has had to reconstruct his team due to a number of changes in personnel and he also wants to create a stronger unity both on and off the pitch. "Mike Malone is a find and we're delighted to have him. Also we know the calibre of hurling that Andrew Quinn is capable of. You have John Devane, who wasn't playing today. Paddy Stapleton came on in the second half. We've to try and blend all these lads, both on the field and off the field. We found that was a huge problem last year. We went to a Fitzgibbon weekend and some lads didn't know each other. That is one of the major stumbling blocks we've to try and overcome."

On the evidence of this showing, his wish for a tight-knit UL unit seems to be materialising nicely. Once the high-tempo tactics become second nature to the players we may see this team become even more difficult to beat. Cunningham can now plan for a busy few weeks comfortable in the knowledge that his master plan is slowly but surely bearing fruit.

Darts club hold off An Focal challenge

By Tomás McCarthy - Sports Editor

ON THE night of 17 November An Focal Sport entered the Sports Bar to bravely take on the UL darts club in a challenge game. While many of the sports team could emerge with some pride the spoils resided with the experts.

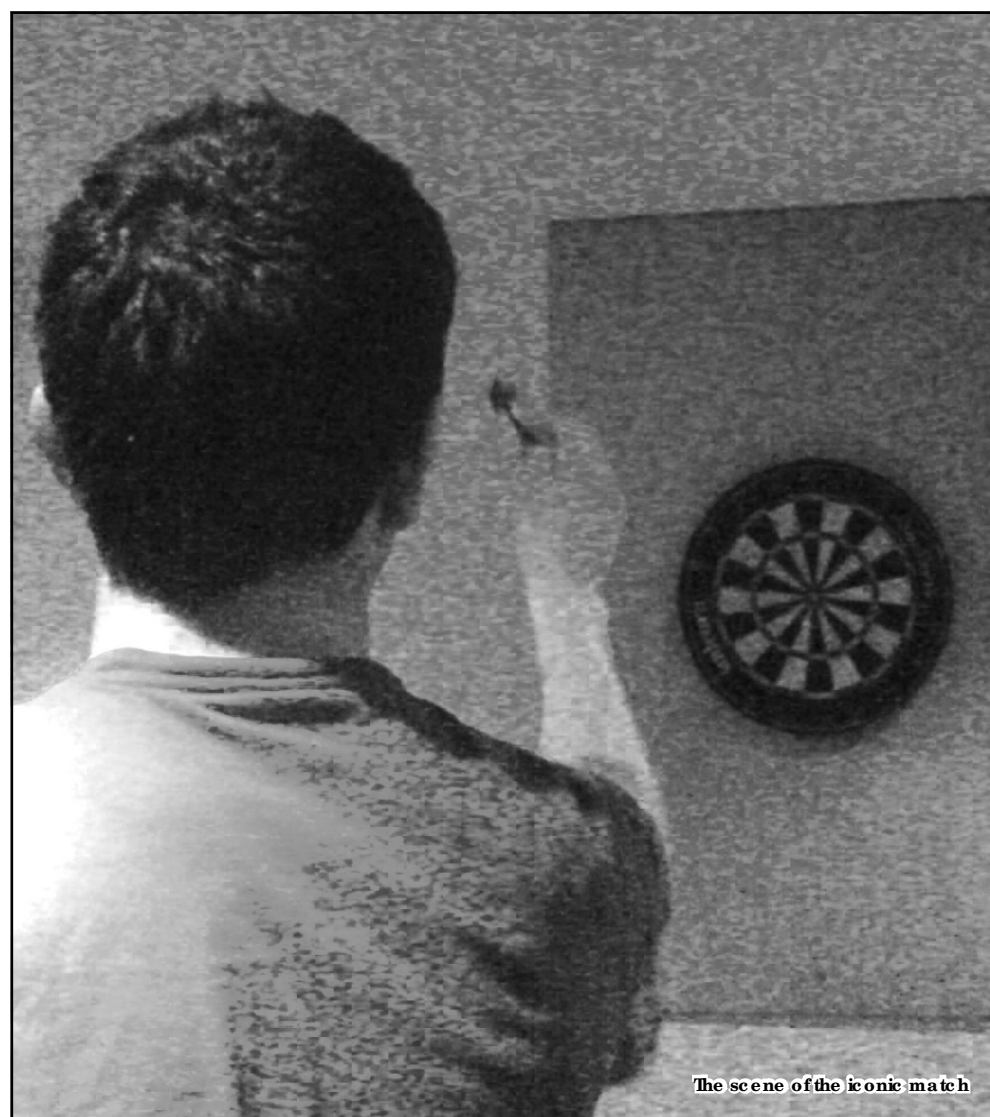
An Focal were represented by Enda Dowling, Eoin King, Daniel Bridge and Tommy Crean. On the other side Alan O'Sullivan, Darren Savage, Paul Moroney and Andy Dixon were there to preserve the pride of the UL darts club. The sports editor meanwhile was on score-keeping duty for the night. The initial plan of everyone playing everyone else over seven rounds was quickly switched to four rounds. This was mainly due to the King v Crean first round clash which seemed to last forever. Before that Dan should have upset Andy but in the end it was Andy who responded to the tension.

