



**Shagadelic Pullout!
See p17!**

200 march against fees

ON Tuesday November 14th over two hundred Limerick students took to the streets to march against the continuous rises in Registration Fees and the inadequacy of the Maintenance Grant. About fifty UL students attended the protest and met their fellow campaigners on Clare Street. The marchers then proceeded up O'Connell Street and finished up at City Hall, where speeches were made by the various Students' Union presidents, and also the USI president.

The students held banners

and chanted slogans such as 'They say cut back, we say fight back!' throughout the march. According to organisers, a 'free fees' degree course will actually cost around €3,200. According to the HEA the grant covers only half of this cost.

Speaking before the march, ULSU President St. John Ó Donnabháin said 'The under funding of third level education in Ireland is a very serious issue. It has serious implications in terms both of the economy and of equal access for all. We're marching today to highlight this scandalous disregard for the



BY TRACY LYNCH

importance of education and learning. Politicians should be conscious of the importance of this issue to thousands of voters - not only students, but their parents.' LITSU President Katie McDermott added 'It is high time that the



Limerick students march up Patrick Street
Photo: Eimear Gavin, Limerick School of Art and Design

Irish Government took education seriously. At present the full maintenance Grant is € 3,110. This is half the estimated cost of one year in college according to the HEA. When you take this into account with the current rate of inflation and the ever increasing registration fees it makes it extremely hard for the average student to get by.'

The Unions seem to be doing their best to grab the government's attention to these issues in the run up to the new budget and elections, aiming for a change that will benefit students.

Alannah Turner, ULSU Campaigns and Services Officer was happy that the march proved a success, but added that she was

disappointed at the overall turnout. After the march, she stated that 'I think all students from all over the country need to join together to show their anger at the government's continuous increase of the registration fee and it's resistance to increasing the grant.'

Scéim Teanga seolta ag an Ollscoil

AN FOCAL REPORTER

AR an Luain seachtain 8 seoladh an t-aire Éamonn Ó Cuív scéim Teanga na hOllscoille i dTeach Plasaigh. Ag labhairt le *An Focal*, dúirt an t-Aire go bhfuil áthas air go bhfuil an scéim seolta ag an Ollscoil. Tá thart ar 34 scéim déanta anois ag

ollscoileanna agus eagraíochtaí eile, arsa an t-aire. Meascann an scéim anseo teicneolaíocht agus teanga agus tá sé practiciúil freisin, dar leis.

I measc na daoine ón Ollscoil a bhí ann bhí Deirdre Ní Loingsigh, Stuirtheoir na Gaeilge ag Aonad na Gaeilge anseo san Ollscoil. Dar léi tá an scéim seo

an-tábhachtach don Ollscoil. Tá sé soléir go bhfuil an Ollscoil ag tabhairt an-thacaíocht don ghaeilge, tá siad ag scaoileadh daoine ón obair i rith an lae chun freastail ar modúil don diploma sa Ghaeilge anseo san Ollscoil. Tá sé tábhachtach freisin go bhfuil na Mic Léinn ar an Eolas faoin Scéim. Tá deis ann agus cathaigh na Mic Léinn an deis sin a tapú.

Ag labhairt do *An Focal* dúirt Síne Nic an Aili, Iar Oifigeach na Gaeilge leis an Aontas agus Cathaoirleach an Cumann Gaelach go raibh áthas uirthi a bheith i láthair ag an seoladh agus gur cuidigh na Mic Léinn go leir leis an dtógra seo. Cathaigh siad an deis seo a tapú agus uasáid a baint as na seirbhísí trí Gaeilge.

Tá dualgeas ar an Ollscoil na seirbhísí a chur ar fáil agus feabhais leanúnach a chur leo. Dar le Breandán Ó hÉamhaigh, Iar Oifigeach na Gaeilge agus Uachtarán an Cumann Gaelach, tá sé tábhachtach go bhfuil na seirbhísí curtha ar fáil anois. Agus cathaigh an Ollscoil leanú leis. Tá an dualgeas orthu iad a chur ar fáil agus na Mic Léinn a chur ar an eolas faoi.

On Monday of Week 8 Minister Éamonn Ó Cuív launched the language scheme for UL in Plassey House. Both students and staff in attendance were delighted with the content of the scheme, with all extending congratulations to those involved in its planning and launch.



Members of An Cumann Gaelach with Minister Ó Cuív

Campus break-in

ALAN OWENS, CHIEF NEWS CORRESPONDENT

A break-in occurred in the University on Monday night, the 20th of November. Three unidentified males were caught in possession of two plasma screens by Gardai in the Plassey area. It has been confirmed that the group were not students.

Gardai from Henry Street station apprehended the youths at 11.30pm on Monday. The trio were in possession of two 52-inch plasma screens worth in the region of 9000 euro.

The youths were detained overnight in Henry Street and were due to appear in the District Court early Tuesday morning. It is believed that they were known to the Gardai.

The plasma displays in question were taken from rooms in the C-Block. Access was gained to C0071 and C0072 through CM083. While the gang were caught in possession of two

of the screens, they did drop one and leave it behind. This screen was damaged beyond repair.

All of the screens in question have been recovered, and reinstalled. Additional security cables have been added to discourage any future thefts. A replacement screen is being sourced for the one screen that was irrevocably damaged.

An Focal spoke to John McDonnell, Security Operations Manager who said that 'the men were known to Gardai and were from a criminal fraternity in the city'. 'This break-in was part of a planned operation that was interrupted thanks to heightened security measures put in place recently.' He went on to say that 'these men were seen acting suspiciously, security was alerted and the Guards were in turn notified, who arrested the men in Plassey. We would ask again anyone on campus to report what they might think is suspicious behaviour immediately to security'.

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EDITORIAL



BY DEIRDRE O' SHAUGHNESSY

FROM what I hear, An Focal is being well received this semester by students, staff and residents alike. The increased level of letters to the editor in the paper has also been encouraging - An Focal is not here to offend people, but to inform and excite debate. While this is a heartening thought, I'm well aware how unlikely it is that someone would insult or even legitimately criticise the paper to my face. There is no fury like an editor snubbed!

However, there has been some disquiet among a certain sector of the student population, namely Clubs and Societies, about the level of coverage they receive in An Focal. My predecessor spoke at length about this issue during my training over the summer, as did the previous editor.

The issue of Clubs and Societies' use of An Focal has been controversial with every editor who has wanted to make An

Focal a quality newspaper, as opposed to a newsletter. As a former society PRO myself, this year I have tried to combat any exclusion felt by these groups by speaking to Clubs and Societies Council and holding three workshops (two for C&S PROs, and one for Sports/Clubs writers specifically, in conjunction with Patrick Mannix, An Focal's sports editor). I have also issued detailed guidelines and offered help to any PROs who feel they need it with both article-writing and press releasing.

At these workshops it was explained that C&S are free to place an ad in every edition, at no cost, to advertise their usual meeting times, etc. This is an entirely new initiative. Guidelines were outlined for submission of newsworthy material, and the availability of An Focal reporters and photographers to attend newsworthy events was highlighted.

As is evident from the current edition, this has worked in favour of the majority of C&S, especially those which are particularly active. This edition includes timely and printable submissions from An Cumann Gaelach, Christian Union, UL Palestine Solidarity Society, Enviro Soc, the History Society, the Hurling Club, the Athletics Club, TKD, Shotokan Karate, Volleyball and Ladies Football.

Consequently, it is clear that the new system is working for most Clubs and Societies. For the rest, I will be holding further workshops in the new semester, and I am always available to go through the guidelines and explain what's necessary to make an article printable.

An Focal is here to serve the entire student population. Articles in the paper need to appeal to the widest sector possible of the population, and while they say that you can't please all of the people all of the time, I'm afraid it's my job to attempt to do so.

Quotes of the fortnight

- **'Slogo....loga...slogo...what? I'm working really hard, ok!'** SU Welfare Officer Sinéad Hickey finds that English is no longer her forte.
- **'Why, was there a protest on?'** A member of SU staff in response to President St. John Ó Donnabháin mentioning that he'd been in Thomond Park the previous night.
- **'St. John used to have a fluffy dinosaur in his office for people to throw at him, but they replaced it with a rock.'** One member of the ULSU Executive sees a new use for the President's pet rock.
- **'SHAGadelic baby!'** SU officers prepare for SHAG week.
- **'He's angry enough - don't wet him, he'll be like a gremlin!'** Education Officer Alan Higgins cautions President St. John Ó Donnabháin about his treatment of a student with an issue (in front of the student).
- **'Dempsey said that if you were to stand three metres from the pipeline and it exploded you'd be perfectly fine... he's right, all your troubles would be over'** Micheál Ó Seighin of the Rossport Five, speaking to UL Enviro Soc.

AN FOCAL EDITORIAL TEAM

T: 061 202363

F: 061 213476

E: deirdre.oshaughnessy@ul.ie

Editor : Deirdre O' Shaughnessy

Advertising : Deirdre O' Shaughnessy

Layout & Design : Jackie Britton, Topdesk

Sports Editor : Patrick Mannix

Chief News Correspondent : Alan Owens

News staff:

Alan Owens

Niamh Clowry

Alannah Turner

Maja Niebrzegowska

Katie Harrington

Séamus Ryan

Features staff:

Thomas Dee

Sinéad Hickey

St. John Ó Donnabháin

Breandán Ó hÉamhaigh

Sport:

Patrick Mannix

Tomás McCarthy

Liam Togher

Kevin Corcoran

Tommy Tuohy

IN THE UNION THIS FORTNIGHT:

" LASU calendar went to print

" Science College Day

" An Focal

" Review 2 published

" Engineering College Day

" Presidential Search Board

" Class Reps Council adopted anti-nuclear policy

" Preparation for SHAG week

Science Week at UL

SIOBHAN B. REEVES
AND ALAN OWENS,
CHIEF NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE theme of this year's Science Week Ireland, which took place last week, was 'Science in our Future'. Professor David O'Beirne, Dean of the College of Science, described this to An Focal as very beneficial for the university as it encourages school pupils to seriously consider UL for third-level education, and also important to 'illustrate the great potential of science as a career'. The feedback from teachers and students has been described as excellent, with one event alone attended by over 950 students in the University Concert Hall. The week's activities were supported by the British Council, the Irish Institute of Physics and the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance.

As suggested by this year's theme, the events focused on the most dynamic area of science, astronomy. One of the most popular events was 'Time Travel with the Hubble Space Telescope', an interactive journey through space. The presentation was given four times throughout Tuesday 14th by Mr Robert Hill, Armagh Planetarium and the Northern Ireland Space Office. The feedback from the audience demonstrated that there is genuine interest in the Hubble Space Telescope after earlier this month NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) announced plans for a fifth servicing mission to extend and improve the observatory's capabilities through 2013.

Another popular lecture was given by UL's own Dr John Breen of the Department of Life Sciences entitled WIMBY (What's In My Back Yard) on Thursday 16th. This was a break away from the astronomical focus of the week and instead was a well-received talk about the creep crawlies found in our own back yards. 'The Bubble Show' presented by Dr Steve Allman on Wednesday 15th, was very popular with primary school children visiting the campus. During the show Dr Allman examined and demonstrated the science behind bubbles to a captive audience.