It was a trend for the night. At times the An Focal lads got close to turning the tables on the darts club but every time they seemed to eek out the victory. Despite not hitting the heights on the board the An Focal crew did produce some memorable moments. King missing the dartboard with three darts was up there but

he was topped by Tommy Crean. Needing a double nine to win Tommy exclaimed "I won!" He had in fact hit the double six and it sparked a rousing rendition of the darts song by all present.

The real surprise of the night was the emergence of Enda. The newcomer to the paper claimed he never played the game in his life. His form on the night though would suggest otherwise. He was the only one of the sports writers to reach the semi finals and probably should have beaten Darren. Needing a double four to win and encouraged by the sports editor and Dan, the Laois man was forced to settle for a moral victory.

For the darts club Alan O'Sullivan was in simply flying form eventually winning the final of the competition by three legs to nil against Darren. By that stage The Sports Bar was closing up around us and a four and a half hour marathon was over. More practice is required for An Focal but King in particular was up for a more exciting sport to take on in the future. The darts club deserve credit for agreeing to takes us on and being good sports. An Focal provided ideal opposition to build their confidence ahead of the intervarsities.



The scene of the iconic match

Lee survives with a smile

To más McCarthy reports from the UL Arena

“TRYING to please the crowd can be your downfall”. In the bowels of the UL Arena just past midnight Andy Lee was smiling. He knew that his return to Limerick may not have been as entertaining as the crowd would have liked but nonetheless his points triumph over Affif Belghecham sends him back on track towards a major title shot next year.

It was night for both the fans and Lee to bite their lips and be patient. The French contender was dogged all night long never letting down his tight defence. Early on it appeared that Lee would cruise to victory. Having easily won the opening three rounds a knock out appeared imminent. The main source of success for Lee was constant jabbing with the right and good body shots. As the night wore on the tide changed. The experience of Belghecham became apparent because for all of Lee's hard work the 35 year old still wasn't buckling. It was until the fourth round that we saw the French fighter release a punch in anger, a nice shot to the head off his left. From that point on it was clear that Belghecham was here for the duration.

Again Lee could have gone for the kill in round five but he appeared to stand back, grinning strangely to himself. Lee was obviously pacing himself. He could afford to because throughout rounds five, six and seven his jab was proving a very effective defensive weapon. Belghecham relished the closer exchanges but Lee was well capable of escaping from his clutches. On the other hand Lee couldn't break down Belghecham and the crowd were now in near silence. That was until round nine. Belghecham had worn Lee down at that stage and was now the

fresher of the two fighters. Round nine saw him land some his best shots of the evening and suddenly Lee was in trouble.

From the start of round ten Belghecham chased down Lee in a dramatic finale landing shots to the head with left and right. Belghecham, however, had left it too late and despite his attempts for the knock out the bell saved Lee and the crowd erupted with relief that Andy had survived.

In the post fight press conference Lee admitted his French opponent was “fighting in his shell” and was also “very cagey. I couldn't put a dent into him”. Lee's plan was to box to his strengths saying that Belghecham “couldn't get past my jab”. Despite this he did admit “towards the end I lost my concentration”. He claimed that he knew Belghecham didn't have the power to trouble him but somehow behind that smile Lee knew he was nearly caught out.

In an overall sense the Yainjing fight night, like all Brian Peters promotions, ran smoothly. The University Arena was once again shown off in all its glory to the country. It is the ideal facility for such a night. Patrons looking to see the big Ireland v France match were catered for with two big screens at either side. The seating, whether ringside or in the tiered section, meant a good view of the action was guaranteed. There was also plenty of space to leave your seat and walk about. Despite the steep price of some of the tickets the hunger for boxing in Limerick was evident by the big turnout on the night. Even though the fight is the main event the crowd needs to be catered for and entertained which is what Peters has brought to the scene and was evident again that Saturday night.