The highlight of Science Week in UL however was the internationally acclaimed Superstrings performance in the Jean Monnet on Wednesday 15th. Professor of Physics at Oxford University, Professor Brian Foster, and the talented young violinist



Jack Liebeck have travelled the world with their unique Superstrings presentation. Professor O'Beirne described it as 'a brilliant performance with excellent music combined with getting across some very big ideas of physics in an understandable way'. Superstrings is a lecture which links Einstein's favourite instrument, the violin, with the concepts of modern day physics he fundamentally founded. Jack Liebeck played pieces from Bach, Boccherini and Panchani on his Guadagnini violin to accompany the slides illustrating Einstein's life and how his theories have changed the way we view space, time and the evolution of the universe. The lecture continued to discuss the Standard model of particle physics and goes on to explain the Superstrings theory, which suggests the possibility of a number of hidden dimensions that may be experimentally proven to exist in the new particle accelerator at CERN, the European Centre for Particle Physics in Geneva. The complexities of the theory and yet also the simplicity of its potential was enthralling. This performance was a rare opportunity well worth taking advantage of.

Einstein's life, his involvement with music, how his ideas shaped our concepts of space, time and the evolution of the Universe, were among the things presented in the performance, which also featured selections of Einstein's favourite music. These performances have been acclaimed in the US, Europe and the Far East, so it was quite a coup for the University to have them here for Science Week.

Science Week Ireland was most definitely a great success for the College of Sciences and the University itself. The influx of primary and secondary school pupils on to the campus is very encouraging as many students expressed a desire to come to UL for later studies. In an increasingly scientific and technological world it is also important to heighten our interest and understanding of the potential of science in the future. In the words of Professor David O'Beirne: 'Overall we were delighted with the week and we see it as an event of increasing importance given Ireland's aspiration to become a knowledge economy by 2013'.

Also taking place in week 8 was Science College Day, organised by Alannah Turner, Campaigns and Services Officer for ULSU. Unlike Science Week, Science College day was for UL Science Students to get together and have some fun, and try and raise some money for charity as well.

Alannah told An Focal that she was happy with the way the day went. 'I was disappointed when I saw the really poor weather in the morning because I knew it would affect the turn out at some of the events, especially the Human Table Football competition' she said. 'However the people who did take part really enjoyed themselves, especially those who won!' said Alannah.

A Table Quiz was also held that in the Stables, which raised over a €100 for charity, and was followed that evening by a Mad Scientist Ball in the Trinity Rooms, which was a great success.

ULSU Joins 'Million Against Nuclear Campaign'

ANDREW CLEARY

IN a recent council meeting, UL class reps agreed to join the Million against Nuclear Campaign, which aims to deliver one million signatures to the E.U. Parliament in March 2007. The campaign seeks to ensure that new reactors are not constructed and that EU funds should instead be invested in renewable energy sources. Class reps. agreed to amend the ULSU environmental policy to reflect this view.

Nuclear power is not the solution to our energy needs. It is extremely expensive, unsustainable in the long term and poses massive risks to the environment (of which we are a part). The advocates of the second-generation reactors claim that they are 'inherently safe'. This is a claim that I'm sure we will hear time and again in the future. I hope too that the counter claim is heard just as loud. 'In no way can nuclear power ever be regarded as inherently safe' - the Union of Concerned Scientists, an advocacy group based in the U.S.

The safety issue is a vital concern especially when we look at the horrific devastation



caused by the Chernobyl disaster. Storage of radioactive waste is also a massive problem. Present storage facilities are of a temporary nature only and no long-term solution is available; imagine how much it will cost to store this waste for a thousand years or more. And if the money runs out, what then? We are not dealing with our energy problems very well and merely pushing them onto the generations that will follow.

The people of Ireland have already made their views clear on the issue of nuclear power in the campaign to get Sellafield closed down. Over

one million postcards were sent to 10 Downing Street as part of this campaign in 2002. By joining the million against nuclear campaign, ULSU is continuing what I would describe as a proud tradition and is keeping the anti-nuclear issue on the agenda. Sellafield is still there you know! The nuclear problem is still there. The question is do we ignore it or do we make the right decisions now.

Andrew Cleary is a member of UL Environmental Society and brought the nuclear campaign to Class Representatives Council.

Car burned-out on campus



BY DEIRDRE O' SHAUGHNESSY
EDITOR

A 1991 Nissan Micra owned by a fourth year student was found burning by members of campus security at approximately 4am on Wednesday of Week 8. The car had been moved about 10 places in the car park behind the Foundation building and set alight. Fourth Year Production Management student Dónal Brody from Co. Clare told The An Focal 'all you could see really was the



number plate' by the time the car was extinguished by the Fire Brigade. Mr Brody said that due to the car's age it was an easy target for break-ins, but that he generally removed the starter when not in the car to prevent it being stolen.

It had been broken into earlier in the semester in the same car park. Mr Brody is a resident of Dromroe village, which does not have its own car park, and thus had no other option but to park in the

Foundation Building car park.

This incident follows a spate of break-ins in the foundation building and pay car parks on campus. After a previous incident, UL's head of security told An Focal that campus security has 'a 24-hour security presence here in the University' and that, as a result of the break-ins, they had heightened their security patrols.

Students' Union tackles lack of campus atmosphere

ALANNAH TURNER

THE union has taken on a new initiative called college days in an attempt to tackle the lack of atmosphere on campus complained of by many students. So far the Business and Science colleges have had their college days in weeks 5 and 8, respectively. Engineering and Informatics and Electronics college days are planned for weeks 9 and 10. All of the college days take on a similar structure. The afternoon sees the Human Table Football competition taking place in the Stables. This is followed by an event tailored to suit that particular college. The Business college day held a successful business debate on whether 'Ryanair should keep its nose out of Aer Lingus'. The Science college day held

a table quiz where questions were customised with a science theme. The night ends up with a themed night in the Trinity Rooms.

Students' Union President St. John Ó Donnabháin: 'We are trying to improve the atmosphere on campus and have found that college days have been received well. However, we are always open to new suggestions when it comes to entertainments and would like to see students becoming more involved'.

The initiative was initially proposed last year by the First Year Representative on the SU Executive. The issue of a lack of campus atmosphere was high on the agenda and this was seen as one way in which this could be tackled. The idea of the college days is not only to improve atmosphere but also try to raise money for

charity. All of the money raised in college days will go towards the overall RAG week fund which is distributed among a number of colleges.

Further to this project, the union has also this year sought alternative ways of providing entertainment for its students. The weekly nights have been continued on top of campus events such as the Irish bands night which is held in the Stables and the Midweekers which are held in the Jean Monnet. A number of bands have so far played in the Stables. These include The Flaws, the Immediate, DC Pakt, the Jades, Fred and the Alphastates. The Midweeker gigs have seen the likes of Andrew Maxwell, Reuben, Karl Spain and Zak Powers appear.

Community Forum highlights garda absence



BY KATIE HARRINGTON

AT Community Forum on Monday of Week 8 the representative from Kilmurry Residents Association, Ms Rita Lyons, brought to the fore a huge issue affecting students and residents in the Castletroy area, the lack of a Garda presence in the area. While this has been an issue for some time, many were unpleasantly surprised when Mrs. Lyons informed those present that for the purposes of Garda allocations the student body is not

taken into account. While making a complaint by telephone, she was informed by the officer on duty that students are not considered residents, as most are only on campus for 30 weeks of the year.

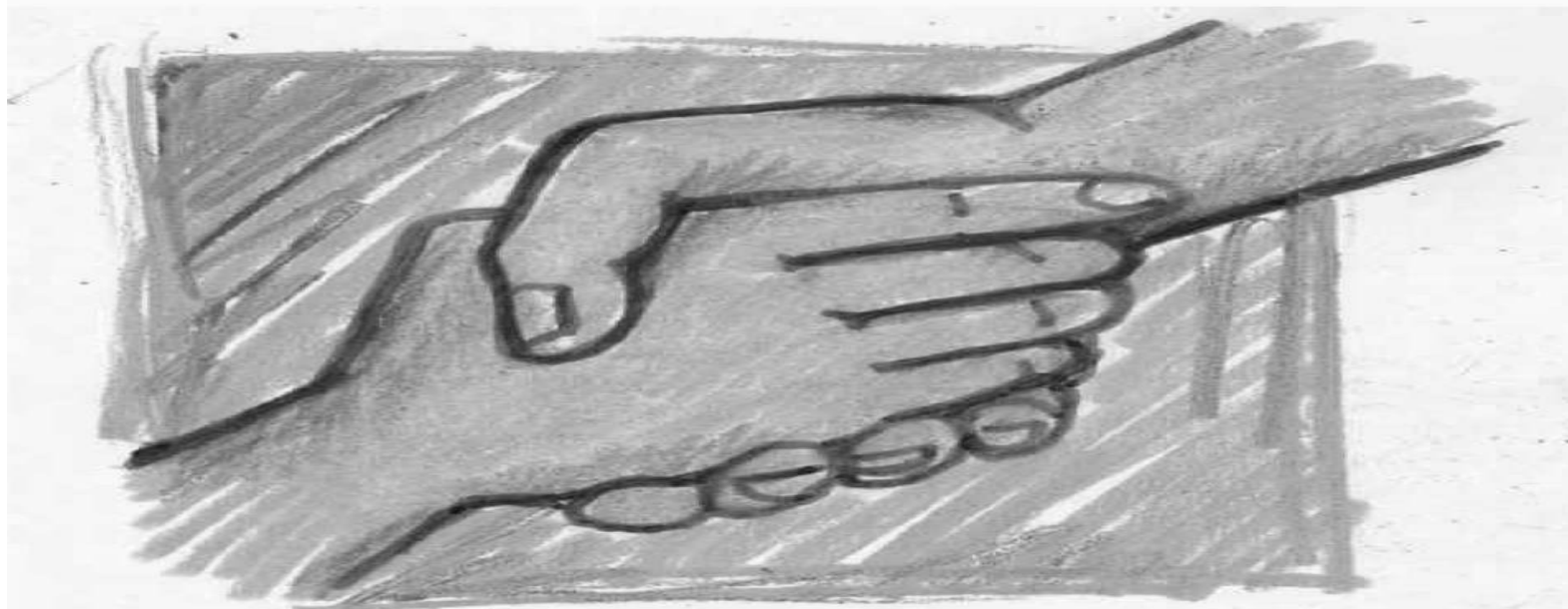
However, Sergeant Séamus O' Neill of Henry Street Garda Station stated that this information was not accurate. According to Sergeant O' Neill 'A lot of things are taken into account for Garda allocations; population is one, but also the amount of businesses in the area, traffic, and that sort of thing' He also stated that some Castletroy estates are sub-districts of the Castleconnell station and would be served under them and not Henry Street, which also affects Garda allocations, and the allocation of a Garda Station to Castletroy. Sergeant

O' Neill clarified that the information Mrs. Lyons had been given was incorrect and that having three Community Relations Officers showed that the University was being taken into account.

Community Relations Guard Essy Stokes also stated at Community Forum that reporting any incidents, even minor ones, is advisable, as it will effect crime statistics in the area which is also taken into account in Garda allocations.

Community Forum is an information exchange which takes place every six weeks between residents, the university and representatives from the Students' Union. To bring an issue to community forum, please contact Community Relations Officer Katie Harrington by leaving a message at SU reception.

ARE YOU WILLING TO GIVE A HELPING HAND?



ULSU IS SETTING UP A PEER SUPPORT NETWORK

2ND YEARS UP ARE WELCOME TO BE A PEER SUPPORT TO STUDENTS LOOKING FOR A FRIENDLY EAR AND A HELPING HAND

ARE YOU SOMEONE WHO CAN HELP?

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT SINEAD ON 061 202519 or sinead.hickey@ul.ie

PEER SUPPORT NETWORK

Library seeking feedback on extension

ROSE BARRETT

WITH the announcement of the Glucksman Library Extension an inclusive project is underway to increase awareness among students and encourage involvement in the process. This process is in place to address any of the issues that students may have regarding the current system and facilities that maybe changed or adapted in the new extension.

At Class Representatives Council in Week 8, representatives were invited to give feedback and suggestions for the extension. Some issues that were raised are: concern about noise in relation to layout, queries about noise in the construction phase, improved lighting, specifically task lighting at desks, security/CCTV cameras particularly in relation to increased numbers of laptops on site, more electronic resources and more wireless access. The

extension will include an additional 830 reader places, increasing from the current 1100 to 1930. It will double the space provided for volumes and include more resources for students from all disciplines. This new venture will see the library expand on the work being done with online resources and facilitate the availability of the newest technologies.

The library staff are keen to hear all ideas and views on the extension and are only happy to answer all questions.

All suggestions are welcome and encouraged. The library is also running a competition for the most innovative suggestion relevant to the new extension. The competition is underway and runs until Monday the 11th of December with a suggestions box placed in the foyer of the Library. Suggestions are also welcome to the dedicated e-mail address lisb@ul.ie. The winner will receive a €100 book token.



Locked out? That'll be €25...



BY DEIRDRE FINNERTY

appear very harsh' but that a 'significant number, in the region of 20 callouts a day' were wasting Security's time and that 'it is the resident's responsibility to look after their keys'. He was also keen to emphasize that 'in the event of an emergency no one will be left stranded'.

Michelle Mc Auley, Dromroe Village Manager assured that the new policy was 'not a money making racket. The money will go to charity and nobody will have to pay anything if they're a little bit more careful'. The charity in question is Milford Hospice.

A letter issued by the Plassey Campus centre regarding keys and lockouts has outlined that, from the 13th of November, Campus Security has been instructed not to attend to lockouts. This means that if you are locked out of your room or apartment, you can only gain access during normal Village reception hours (Mon to Fri 9-5.30) or from 23.00 to 02.00 7 days a week. Campus Security will not attend to lockouts outside these hours. Furthermore, all lockouts will incur a fine of 25.

John O Rourke, Campus Life Services Manager stated that the new lockout procedure was 'mainly a deterrent' and would impress on students 'to be more careful'. He stressed the fact that the Plassey Campus Centre 'does not want to

Most students seemed to accept the measure as fair, however they did feel that the 25 fine was a little harsh. David Connolly, 4th year Mechanical Engineering suggested that perhaps students 'should not be fined the first time that they lose their key, but anytime after that they should have to pay. Losing your key twice is just careless. It's an incentive to look after your key. People shouldn't expect that someone will automatically be there to let them in'.

Tráth na gCeist
IT'S QUESTION TIME PEOPLE!!!

8.00PM 
SPORTS BAR
DÉ MÁIRT 28ú SAMHAIN SEACHTAIN 10

ANOCHT!!!

DUAISEANNA GO LEOR, CRAIC DEN SCOTH AGUS CÚIS MHAITH!!

All-night DVD service comes to canteen

AN FOCAL REPORTER

UL'S first DVD rental machine will be installed in the main canteen in coming weeks. The machine, owned by NowDVDnow, a Galway based company, is expected to do well in a campus at least a mile from the nearest DVD shop and on which almost 2,000 students live. According to the company, the kiosk is 'smaller than a photo booth, as simple to use as a bank ATM,' and holds over 1,000 DVDs.

Membership forms can be collected at the Students' Union or at the machine, and membership is free. In a special opening offer, the first fifty people to sign up will get €10 credit free.

As the initiative may be unfamiliar to most students, NowDVDnow advises students that 'on sign up, members will get their own account number

which will be protected with a PIN code. Users are then able to rent, return and top up at the machine using cash, laser or credit card. Bonus deals also apply, with extra cash for large top-ups. The company website, www.nowdvdnow.ie, also contains a list of movie titles.

According to Michael Duke, one of NowDVDnow's founders, 'Students who are looking for a break from their all night studies can access the service online over any web browser and see exactly what movie titles are available for rent by checking out www.nowdvdnow.ie/locations/university_of_limerick.asp. We also plan to launch a Movie Rentals subscription service whereby a customer can rent movies daily for a flat monthly fee of €19.99. It's a fun and friendly experience for renting movies.'

The service is expected to be up and running by mid-December.



ULPSS brings CIA to UL!

ZOË LAWLOR

THE first event held by UL Palestine Solidarity Society for this academic year was the visit of two former CIA analysts in early November.

Kathy and Bill Christison spoke to a large audience of around eighty people in An Phluais.

Between them, the Christisons have 43 years service with the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency). Kathy is a former CIA analyst and has worked on Middle East issues for 30 years. She is also the author of the acclaimed books *Perceptions of Palestine* and *The Wound of Dispossession*. Bill was a senior official of the CIA who he served as a National Intelligence Officer for Southeast Asia, South Asia and Africa. Subsequently, he served as Director of the CIA's Office of Regional and Political Analysis. The couple spoke mainly about their recent trip to Palestine and the worsening horror of the occupation they saw there. They also spoke about the amount of aid and weaponry supplied by the US to Israel and the influence of the Israeli lobby in Washington. As peace activists, the Christisons were very interested in coming up with positive plans of action for future campaigns. There was a lively question and answer session with the audience afterwards with peo-



ple showing their fascination to meet CIA analysts, and in some cases their suspicion.

The audience was very interested to know how two CIA employees had come to be public speakers on human rights issues. The couple explained that they had left the CIA 23 years previously and had plenty of time to assess the impact of American foreign policy on the world. Bill Christison described his time in the CIA as something he was ashamed of.

For further information on joining please contact: ulpalstine@eircom.net or visit www.skynet.ie/~ulpalstine.

Carol Service

Contemplative Centre, 8PM

Wed 6th Dec (Wk 11)

UL Christian Union
(Mondays 8PM Contemplative Centre)

www.skynet.ie/~cu cu@skynet.ie

Oíche Scannánaíochta



Cén Scannán? **Poitín**

Cá háit? **An Phluais** in aice na
Scholars

Cathain? **Dé Máirt, Seachtain 11**

Cén T-am? **7 a chlog PM**



Mícheál Ó Seighin of the Rossport 5 speaks in UL



BY ST. JOHN Ó DONNABHÁIN

LAST Tuesday evening saw the visit of Mícheál Ó Seighin to UL, a man made famous through his actions (including spending 94 days in jail) in defying the petroleum multinational Shell as part of the group which became known as the Rossport 5. Mr. Ó Seighin was the guest of the Environmental Society.

Ó Seighin is a hugely engaging speaker, and he draws the listener in through a concoction of passion, amusing anecdotes and hard facts to weave the story which has made headlines across the country over the last eighteen months. He spoke for almost three hours, virtually without pause, and with the full and

rapt attention of the crowd.

The way that the idea that the safety concerns have been addressed was dismissed was typical of this style; '[Minister] Dempsey said that if you were to stand three metres from the pipeline and it exploded, you'd be perfectly fine...he's right, all your troubles would be over!'. This assessment was backed up by information from Mexico, where the explosion of a similar, but much lower-pressure pipeline in a very sparsely populated area resulted in multiple deaths. He was very conscious that all claims with regard to the pipeline's safety had to be backed up, and repeatedly referred to different reports by engineers, environmentalists, as well as experience in other countries.

Then the discourse began on the subject of the deal which the Irish people are getting on our natural resources, concentrating on the issue of tax - the progressive reduction of tax on oil companies by various Ministers, including the disgraced Ray Burke,

along with our current Taoiseach's Finance Bill (from around the same time as certain controversial dinners in Manchester) which continued this process of reducing our stake. At the same time, the state of Norway gets 25% of the profit from the Corrib Gas Field (through its stake in Statoil), we may end up with nothing, due to the ability to write off costs against the low level of tax, at only 25%. In Ó Seighin's own words, Noel Dempsey 'was boasting that they were keeping the [tax] deal ... the stupidest deal that was ever signed!'

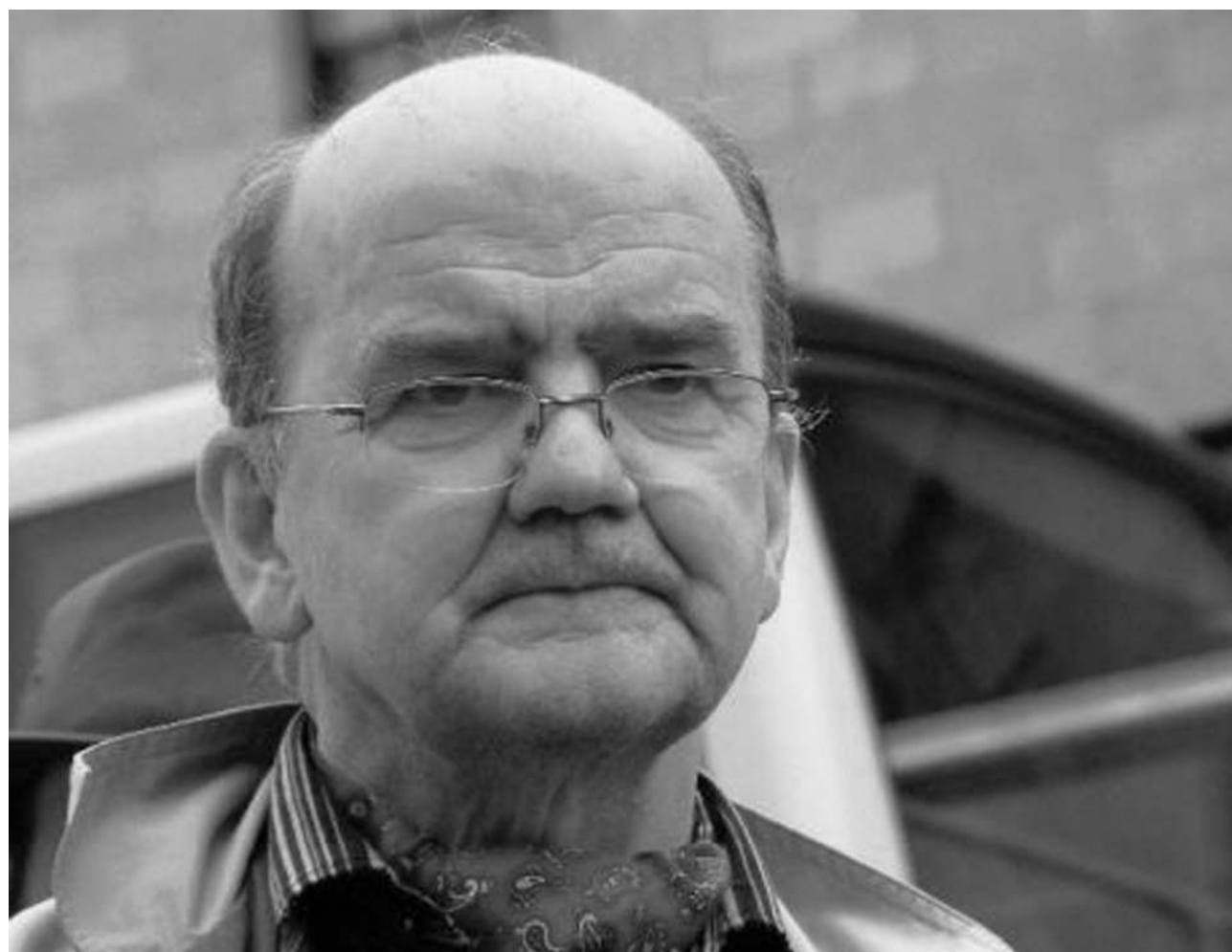
The environmental impacts of the project were next on the list. The route of the pipeline crosses a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under European legislation, a Special Protection Area (SPA) for birds, as well as the reclaimed bog along the shoreline. It is also a very important dolphin breeding ground. Furthermore, there are huge fears that the whole bay will be polluted, as the waste dumping pipe from the

refinery is set to be much closer to the shore than originally thought, and local currents ensure a 'drag in' effect. And environmental protection of course means protection and the safety of the lived environment too.