For Lee and Peters this is a show that must go on. Matthew Macklin wouldn't be quaking in his boots after Lee's performance but Andy knows he is at least two fights away from Macklin. With two more wins Brian

Peters' talk of a potential all Irish, winner takes all World title fight may not be so fanciful. As Lee admitted himself though “the financial reward must match the risk of the fight”. Who would be smiling at the end of that?

Who Are Ya?

Compiled by Tomás McCarthy – Sports Editor

The Basics

Name: June Downey

Age: 22

County: Laois

UL Club: UL Ladies Rugby

Position: A Forward

Sporting Heroes: Ronan O' Gara

Biggest sporting achievement: League and Intersvarsity titles, two in the space of seven days last year, sweet.

Best thing about the Club: The sessions following matches!

Worst thing about the club: Training in Maguire's

Favourite s

Food: Ice-cream **Drink:** Vodka

Song: Black Eyed Peas - Meet Me Halfway

Movie: The Italian Job

Jersey: Newly designed UL Ladies Rugby Jerseys

Take your pick

Lodge or Angel Lane: LODGE all the way

O' Driscoll or O'Gara: O'Gara

Tea or Coffee: Hot chocolate

Simpsons or Family Guy: Simpsons at a push!

Four to finish

What are you scared of? Some of my team members tackles. Luckily I'm on their team!!

What will you be when you grow up?
A Super Nurse

Any plans for 2010? UL is hosting Intersvarsities in April can't wait!

Favourite Christmas song? Fairly Tale of New York!



UL Sports Round-up

By Tomás McCarthy – Sports Editor

Water polo

The UL waterpolo club are top of national league division 3 after two wins over St Vincents and Cork.

Ultimate Frisbee

The ultimate Frisbee club went to the Cork Open with a team blended with youth and experience. They finished 16th out of 24 teams.

Facebook

Check out An Focal sport on Facebook to get the latest UL sports news and results.

Fantasy Premier League

The code for the UL fantasy league on premierleague.com is 361507-163498.

Comments

The address for all comments is mossy.mccarthy@gmail.com

Sports Writers Diary

By Tomás McCarthy - Sports Editor

7 November

Man City stay consistent by drawing yet again!

8 November

Super Sunday sees United win undeservedly and it provides us with the first (but by no means the most controversial) poor refereeing decision in this diary.

9 November

Awful, miserable day. The summer is over folks!

10 November

Class party night! No further comments will be made about the standard of the dancing in El Lodginton!

11 November

I report on a fine soccer game between UL v CSN. The referee was very fussy and was letting everyone know who was boss!

12 November

I get my hands on Liam McCarthy for the first time. No more jokes about Waterford and Liam McCarthy please.

13 November

France v South Africa gives Ireland a warning that the Six Nations will be even harder to win this time around.

14 November

Arrive at The Stables in good time for Ireland v France then dash down to the Arena for the Andy Lee fight! This is the life.

15 November

Sunday afternoon watching Ireland v Australia in the sports bar would be grand if there wasn't loads of kids screaming!

16 November

You know Week 11 has arrived when the library is jammed and there's only a man and his dog in The Stables!

17 November

Wind and rain and general coldness batter myself, Enda and Togher on pitch 1. Then Togher produces out of the bag the most useless umbrella ever seen. Unbelievable scenes!

18 November

A fair bunch of the An Focal crew hit the absolutely wedged Stables and ended up sitting on the table to view the big screen. It was a play off night that started so brightly and ended in the cruellest manner by a French player that Irish fans will never forget. For once I was left speechless.

19 November

Endure an exam at 9 in the morning which a lot of us were in no mood for after the night before. The rain of course is of no comfort.

20 November

Last diary entry of the semester! Best wishes to Emmet, Brian and Philip of 61 Thomond and also Andrew who are all heading on co-op. Also any early Christmas presents for the sports editor would be welcome and can be dropped at Aoife's office!

Forgotten Footballer – Tony Yeboah

By Stephen Kelly

Franz Beckenbauer rarely has a good word to say about anyone so when he describes a player as “a cross between Carl Lewis and Pele” you know they must be something special.

In the mid 90s Tony Yeboah was one of the most spectacular strikers in world football. While at Eintracht Frankfurt he was top scorer in the Bundesliga two seasons running and was a huge crowd favourite. The “Zeugen Yeboahs” (“Yeboah’s Witnesses”) slogan worn by their fans is surely the finest ever football pun. However, he was packed off to Leeds United after falling out with the manager near the end of the 94/95 season.