On top of all of his knowledge, Mícheál's knowledge of the local area and its mythology is wonderful, and he mixed the hard facts with stories of the arrival of Balor of the Evil Eye to Mayo back in the mists of time, and his eventual defeat by Lughadh of the Silver Hand - and hoped that the Shell to Sea campaign would find its own Lughadh to rid the North-West of the scourge of Shell!

The Environmental Society has been strongly involved in the Shell to Sea campaign for the last few years, and we intend to continue! Come along to a meeting - Mondays at 8pm in the Students' Union - or check out www.shell-tosea.com and www.indy-media.ie/mayo for more info.

Mícheál Ó Seighin



Students Union AGM fails to reach quorum



BY NIAMH CLOWRY

WEDNESDAY of Week Six witnessed the first Students' Union Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the current academic year. Items on the agenda included Ratification of the Audited Accounts, Officers Reports, Ratification of Unopposed Officers, the Car park campaign, fair grants and registration fees campaign and a discussion on whether UL should become a member of the Union of Students in Ireland (USI).

Unfortunately the AGM failed to reach the required quorum of 200 students, which is necessary for voting to take place, so certain items from the agenda were postponed. Officers' reports still went ahead, whereby the various members of the Students Union Executive gave a brief overview of work they have completed so far this semester and ongoing campaigns and plans for the remainder of the year.

The three current campaigns of the Union, namely the Car park campaign, fair grants and registration campaign and USI were dealt with at length by Student Union President St. John O' Donnabhain and Education Officer Alan Higgins. In relation to the car parking campaign it was noted that although a petition with some 2,500 signatures was handed into the college over a week ago there has been no response

from the college on the issue. The campaign is ongoing however, with members of the Union actively involved in blocking the barriers in the car park, even whilst under the threat of arrest. Students' Union President St. John Ó Donnabháin concluded that 'we are going to keep going with this issue however long it takes'.

The issue of UL joining forces with USI was also raised at the AGM, with a representative from USI in attendance to give a presentation on the work of the body and what membership would entail. This particular issue is one that will be debated considerably at class reps council in the coming weeks. For the moment the Students' Union here at UL hopes to get as much feedback as possible from the student body as a whole on this issue, so that when a decision is reached it will be one of consensus.

Due to the lack of a quorum the AGM was unable to ratify the Auditors or the Unopposed Officers.

After the AGM Education Officer Alan Higgins said that the Union 'was very grateful for everyone who attended although disappointed that [it] didn't reach quorum and hope that at least some students are aware of the issues and the work that the Students Union is currently undertaking'.

SU President St. John Ó Donnabháin echoed this sentiment and stated 'hopefully next time we will reach a quorum as it is really important to talk about these issues. Thanks is due to everyone who did make it along tonight, it was great too see those willing to make the effort'.



Postgraduate News

Hello Everyone,

I have been very busy in recent weeks attending all sorts of meetings including Access Committee, Financial Aid Fund and Academic Programme Review Committee meeting. Together with Sinead (SU Welfare) and two students we set up a Student-Parent group, a support group that will take care of issues concerning student-parents needs. If you are a

student-parent yourself and want to talk to other people who are in the same situation, join us. We would like to meet on a regular basis and organize some social events. If you want to get involved email me at ulstudentparents@yahoo.co.uk or call over to my office.

As we all are busy and I can only imagine the load of work you are doing at the moment, all the reports, preparation for exams. I think you all deserve a break.

Afternoon snack with the Postgraduate Career Advisor - Patsy Ryan - 30th November - start at 5pm till 6.30 pm snacks and soft drinks provided

Many graduates who have never had a full-time job have to face the reality of job hunting. There are many obstacles like a lack of experience or inability to present themselves to their future employers. Together with Patsy Ryan, who is the Postgraduate Career Advisor, we decided to run two 2hrs presentations that would allow you to explore your career options and gain some practical knowledge of how to deal with the interviews and the recruitment process. Our first meeting will take place on 30th November in the PSA common room.

The main focus will be on providing you with more general information on how to write a CV and a cover letter, how to prepare for an interview and succeed at it. Patsy will also be able to answer your questions so do not hesitate joining us on Thursday afternoon. Later in December we will have a second meeting but this time with the international graduates seeking a job in Ireland in mind, with more focus on their specific situation.

Autumn Indoors BBQ in the Kilmurry Lodge Hotel - 3rd December

The next PSA BBQ will be held in the Kilmurry Lodge Hotel on 3rd December. There will be JENGA competition and the winner will get a € 20 voucher for Storm Cinema. The JENGA competition entry is for only €1 on the night.

There will be some live music and dancing in the Lodge afterwards. Tickets (including delicious meal and free entry into the Lodge afterwards) are only € 4 and if you buy 3 for your friends you will get yours half price. Tickets are available from PSA centre, also possible to buy on the night. The night will start at about 8.00 and promises to be a good one! Don't be late the food will be served till 10.00.

Multicultural Day

Multicultural Day is planned to take place at the beginning of the next semester. This event will give an insight into different cultures, languages, and traditions at UL. The event will include traditional foods, dress, art, music and literature. So come and share your national heritage with others. Multi-Cultural Day will highlight the multicultural diversity of UL community.

For a nominal fee or the contribution of a homemade food, participants will be admitted into a common room filled with an assortment of treats, where they will be allowed to eat to their heart's content.

At the moment we are looking for people who can cook and would love to share their national heritage (cuisine, music, art etc) with others. If you are from abroad and would like to tell other students about your homeland drop by or email me and we can talk about your ideas for the Multi-Cultural Day.

Best wishes

**Maja
PSA**

maja.niebrzegowska@ul.ie

Limerick crime 'over-hyped'



BY DEIRDRE O'SHAUGHNESSY
EDITOR

A Maths Professor at the University of Limerick has said that crime statistics for Limerick

are grossly over-exaggerated by the media. Professor Stephen O' Brien decided to scrutinise national crime statistics as he felt that crime appeared to be a 'big issue' in Limerick.

Professor O' Brien, who says that he 'just looked up the figures out of curiosity', was surprised at the results of cursory research that he says just took two minutes. Garda crime figures are available to the public on the garda website, and these figures are obviously available to the

media. Figures for 2005 show that Limerick had just one murder, whereas, according to Prof O' Brien, this would run contrary to public perception of Limerick's statistics.

He found that crime statistics in Limerick are certainly better than those of Dublin, and, on average, are lower than those of Cork. Prof O' Brien went on to add that events taking place in Dublin which go unreported in national media would be the subject of a media furore if they took place in Limerick.

Life Memberships presented by UL's Society of the Year

SÉAMUS RYAN

UL'S History Society took the opportunity at the launch of the latest edition of its seventh annual History Studies journal to present life memberships to a number of individuals who have given long-standing support to the society since its inception. Honoured were Dr Roger Downer as President Emeritus of the University, Senior Lecturers in History Dr John Logan and Bernadette Whelan, ULSU's Clubs and Societies Development Officer Paul Lee, UL's Arts Officer Patricia Moriarty and former and current committee members Alan Higgins, John Hickey, Seamus Ryan and Patrick Kennedy.

Eamonn Gardiner, Society Auditor said 'The journal has gone from strength to strength

since its first volume in 1999. This year's edition sees a new departure for the journal, the inclusion of a review section. It continues to contribute significantly to the society and to the wider academic community in the University'. He paid particular tribute to the support in recent years of Dr Roger Downer, President Emeritus of the university.

Dr Downer spoke of the high level of achievement of the History Society since its foundation in 1997 and spoke approvingly of the consistent amount of activity by the society. He was presented with a boxed set of all seven volumes of History Studies by Eamonn Gardiner.

Dr John Logan thanked Dr Downer for his support during his tenure, particularly taking the step of founding the Department of History and

highlighted the recent achievements of the Society, especially the 'Poets And Patriots Parted' exhibition by the society in February 2006 to commemorate the 90th anniversaries of the Easter Rising and Battle of the Somme in conjunction with the hosting of the 56th Irish History Students' Association Conference, which earned the society the title of 'UL Society Of The Year' for 2005-06.

Inclusion in the journal is open to all undergraduate and postgraduate students. The journal editors are seeking papers for the next issue. The closing date for submissions is 31 August 2007, details can be received from Conor.Reidy@ul.ie

Mature Students Wanted

Calling all mature students in UL!

If you are interested in forming a Mature Students' Society, keep an eye out for posters in the Mature Student Office and around college from this week onward.

Contact maturestudent.soc@gmail.com for more information

Féile Iontach ar Thaobh na Sionnaine

SARAH NÍ CHORRAGÁIN

TÁ fáil ar an gceol traidisiúnta Gaelach sa choláiste níos flúirsí ná riamh na laethanta seo agus é ag éirí níos flúirsí agus níos fearr fós an t-am uilig. Tá seans ann nach bhfuil mórán eolais ag mórphobal na hOllscoile ar an gceol, mar sin seo achoimre ar an eolas ar fad a bheas ag teastáil uaibh ó thaobh an choláiste de.

Tá cúlra céime á rith ag an gcoláiste darbh ainm 'Ceol agus Rince Gaelach'. Foghlaimíonn daltaí faoin traidisiún Gaelach ó thaobh an cheoil agus an rince de ar an gcúlra seo, faoi thraidisiúin eile bainteach leis an gceol agus leis an damhsa, déanann siad staidéar ar an nGaeilge, agus bíonn dhá uirlis le seinnim acu chomh maith leis sin ar fad, nó is féidir staidéar a dhéanamh ar damhsa nó amhránaíocht.

Bhí Féile Sionna ar siúl le déanaí sa choláiste freisin. Is féile bliantúil é a mhaireann seachtain le ceol traidisiúnta tíortha éagsúla eile a cheiliúradh. Chuir na *Chieftains*, - banna tradcheoil Éireannach atá an-chumas ag baint leo agus iad cáiliúil ar fud an domhain - críoch leis an bhféile lena gceolchoirm i gCeoláras sa na hOllscoile ar an 18ú Samhain. Sheinn, chan agus rinne na mic léinn ón gcúlra 'Ceol agus Rince Gaelach' damhsa ina dteannta. Ba iad lucht na céad bhliana a d'oscail an ceolchoirm le cúpla port, amhrán agus beagán rince agus bhí idir iontas agus áthas ar na *Chieftains* de bharr a bhfeabhais.

Sa bhreis air sin uile, tá Cumann Ceoil agus Rince Gaelaigh darbh ainm 'Gan Ainm' sa choláiste agus d'eagraigh siad céili níos luaithe an mhí seo. Cuireann

an Cumann ranganna ceoil agus ranganna damhsa ar siúl go seachtainiúil agus eagraíonn siad imeachtaí ar nós an chéilí leis an dtraidisiún ceoil agus rince san Ollscoil a chur chun cinn. I mbliana tá súil acu a bhféile mór ceoil *Campus Trad* a reáchtáil ar an gcampas arís am éigean i mí Feabhra nó mí an Mhárta.

Bíonn seisiúin á reáchtáil ag an gCumann gach seachtain sa teach tábhairne *Groody* freisin agus tá lán fáilte roimh cách teacht ann. Bigí ag faire amach d'imeachtaí ag baint leis an gceol nó leis an damhsa amach anseo, bheadh ionadh oraibh faoin méid atá á chur ar fáil daoibh. Is seans iontach maith é bualadh le duine nua leis na suimeanna céanna acu so bainigí leas agus an-cheol ar an deis seo!

Presidential search goes on



BY ALAN OWENS
CHIEF NEWS CORRESPONDENT

AS the academic year moves into December, towards holidays and dreaded exams, a lot of discussion is taking place around the campus as to who will take the office of UL president next year. Currently in the job is Dr John O'Connor, acting president, who took over from Roger Downer last April. Professor Downer retired due to ill health after eight years as President.

Applications from candidates were invited upon Prof Downer's retirement, and the closing date was October 10th. A firm of leading international consultants has been engaged by UL's governing authority to carry

out the recruitment process. The firm, Heidrick & Struggles, placed the ad in Irish newspapers, The Times and the Economist in Britain and the United States.

Attempts by An Focal to find out from the University who the potential candidates are were met by a lack of a response. In fact, at the time of writing, no information of any kind regarding the search for a new president was available from the University.

Some of the potential candidates are believed to be Don Barry, Vice-President Academic and Registrar, and Vincent Cunnane, Vice-President Research. Rumours have been circulating around the campus that Pat Cox, former President of the European Parliament is also being considered as a possible candidate. However, external and international candidates are also being considered.

Although the job was advertised internationally, candidates are expected to have an understanding of the Irish education system and a vision of UL in its wider global context. The ad reads that candidates should be 'of

exceptional intellectual calibre and be accomplished senior academic leaders with extensive knowledge and experience in the management of a complex organisation'. A salary is not mentioned, and while it is believed to be in six figures, this figure is understood to be still under consideration by university governors.

SU president St. John O'Donnabháin is a member of the Presidential Search Board, and when contacted by An Focal, had this to say, 'We've been arguing all along for the emphasis to be placed on an outstanding student-centred learning environment as per the University's strategic plan'.

'We would wish that the new President would have a connection with the students, have the students' interests at the heart of their project for the development of the University, and act as a lobbyist on our behalf to central government' he said.

The successful candidate is due to be announced sometime in the New Year.



Poetry and Politics in An Phluais

ZOË LAWLOR

UL Palestine Solidarity Society hosted Israeli linguist and political activist Professor Tanya Reinhart and her husband Aharon Shabtai, a prizewinning poet in An Phluais at the beginning of November. As Professor Reinhart had done her PhD under the supervision of the world famous linguist, writer and political commentator Noam Chomsky, the event was attractive to many, including people not specifically interested in Palestine. The evening began with Aharon Shabtai reading some of his poetry. The poems he read were about the Kafkaesque system of apartheid imposed by Israel on Palestinians. He spoke very

eloquently and movingly about his despair at Israel's murderous behaviour in Palestine and also in Lebanon with the war this summer. It was a surprise and treat for the audience to hear his poetry which was political but also humorous.

Professor Reinhart spoke about the links between the Israeli military and government and also the pressing need for international law to be enacted with regard to Israel. She described how Ireland, as a member state of the EU, has been collaborating in the starvation of the Palestinian people since EU suspension of aid to the Palestinian authority in reaction to the democratic election of the Hamas government in January. She also encouraged the forging of

links between students here and students in Palestine who are frequently prevented from accessing their colleges by the mechanism of the occupation.

Their talk was very timely as the next night nineteen members of the Al Athamna family were slaughtered in their beds in Beit Hanoun by Israeli shells. The UL Palestine Solidarity Society would hope that events like these would encourage students to get involved and to make human rights an issue.

For further information on joining UL Palestine Solidarity Society please contact ulpalestine@eircom.net or visit www.skynet.ie/~ulpalestine.

Where is God?

Talk in C1-058

Wednesday 29th Nov (Week 10)

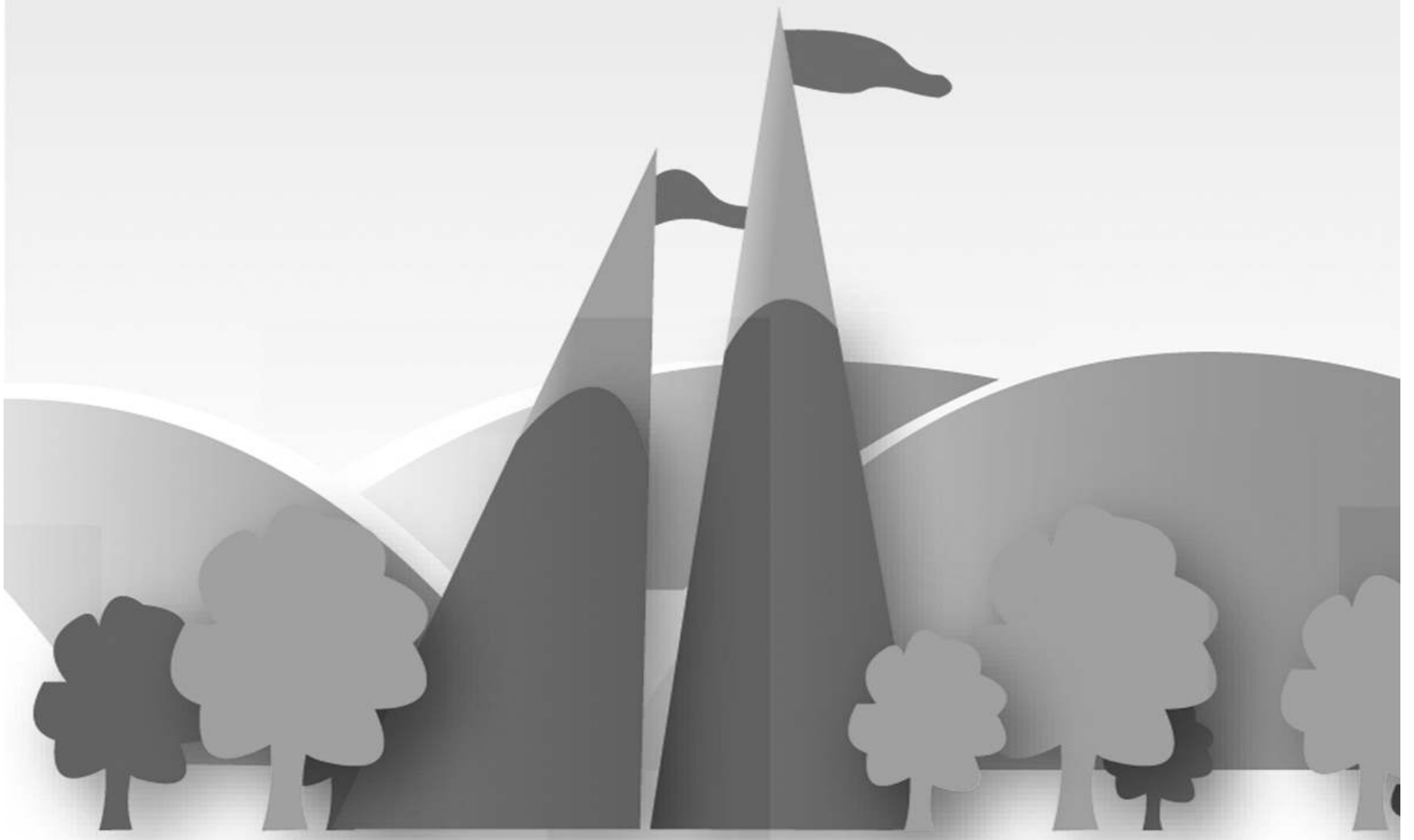
UL Christian Union
(Mondays 8PM Contemplative Centre)

www.skynet.ie/~cu

cu@skynet.ie

For all the info you need on Ents. & Events,
Union News, An Focal Interactive, as well as
Jobs & Accomodation listings...
...log on to the redesigned
Students' Union website:

www.
ulsu.ul.ie



STUDENT SPEAK TAKES A SHAG WEEK SLANT . . .

Thomas Dee asks the beautiful people: *Have you ever had an STI check?*



Orla Kelly - 1st year Business & Fiona O'Connor, 1st year nursing: 'No. It's not like it's ever been relevant'



'St. John Ó Donnabháin, SU President (apparently) ': 'BAN SEX!'

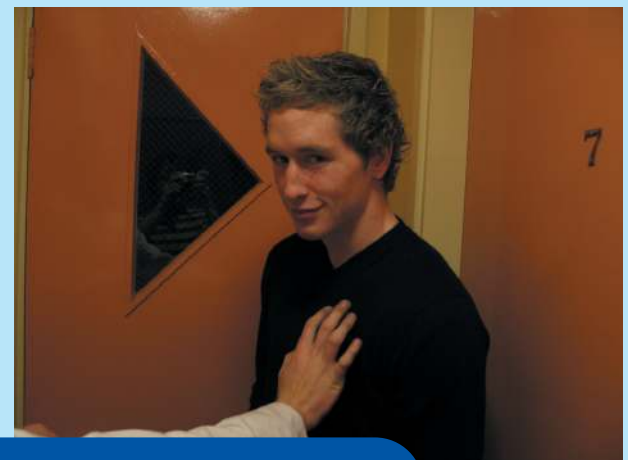
Paddy Rowsome, 1st year Equine Science: 'I don't take the risk. I hose my lovers down beforehand'



Vivion Grisewood, 1st year Physics and Chemistry Teaching: 'I am an S.T.I'



Sharon Conway, 1st year Multimedia Design: 'I don't refer to them as S.T.I's. I call them Pokemon!'



'Fritz' McHugh, 1st year English and History: 'I have become immune at this stage'

Note: Student Speak in Edition 5... what were they really saying???

Best set of names and answers will be printed in the next edition of An Focal and will win a hamper from the SU and €50!



Janette McDonald, President of the Music Soc.: 'No. I stay away from Plassey'



Mike Fitzgerald, 1st year Business: 'Yes. It was at my G.P's. Negative, by the way'



Jaye McKeown, Study abroad: 'Yes I did them for the leaving cert'

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The Stables Club

www.stablesclub.com



The Stables Pantry

The Stables Pantry is open for breakfast each day from 8am.

Breakfast Special (3 portions, toast, & tea/ coffee) - €3.80

Tea-time special (available from 3pm) main course & tea/ coffee/ glass of milk - €4.15

Hot Chicken Rolls - enjoy in the warmth & comfort of The Stables - €3.40
(Available all day for eat-in or take-away)

The Stables Pantry uses only the freshest produce daily.

Check out our new salad bar and our range of vegetarian options.

Bar Food

Hot Paninis are now available in the bar from 7pm each day - €4.95

Christmas Days

It's nearly that time of year again, and time for The Stables Club's annual charity event - Christmas Days. This year Christmas Days will take place on the Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday of Week 11. With live music courtesy of Free Beer & The Willful, DJ's, spot prizes & games, it's sure to be an event not to be missed.

Last year raised almost €10,000 for local charities. Call in to The Stables Club to get your tickets. Each ticket will get you entry to The Stables Club, voucher, Santa Hat, bus into town and entry to the Trinity Rooms - as well as your contribution to charity. All proceeds go to Fr. Gerry Daly's Fund and local charities.

Upcoming Events

Week 10

Monday 27th

Open Mic with the UL Music Society

Tuesday 28th

Karaoke - Your final chance to get into the Grand Final taking place on the Tuesday of Week 12.

Wednesday 29th

Live Music with Zenith.

The Stables also hosts the Campus Village Party Night.

Thursday 30th

Live Music with The Wilful.