Yeboah began the following season in electrifying style. His stunning volley against Liverpool and Goal of the Season-winning strike at Wimbledon remain two of the greatest goals in Premiership history. Repeated injuries and a personality clash with George Graham hindered his progress at Elland Road and he returned to Germany in 1997, signing for Hamburg.

His time there was disrupted by allegations of tax evasion and in 2001 he moved to Qatar to see out his playing career. After retiring Yeboah returned to Ghana where he owns several hotels and is chairman of Premier League club Bechem Chelsea.



The Rumour Mill

By Conor McGrath

EINSTEIN once stated that “whoever undertakes to set himself up as a judge of truth and knowledge is shipwrecked by the laughter of the gods”. In the modern student community, one should replace the gods with the all too familiar gangs of “goss” hungry, loose women who roam the library at day and the Lodge at night.

Kicking us off this time is the hierarchy of the UL Soccer club. The club has become the subject of intense scrutiny in recent days over their alleged re-enforced support for Thierry Henry and the hand of frog during that night in Paris. The club has yet to issue a statement on the matter but the admiration for the man is as rife as a dangerous plague. “He’s like a bandit, a Jesse James if you will”, according to one member. “He won me a lotta shekels for Trooms” was the response from an avid lover of online gambling.

A possible Michael Owen on the cards. Should we be disappointed or just console ourselves with the notion that maybe a few of our own might stoop to Henry’s level for a win? Winning results are the name of the game. There is no substitute for victory as they say, well maybe a replay.

Apart from the study groups, the Kayak club has taken to the rainy weather like a builder to the tabloids. The club has apparently decided to use the flooded terrain behind Maxol as a base for performance enhancement.

However, some of the members have gone further with one passionate kayaker declaring that “it’s our land now”. The rowing club elite must be loving this debacle in their spanking new boathouse.

Quotes of the Edition

By Liam Togher

“Just aim for the fire alarm, Tommy!”

Eoin King gives Mr Crean some darts advice during the big night at the Sports Bar. Somehow I doubt that would land Tommy the coveted “one hundred and eighty”.

“Note to self: get bigger notepad”

Enda Dowling, the latest recruit to the An Focal Sport team, bemoans running out of space to jot down notes for his match report. With that sort of preparation he wouldn’t last long in the scouts!

“Does anyone else think that Belly looks like Berbatov after 20 kebabs?”

Darren Savage alludes to two popular nicknames for Alan O’Sullivan at the darts night. I must say that’s a rather damning indictment of the Bulgarian striker, though.

“Go away, you bent b**rd!”**

LIT full-forward Bernard Gaffney gets the terrace taunts on Pitch 1 during the senior hurling league game after missing a straightforward free. That’s Newmarket-on-Fergus for you, I suppose.

“The human frame was not meant to be hit by a cement mixer.”

George Hook has his say on the crunching hit delivered to Rob Kearney during Ireland’s 20-20 draw with Australia. Indeed I doubt the cement mixer’s main purpose is to batter the human frame either.

“I won! I won!”

Tommy Crean rejoices at landing a double six during the darts night. Sadly he needed a double nine for victory so his bubble was soon burst.

“I like the look of number 8.”

The sports editor has his eye on one of the UL ladies soccer team during the 10-1 rout of Sligo IT. Whether he was referring to the player’s football ability is another matter.

“Who likes short shorts!”

Alan O’Sullivan is temporarily distracted from the all-important darts to check on a female athlete doing the rounds on the running track. They really need to pull the curtains above in that Sports Bar!

“Do they mind runners in the Lodge?”

Enda makes a reappearance by enquiring about El Lodginton’s less than authoritarian dress code. We’ll put this one down to fresher inexperience.

GAA Results

**Intermediate football League
quarter final**

Sligo IT 2-9 UL 0-10

Senior Hurling League

UL 1-17 to LIT 0-17

Senior Hurling League

Quarter final
UL 2-18 DIT 1-09

Intermediate Hurling League
UL 5-11 WIT 0-11

Fresher Camogie League
UL 5-18 CIT 1-04

Intermediate Camogie League
UL 3-07 I.T.T 3-07

**Fresher Ladies Football
League**
UL 5-05 LIT 1-01

AN FOCAL SPORT

UL simply doesn't do hockey coaches

By Eoin King

TIMES are tough for UL Hockey. Sports in this college are a major selling point and one of the major attractions to potential students. Yet, sadly, some issues go under the radar and some teams don't benefit the way they should.