One of the great live bands, a night not to be missed!

Friday 1st

21st Party Night with DJ

If you would like to have your 21st in The Stables, call in and ask for Declan or Brendan.

Saturday 2nd

Open for hot food from 9am until 6pm. Watch all the matches live, play pool on our 2 pool tables or kick back and listen to your favourite music on our jukebox.

Sunday 3rd

The Stables Club opens at 5pm. Showing American Football and La Liga, ease yourself into the new week!

Week 11 - Christmas Days

Monday 4th

Open Mic night with UL Music Society

Tuesday 5th, Wednesday 6th, Thursday 7th

Christmas Days are here! See posters in The Stables Club for more details.

Friday 8th

Stables Club Party Night with DJ Ber

Saturday 9th

Serving hot food all day, The Stables Club is the place on campus to relax and recharge those batteries after a hectic week.

Sunday 10th

With our 5 screens we can show you a choice of matches.

*"Life is like riding a bicycle.
To keep your balance you must keep moving."*
Albert Einstein (1879 - 1955)



BECOMING A SOLICITOR - THE NEXT STEP

FE-1 Direct is one of the largest providers of Legal Seminars for the Law Society of Ireland Entrance Examinations. With its professional philosophy, innovative teaching

strategies and actual experiences of lecturers in Professional Legal Services and Education candidates can be assured of quality improvement in their exam results.

INTENSIVE LEGAL SEMINAR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK*

Saturday 20th January 2007 to 11th February 2007.

For Registration details please visit: www.fe1direct.ie or email: info@fe1direct.ie

*Check out details of the Summer Intensive Seminars at the Law Society of Ireland and University of Limerick August 2007.



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Deli Offers

Soup with brown bread or roll - €1.75

Sausage Rolls - 3 for €1

Buy a chicken baguette with a Twix & mini Coke for €4.80

Capri-Sonne 2 for €1

Galaxy bars 2 for €1

Cadbury's Moro 2 for €1

USB Sticks

256mb - €20.25

512mb - €24.50

El Presidente

FRIDAY the 17th of November was International Students' Day. This is a celebration of the achievements of student activism down the years, and a reminder of the power of students to achieve positive change in society through standing up and speaking out on the important issues of the day.

The date remembers the Nazi storming of the University of Prague in 1939 during the invasion of what was then Czechoslovakia - nine student leaders were put to death, many hundreds of students put in prison, and all of the schools and universities in the country closed down. This was first commemorated two years later, and has seen many notable observances down the years, none more so than 60 years later. This was when student demonstrations helped spark the Velvet Revolution of 1989 against Soviet Communism, and the peaceful overthrow of an oppressive regime.

This is a very dramatic backdrop, massive social change of global significance. But I use it to illustrate the power of united student action, which I think is still of huge significance to this day. Where does this apply in the rich Ireland of today? Well, that prosperity doesn't extend to all, and that's why we were out on the streets in the same week as International Students Day.

A coincidence, but an important one. As I've written about before in this column, the creeping rise of registration fees (or fees-by-the-back-door!), coupled with a desperately inadequate grants system form a huge barrier to thousands of young (and not so young) people in making their way through the education system. This is in direct conflict with stated governmental goals of inclusiveness equality, and fair investment in education for the benefit of all in society.

We're lucky to be living in a time of prosperity - we have to make the best use of it we can; Education must be at the heart of government thinking. And we intend to place it firmly there, through action like protest and lobbying; last week's protest was far from the end, more like a beginning. Already plans are beginning for a national day of action next semester - keep a lookout, or call into the Students Union if you want to get involved! Student activism has achieved a huge amount, and it's up to us to make sure that proud history is built upon!!!

St. John Ó Donnabháin, UL Students Union President



Letters to the editor

An Focal, UL Students' Union, UL, Castletroy, Limerick.
Phone 061 202363, Fax 061 213476, Email deirdre.oshaughnessy@ul.ie

An Focal will endeavour to accommodate all letters as far as legally possible. All parties have a right of reply to letters printed herein.

Madam,

I would like to thank *An Focal* for highlighting in your last edition the difficulty for Irishwomen in accessing the 'morning-after' pill. I would also like to share with your readers some of my own experiences.

Last year, my (non-student) friend visited me for a weekend in Castletroy. On the Saturday morning she needed the emergency contraceptive pill (ECP). I thought it would simply be a matter of calling the Family Planning Clinic in Limerick city. However, she was coarsely told that she could not have an appointment until the following Monday at which point she would no longer be in Limerick and also, as Treacy Lynch explains in her article, the ECP would be less effective. She was then advised to contact her own GP, at the other side of the country. Finally she rang Shannondoc who gave her an appointment for that day, 15 miles from Castletroy! Fortunately my flatmate was able to drive her there and she got a prescription for €20 and charged €50 for the appointment. The most frustrating aspect of this was that the pharmacy where she finally obtained the ECP was no less than 25 metres from my house.

I would like to contrast this with my own experience in France where I was able to obtain the ECP from a local pharmacy at a total cost of €6 and where the pharmacist clearly explained its use over the counter.

I refuse to believe that Irishwomen are less intelligent, less educated or less capable of understanding basic medical instructions than their French counterparts or that we should have to pay more than ten times the cost for the privilege of having a doctor explain to us the same instructions as a qualified pharmacist.

As your article shows, 90% of people surveyed were in favour of over the counter availability of the ECP and even though this issue has received sporadic attention in the past few years, no real debate or progress has been made. I would thus call upon the Students' Union to officially lend their support to the IFPA's campaign with the hope of bringing about real policy change in Ireland.

Yours faithfully,
Ruth Clancy,
4th Year, LCS.

Madam,

I am writing with regards to unwanted mail (spam) from the University advertising the Irish Blood Transfusion Service. (I.B.T.S.). From the start I want to clarify for all interested parties that blood transfusion is a necessary service, but with policies for the greater good, which disregard some students from providing blood for transfusion. The list of reasons is varied and long. One of the categories for never giving blood is the practice of homosexuality; and as such irrespective of safe sex practice, a man having sex with another man is never permitted to give blood. This was and still is contentious for some of the U.L. student body. As such when the relevant email was forwarded it omitted homosexuality from the list of reasons.

My questions are simple, does the gay male community of the University not merit mention that we are unable to give blood or have the University chosen to avoid any mention in case of an image of being perceived as potentially homophobic? This is enraging for me personally, that in fourth year I received this unwanted mail. Can the University clarify the rationale for sending generic emails with sensitive subject matter? Also clarity is wanted with regards to a policy surrounding emails omitting necessary information, which could help avoid embarrassment for some students unaware of the I.B.T.S. policy on practising homosexuality.

In a centre reinforcing its enlightenment and excellence one would naively believe that some thought, and genuine sensitivity would seem plausible when surrounding such a topic. The gravity surrounding lack of genuine diverse spectrum on our campus is paramount when issues of this nature seem to go unrecognised on administration's radar. If this practice of reinforcing a mass mediated policy for 'the extraordinary club' membership of the I.B.T.S. supersedes the student body as a whole, what else can be seen to inextricably fall under the catchment of 'remiss'?

The hegemonic belief that this type of standardised, generic email is absolutely inclusive and non-intrusive shows a blindness on the part of the University to the diversity among the student body that receives its education in this institution.

As such, a University response is greatly needed as these practices, if unaddressed, blatantly favour segregation of the student body.

Yours in frustration,
Patrick Mc Hugh.

Dear Madam,

I would like to comment on the spiralling greediness of the Students' Union Clubs and Societies. Firstly could I please ask the general student population: how would you like to go on a foreign holiday with a bunch of friends where you will all participate in an activity you have in common and generally have lots of fun? You wouldn't say no I'm sure! But how would you like it if the Students' Union paid some of the cost? Needless to say there are few of you who wouldn't jump at that chance and be damn grateful for it. So what's so different about the students who run clubs and societies? It seems the members of some clubs and societies believe not only that the money for foreign trips should come completely from the budgets provided by the SU and not from their own pockets but also that they shouldn't have to have a reason for taking the trip such as to obtain training or partake in competitions. Can I ask those people: have you come to believe that holidays abroad are a now a right to all? Perhaps you feel if one club/society is allowed to go abroad you should all be allowed? I must bring you back to reality. If there is nothing hindering you from successfully carrying

out your activity here in Ireland then you have no reason to go abroad.

I appreciate some of you may feel hard done by but that is no reason to continue this fiasco of asking for money which would be better spent on improving the activities you already run right here on campus.

Don't get me wrong, if the club/society is seeking training or entering a prestigious competition abroad, good luck to them! But a holiday it still is and there is no way you shouldn't have to pay some of it yourself!

In my opinion the purpose of student clubs and societies is to accommodate as many students a possible. Isn't providing a 'holiday' for only ten or twenty members completely contradictory to this objective and unbeneficial to the rest of your members as a whole?

Yours etc
Maeve Bourke

"In Cathal O' Riordan's letter of edition 5 it was stated that 'Immigration has (thankfully) been almost eradicated in Ireland'. Mr O' Riordan would like to clarify that he was referring to 'Emigration'.

Madam,

There have been some notable exceptions for the list distributed below. For clarity here is the full list of exemptions as copied from the IBTS website, 21 November 2006.

Never give blood if:

- You are a male who has ever had anal or oral sex with another male, even if a condom or other form of protection was used
- You have received a blood transfusion (other than an autologous transfusion) in the Republic of Ireland on or after the 1st January 1980
- You received a blood transfusion (other than an autologous transfusion) outside the Republic of Ireland at anytime
- You have spent 1 year or more, in total, in the UK in the years 1980 to 1996
- You have ever used a needle to take unprescribed drugs, this includes body building drugs
- You or your partner is HIV positive
- You have had jaundice of uncertain cause after the age of 13 years
- You have had hepatitis B or C

Do not donate blood for 12 months after:

- You have visited a malarial area
- You were pregnant or gave birth to a baby
- You received an autologous blood transfusion

Do not give blood for 6 months after:

- You have had major surgery
- You have visited a tropical area
- You have had any part of your body pierced
- You have had a tattoo
- You received acupuncture (acupuncture performed by a doctor, nurse or physiotherapist may be acceptable, please contact us for details)
- You had an endoscopy

Do not give blood for 2 months after:

- You have visited the United States of America, Canada, Cuba, Mexico or Israel, because of the possibility of onward transmission of West Nile Virus via blood transfusion

Do not give blood for 1 month after:

- You have had contact with infectious diseases (where you have not previously been infected) e.g. chicken pox, mumps, measles or German measles
- Do not give blood for two weeks after:
 - You have recovered from the 'flu

Do not give blood for one week after:

- You have had a dental extraction
- You have completed a course of antibiotics

Do not give blood for 24 hours after:

- You have had an uncomplicated dental filling or scaling

Do not give blood until you have recovered after:

- A cold or cold sore

vCJD and Blood Donation

The IBTS does not accept donations from people who have lived for a total of 1 year or more in the UK between 1st January 1980 and 31st December 1996. This includes living, working or on holidays. By the UK we mean England, Wales, Northern Ireland, Scotland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

Regards,
Derrick Howard

Madam,

I am an expatriate working for a company in National Technology Park and living nearby in Brierfield. I get your An Focal at my door and I like reading it. That might explain how I got your email address.

Lately I couldn't help getting a negative impression about UL students. They are actually earning a very bad reputation for UL in general as some travellers managed to earn bad reputation for their whole community. I am also worried that those students apart from spoiling the reputation of UL, also cast a bad image of housing estates near UL. Though these housing estates are not as badly regarded as Southhill and Moyross, I am afraid we not far from such a day, if these students continue doing what they do now.

A couple of weeks back, on 5/11/2006 Sunday early morning between 2.30a.m. and 3.00a.m my car was vandalised by some drunk students. I hesitate to use the word "allegedly" here as all of us know the truth. They kicked down the side mirrors and took away the wiper including its arm. You can imagine how hard it is to drive in Ireland without wipers and side mirrors. Another car parked 100 meters further down also had the same fate of meeting those thoughtless students.

I called Garda and they came down and noted the damage. They don't seem to have time to investigate and catch those who did that. Again, everybody knows that and that gives the courage to do such things repeatedly. I had to spend €300 to get it fixed and it took 10 days to sort things out by visiting several garages, dealers and scrap yards - in between doing my work at office and taking care of my 2 months old baby. That put a lot of pressure on me and gave me the negative impression I explained above. This impression is not going to change for ever.

I wish these bad apples realise what damage they are doing to their future colleagues working in firms around UL and even to some of their employers who are going to recruit them. They are not really out of their senses after drinking. If they were out of senses, they could jump in front of cars in Dublin Road, near Hurlers Pub and test the braking capacity of those cars as they tested the strength of my wing mirrors and wipers. They know what they are doing very well. Those who get fun by damaging others property and causing immeasurable inconvenience to others don't really fit in a civilized society. I think there is fundamentally something wrong in their upbringing. I also have doubts how law-abiding those are going to be once they finish their course and out in the real world facing real issues.

I wish you could write in your An Focal more often stressing the need for gaining a good reputation for UL students among the residents near UL. These are the residents they are going to meet more often if they get employed in Limerick and it counts.

We, the residents, read and understand your anger in raising the course registration fees and car parking charges. The same way, we expect you to understand spending our money and time to recover from the damages you cause make us get anger as well.

Best Regards,
Ramson Tutte

WE mentioned very much in passing last time we wrote that el Pres had been a leading member of the Cocanistas. We didn't think that it would provide an apt lead-in to this week's mis-sive. It has been intimated to the Throat (in a car park near you) that someone purporting to represent the SU approached one of the shops/restaurants on campus with the intent of putting pressure on them to stop stocking coke products and not the white marching powder stuff either. This person suggested to the vendor that they would be better-off doing something now before being forced to do it. It would appear according to our sources that the provenance of those involved is somewhat unclear. So, while the front of shop campaign at the SU is all about the car park pricing situation, some people appear to be trying to take advantage and wage a secret war, a 'geheimer Krieg' if you will. Now, I favour a benevolent dictatorship as much as the next man, especially, if I'm the next man to have a go at the tight leather boots and monocle, but honestly, who thought our beloved crustacean had it in him to organise a secret police type operation like this? Well, not I for one.

This leaves us with a number of intriguing possibilities, that someone is pretending to act for the SU when not empowered to do so, that someone is pretending that someone is approaching them while pretending to act for the SU, or that pretending is a game you should stop straight after doctors and nurses goes wrong with your housemates. Now it is kind of hard to see the sense in all this. After all if vendor X stops then it means more business for vendor Y. So it would really require a campus ban for this to be effective...hang on, wasn't there some pesky vote on all of this about 2 years back, didn't we decide to ... well ... long finger any decisions at all really. I'm going to be keeping my ear to the grapevine but I can't see this going anyway.



As for the progress of the various campaigns, the calling of the Gardai to stop the barrier protest seems a tad excessive. There again, we've had the Gardai being called out on quite a few occasions by the boys in luminous jackets since the semester started. Isn't it practically wasting police time to call the Gardai just because a student called you a bad name and looked at you in a funny way? Fact is here at the Throat we find all this talk of legality to be so 20th century, after all international law didn't stand in the way of George W. Bush and we all know how much of fan el Pres Whingun is. Well, he seems to talk about nothing else, if it isn't George W. this, then it's George W. that. We should be calling for UN resolutions, move swiftly to annex the pay car park, and expand the whole issue to address car parking more generally on campus.

With the limited number of clamps available (some say 25, others 12, perhaps a cat) it seems that security is being forced to be more discerning in their efforts. And by discerning I mean haphazard. As we previous noted they are concentrating on ensuring that the staff parking areas are not being infringed upon by unclean non-staff types. We've also seen the unearthing by of another parking lane along the fountain in front of the foundation building, though it makes it incredibly tight for those who arrived earlier and parked legally. I can see an interesting day in the courts ahead for some unlucky driver who makes a hames of

their reversing.

The fees protest seemed quite tame really with a turnout of barely more than a hundred from all the colleges in Limerick. And if education is such a right why do we have to pay people to give it to us?

Break-ins and general larceny appears to be order of the day, and we're not just talking about the car parking and registration charges either. Lecture theatres and tutorial rooms are having plasma screens swiped and laptops, tipp-ex and toupees are moving faster in the library than some of the staff. Surely the library could look at lending people Kensington type locks for their laptops or lease them for a €1 per day? That said the culprits in the latest theft of college equipment were caught, and I'm sure a period on bail and some stern words from the judiciary will set them straight. Oddly enough the equipment can't be replaced while it is holidaying in the Garda lockup as evidence. It is all to do with budgets and having to wait for the Harvey Norman New Year's sale.

Seriously, if they need €1 per day to cover the Bridging Life, what will they need to do to bail out the over-runs on the boathouse? You don't really think it will come in on budget to you? And how will this play out with our search for a new UL President. We've had Pat O'Connor make her pitch in these pages on the basis of well... the fact that no one from humanities has had a go in the big chair yet. I wonder if someone on governing body isn't waiting in the long grass on all this financial zigzagging. After all, unlike Chelsea we can't sell the whole thing to some Russian once the bank calls in the overdraft.

Hmm...ULski..has a ring to it. UL Prevails. Email us at thethroat@gmail.com with your rumours and half-truths.



**IT'S TIME TO GET
DOWN TO BUSINESS**

**SEXUAL HEALTH AND
GUIDELINES WEEK
WEEK 10**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT;
SINEAD HICKEY ULSU WELFARE
061 202519 sinead.hickey@ul.ie**

AONTAS NA MAC LÉINN



SHAGADELIC BABY!

HERE'S some snippets of information about SHAG week, remember its all about safe sex and creating an awareness of safe sex on campus!

SHAG week is an event-filled week focusing on sexual health awareness. It also ideally coincides with World AIDS Day Campaign. Throughout the week students dressed in 'sperm suits' will be giving out SHAG packs around the campus, containing condoms, lubricant and information on sexual health. Posters will draw attention to various facts about contraception, STIs, pregnancy and other sexual health related issues.

ULSU's first SHAG week was launched last year by previous Welfare Officer Frank Fogarty and was a great success. We hope to emulate that success this year and encourage even more of you to participate in and enjoy our events!

On Tuesday UL Drama Society will stage a Sexual Health Sock Puppets show in the B canteen. Wednesday Night is a Porn Star theme night in Trinity Rooms (so look out for the Playboy Bunnies), Thursday sees John Simons of the Red Ribbon Project holding a Sexual Health Workshop in the University. On Thursday there will also be a Candle-light vigil for the Rose Project, an organisation dedicated to and focused on fighting against AIDS in Africa. Later that evening UL Debating Union will hold a debate asking 'How Young is too Young?'

So be nice to the sperms, enjoy the freebies during SHAG week, and remember to come along to the Workshop in AN PHLUAIS on Thursday at 2.30pm, there is a free panic alarm for everyone who attends!

Happy SHAGging!

Sinéad Hickey
ULSU Welfare Officer



SHAG Week
- What's it all about?!!

ULSU Welfare Officer Sinéad Hickey being showered with condoms by the SHAG week sperms
Photo : Hugh O' Brien

SHAG WEEK 2006

Tuesday
11am-2pm
On Campus
UL Sperms - Free SHAG Packs

12-1pm
B Canteen
UL Drama Soc Puppet Show

Wednesday
11am - 2pm
On Campus
UL Sperms - Free SHAG Packs

9pm
Trinity Rooms
ULSU Ents and SHAG week come together to present a porn-themed night

Thursday
11am-2pm
On Campus
UL Sperm - Free SHAG Packs

2.30pm-4.30pm
An Phluais
Sexual Health Workshop
with John Simons of Red Ribbon Project

6pm
Outside the SU
ROSE Project and ULSU
present a candlelit vigil and a talk from the ROSE Project
(To show solidarity and support for the fight against AIDS in Africa)

7.30pm 8.30pm
Jonathan Swift
ULSU and UL DebU join forces and
This House asks "How Young is too Young?"



grá love
gnéas sex
dul sa diallait shag
cliúsaí flirt
ag faoileáil flirting
seáinín johnny
coiscín condom
adharcach horny
bladar suirí chat-up line
scóráil sciobtha speed dating
ainnir álainn beautiful girl
cuimilt na gcós footsie
diúlach deas nice guy
cliobóg chick
brillín clitoris
sponc come
snámhaí salach dirty creep
g-spota g-spot
gleoite cute
ar nós na madraí doggy-style
peata dote
aisling stunner
adharc hard-on
anhrách erotic
gibhis fanny
fáiméad snog
seoda clainne family jewels
grá na hailpe gold-digger
faoiseamh lámhe hand-job
cuisle croí heart-throb

ceann head
áibhirseoireacht hanky-panky
corr kinky
triúsaí knickers
cíocha boobs
bod dick
ag buaileadh craicinn bonking
pardóga knocker
buachaill báire playboy
ag suirí sexing
ag collaíocht having sex
lapadaíl leapa nookie
bod-chlipire prick-tease
scuabóg pubes
puisín pussy
fichillín prick
tuairteáil tapa quickie
rampaire ride
ag marcaíocht riding
bodmhadra sexpot (male)
bodóinseach sexpot (female)
póg kiss
barróg hug
ag lapaireacht smooching
muirín sweetie-pie
raiteog tart
dóighiúil handsome
rídhathúil gorgeous

SHAG Week - Sexual Health Awareness and Guidelines

GUYS this week is all about raising the awareness of safe sex. We are not here to preach, condemn or point the finger, but to encourage safe sex practices and make students aware of the infections, diseases and risks that are associated and experienced because of people practicing unsafe sex. We want to create an understanding and consciousness of these implications on this campus. Please read the information handed out, but most of all use the free condoms provided to you.

If you ever need condoms or advice on safe sex please contact me on my email: sinead.hickey@ul.ie or call into me in the SU building.

Happy SHAGging!!!

Why Safe Sex is important...

Sexual intimacy does not necessarily include sexual intercourse. People may choose varying levels of sexual intimacy. You should not feel pressured to engage in sexual intercourse or any other sexual activity; what is right for you is the level of sexual intimacy with which you feel comfortable, whether that means none, intercourse, or any of a mind-boggling variety of other forms of sexual activity.

It's up to you.

For those who wish to be sexually active, the important thing is to take care of

yourself. Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are infectious conditions transmitted through sexual activity - vaginal, oral or anal. Some of the STIs can be easily treated but unfortunately there is no cure for many of them, and these incurable STIs tend to be the most common. Some, for example HIV and hepatitis B, can have serious health consequences.

A person can have any of the STIs without any symptoms. They may therefore be unaware that they have an infection and may be passing it on each time they have sex.

Reducing the risk:

The only way to be 100% certain of never getting an STI is never to have sex at all. This means that if you do have sex, you need to consider ways that you can reduce your risk of acquiring an infection (or passing on an STI you may not know you have!) There are various strategies you can use:

Have an STI check up after sex with a new partner. If you have picked up an infection it may be possible to treat it before complications develop, and the sooner you know you have an STD, the less likely it is that you will unknowingly pass it on to someone else.