The ladies who play for the hockey team are totally and utterly responsible for their own team. While that is commendable, it shouldn't have to be like that because UL hockey is not just a college team. It is a club which participates in the first division of the Irish Hockey Associations Munster Branch yet they have no coach, and they can't find a coach. They have also had little help from the Sports Department in getting a trainer.

An Focal Sport mainly focuses on all things GAA. That's just the way it is. We're Irish and that's our game, so naturally it gets the most attention. However, the ladies who represent UL hockey spoke out at the lack of organisation which has rocked their club. What hurts is the apparent indifference of

the sports department in making amends and finding a coach. This might not hurt so much if the only fixtures to prepare for were against other universities, but when you're rooted to the bottom of your league, without points and goals, there's only one way to describe it; a bit of a shambles. It's hard enough preparing final year projects without the added burden of organising the training, travel arrangements and so on.

One of the girls, in her final year, started when there were four coaches, including one specifically for fitness. On paper, UL is represented by some brilliant stick players. Jenifer O'Loughlin, Sinead McMahon and Laura Davis are on the Interprovincial team. However the preparation and organisation, which should be catered to by a coach, is so poor that two girls have already left the team this year. One left in favour of a team in a division below UL. Four UL students play for the only other Limerick club, Catholic Institute. One of these girls cited the mess as a major factor, and

would love to play for UL if they "took it seriously." Catholic Institute hammered UL 8-0.

It gets better. Last year UL were fined €600 because they had to forfeit from the Irish senior cup; the competition which brings hockey to RTE; the big dance for hockey teams; all because they didn't have enough money to travel.

They have also been suspended from this year's competition too. Despite this not everything is doom and gloom. The second team are in the second round of the Irish Junior Cup and have victories to speak of from their league campaign.

Yet, the fact remains that something is inherently wrong with the UL sports system when girls have to ring other teams' coaches, asking if they know a coach who might know a coach. "Brilliant" help was received from Brian Downs, who filled in as coach for the Intervarsities, where they reached the semi-final of the plate. These ladies should just concentrate on the fixtures. Not money and travel arrangements.

The Sports Department needs to breathe renewed energy into the club. One girl worries that nobody will be attracted to play for the hockey team in the next few years if things remain as they are. Luckily, there

is a camaraderie and love for the game that keeps UL hockey going. The mind boggles at what could be achieved if this was complemented with the proper support but where will they get that?



UL Hockey who are struggling with no coaches

UL ladies trash wasteful GMIT

By Tommy Crean

UL 70-9 GMIT

UL LADIES Senior B basketball team were never seriously threatened in this demolition of GMIT at the Arena. The hosts started impressively in the first quarter, taking an extended early lead and never looked back.

UL's Aoife O'Reilly was stamping her authority on the contest, even at this early stage. GMIT were struggling to defend UL's wave after

wave of attacks and the first quarter finished at 23-4. O'Reilly then had the best score of the second quarter, an exquisite effort from 3-point range that sailed beautifully through the hoop. Emma Cleary also put away a classy individual score, intercepting in her own half before sprinting the length of the court and finishing confidently. UL had put considerable light between themselves and their opponents at this stage. By the third quarter, the "match" had developed

into more of a training exercise, as the home side toyed with their opponents. Despite the whole team trying in vain to restore some competitiveness, the only GMIT player who was influencing was Mary T. Kelly, who was also their top scorer. The final quarter was largely forgettable except for a quality 3-pointer from Karen Murphy. Ten further points were gained as our ladies strolled to a 70-9 victory. I gave my vote for "player of the match" to UL's Aoife O'Reilly.

She always looked threatening in attack and was one of her side's higher scorers. She also tracked back well to perform her defensive duties in a performance of top quality. Other notable mentions go to Emma Cleary, Karen Murphy, Gemma Hassett and Tara Guerin. GMIT were not as poor as the scoreline suggests, but lacked killer instinct when trying to break through UL's defensive "shield". Mary T. Kelly was their standout player while Simona Vasiliauskaite

had a well taken 3-pointer.

UL: Karen Murphy, Emma Cleary, Aoife O'Reilly, Alison Walsh, Laura Walsh, Juliana Murphy, Tara Guerin, Gemma Hassett, Eileen MacEoin, Siobhán Fitzpatrick.

Coaches: Noreen O'Connell, Ciarán O'Gallichoir.

GMIT: Elaine Gibbons, Sarah O'Mahony, Michelle Murphy, Mary T Kelly, Danielle Browne, Carmel Cuans, Lyndsy Nolan, Simona Vasiliauskaite.