If you are in a stable relationship and neither you nor your partner have any other sexual partners, you can make sure

that sex is safe by both having an STI check up. If you have sex with more than one partner or if you often change your partners, one way you can reduce your risk of exposure to an STI is to reduce the number of partners. The more people you have sex with, the more likely it is that one or more of your partners will have an STI.

How can you avoid infection with STIs?

• Abstinence

STIs are transmitted by close contact with an infected person. Therefore, abstaining from sex altogether is a certain way of avoiding infection.

• Limit Partners

Nobody has a natural immunity to STIs and a once only contact can be the source of infection. Also, the more partners you have the greater your risk of catching an infection.

• Condom Use

For sexually active people who are not in a 'one faithful partner' relationship, the proper use of a good quality, new condom, will significantly reduce the risk of infection. However, condoms do not offer total protection as they may fail during use.

Alcohol and Other Drugs

Alcohol and other drugs impair judgement and reduce the ability to make 'safe' decisions. Because certain infections such as HIV/AIDS are incurable, unprotected

sex, or sex while intoxicated, with a partner whose sexual history is unknown to you, could have devastating lifelong consequences.

Sharing needles during intravenous drug use, tattooing and ear piercing with unsterilised equipment are also high risk activities. Diseases such as, Hepatitis C and HIV/AIDS are easily transmitted in this way.

Pregnancy

While condoms do not definitely prevent pregnancy, it is a barrier to prevent pregnancy and it is 98% effective with careful and consistent use. However, the contraceptive pill is 99% effective if used properly. However, there is a higher failure rate if the pill is not used correctly. While the Contraceptive pill has advantages: it does not interrupt sex, it is useful for women who can reliably take pills on a daily basis and often reduces bleeding, period pain and PMT, it does not protect against STI's.

For further information:

<http://www.condoms.ie/advice.htm>

<http://www.thinkcontraception.ie/>

<http://www.crisispregnancy.ie/>

College: it's all about sex!

Or is it? We ask three students.

THREE students tell about their perceptions and experience of sex in college: who's doing it, how often they're doing it and who they're doing it with ... or if they're doing it at all. Our (very basic) straw poll here at An Focal HQ shows that we just don't believe the hype... all right, there are a few of you swinging off disco balls (no chandeliers in this part of the world) every night, but, by and large, we're not as liberated and 'free-lovin' as we think we are. Read on to find out more...

A gay guy's perspective...

There are two main stages gay people have to go through; being able to be comfortable in themselves and being comfortable telling friends and family. Coming to college was a big change for me, for the first time I was okay with who I was. Firstly because of the new environment that I found myself in, but also because since leaving school, in those few short months I had become more mature. It can be difficult at first but although I did not feel the need to avail of them, support services on campus are great. Out in UL is a good way to meet like minded people. For the first time I didn't feel isolated, they helped me to be okay with myself with regular meetings and social events here in Limerick as well as trips to Cork and Dublin.

Telling family and friends is a big step; personally I think if you're not sure then wait. Like I have said, you have to be comfortable with yourself before you can be comfortable with other people knowing. Peer pressure is bad but it's nothing compared to queer pressure!

So, SHAG week. It's about sex. The important message is, obviously, stay protected but remember you need to protect yourself emotionally as well as physically. Sex is available on tap when you come to college but it can come at a price. A huge problem facing gay men in college is the too-common misconception that 'gay guys all have AIDS'. While most of us know this isn't true, some remain

ignorant and this can be difficult to deal with. Having said that, don't believe everything someone you met in the Lodge says - STI's are becoming more and more common among young people - stay safe!

A straight girl's perspective...

When sitting down to write this article, the first thing that sprung to mind was the attitudinal difference for guys and girls. The usual - if a girl sleeps with a guy she is automatically branded a slut. However if a guy happens to get lucky some night in the Lodge (and I'm not talking jumping some poor defenceless girl in the middle of the dance floor) and sleeps with a girl - he is a Stud! This attitude is not just found in third-level education, it is dragged from the secondary school era and it seems that it is still here to stay. Male 'virility' seems to be something to be proud of, and the word 'promiscuous' is rarely used when talking about guys. For girls it's a different story.

Being a young, free and single female in University most definitely has its advantages. You can flirt a little, play a little, and kiss a little... and more? I don't think so. I tend to have friends who either have boyfriends or don't agree with one-night stands. Now don't get me wrong, I'm not a fan of one night stands, but sometimes I wonder if they are as bad as people make them out to be. I mean if you're both careful and understand the meaning of it, why should there be a problem? But there is a common perception that it is not acceptable and this exists in UL, definitely amongst my friends.

Overall I've had a pretty good experience as a single girl in UL. I enjoy the challenge of meeting a guy I've spotted around college, had conversations about with my friends over coffee in the Stables, and made eye contact in the SU shop. Bringing him home does not mean that you will sleep with him. In fact, sitting in the kitchen, eating toast and drinking tea and chatting to all the house mates

seems like a common occurrence after any night out, not rushing home to 'get it on!' I wonder if the male equivalent of this article will share that opinion... I doubt it. Guys seem to think they're on a promise when they're brought home, but in my experience (and that of the vast majority of my friends) all it means is we want a cuddle and a bit of a laugh, not to make the beast with two backs! There is no shortage of good-looking lads in UL for the ladies... now if only they'd stop wearing navy tracksuit bottoms!

A straight guy's perspective... Thomas Dee

Under the oppression of the leaving cert, we are led to believe that the years of college will be the 'promised land'. We expect to live in a land of liberation. This of course would apply to sex. But for the sexually frustrated teen of some small town and stuffy classroom of yesteryear, have his hopes been realised? I spoke to some first year guys who said that the myths are not always the reality of sex in college. Student X says 'It's fairly easy to meet women but actual sex is a whole other kettle of fish'. People might generally agree that yes, free from the social frustrations of home social scenes, shifting is relatively easy. Sex, however, has yet to be realised by many: Student Y says: 'I thought that sex would be more readily available. I came close once but she said she couldn't because she was riding someone else'.

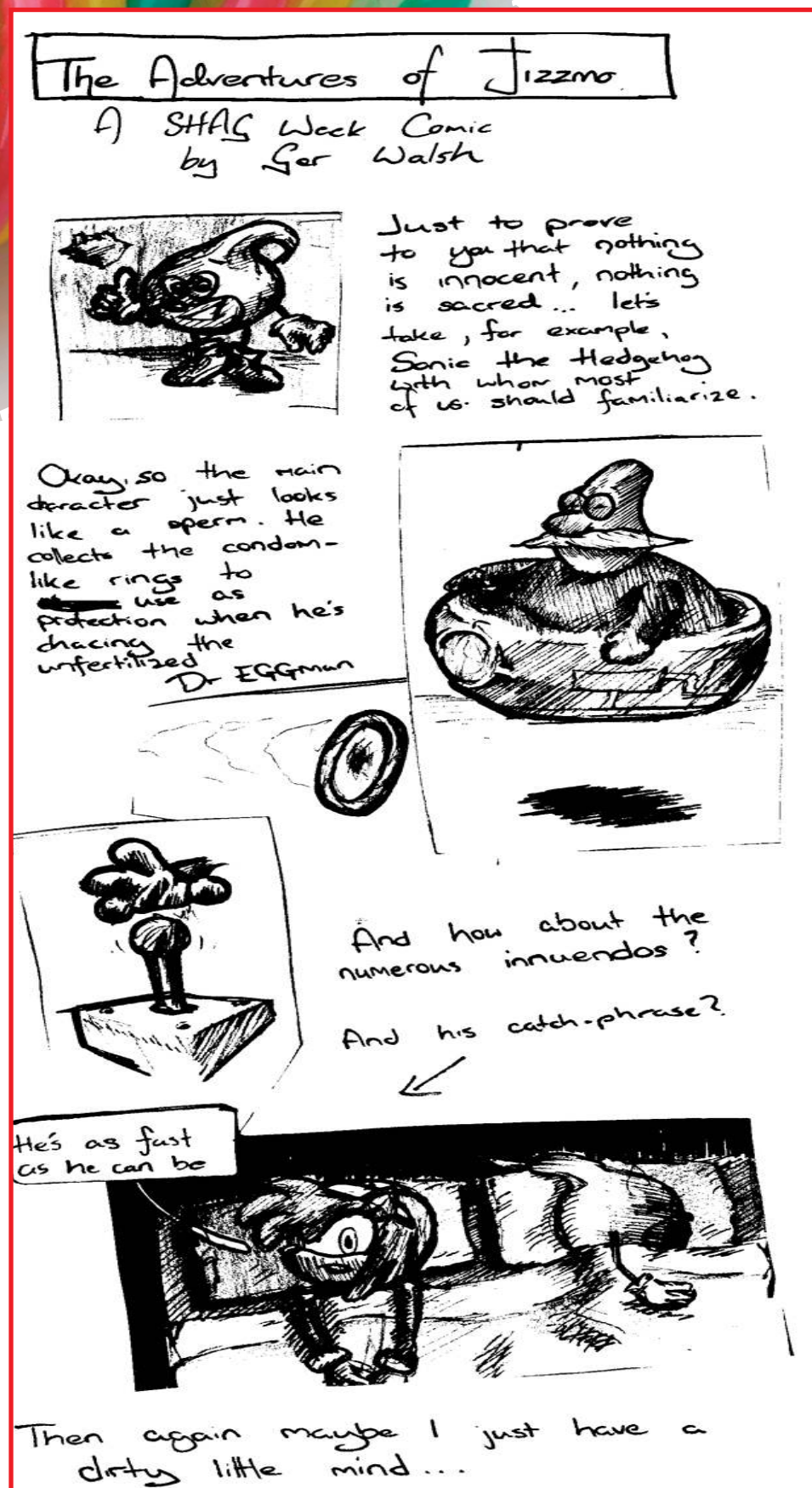
I myself would believe that there is a myth that pervades in the modern youth consciousness, i.e. that we are a promiscuous lot. When someone is in fact not sleeping around they are led to believe that everyone else is. In fact many of the students I talked to might even be repulsed by the idea. Student Y also said: 'I suppose if you want a girl who will sleep with you anytime you'll have to realise that she'll be doing the same with every other fellow. And I don't think any fellow would really like that'. Student Y carried a similar line; 'I

think were led to believe that college is just sex, drink and rock and roll. But then a lot of people are wafflers I suppose.'

Maybe it is that with the lies told to us by a media eager to frighten the older generation, and peers eager to impress and shore up a low self esteem, that we are carried along by the lie. This can

lead us to living and acting in a way that goes against our grain to 'fit in'. Is this really liberation? Student X told me that, though unsuccessful, 'I came close one night. I mean I had her in the bed but she went away, I'd say she was just leading me on. Maybe she was just all bluff.' I feel the only proper way to go is to

live and love whatever way your heart tells you. If someone thinks less of you for it, are they really worth your friendship. By the way, of the three good looking and outgoing fellows I talked to none of them had gotten laid in college yet. Don't believe the hype!



Why safe sex is the *only* option

SO you've heard of STIs but think they're something other people get; well don't be so sure... there is a steady increase in STI cases in Ireland. This is a real issue that affects every person who is sexually active. We're not telling you not to have sex but what we are telling you is that if you make the choice to have sex, make the choice to do it safely. The most effective way of preventing STIs (apart from absence) is to wear a condom. Condoms will be freely available from the sperm people throughout SHAG Week and from the SU Welfare Officer all year round.

There is nothing fun about getting an STI. In their mildest form, STIs are uncomfortable; in the most extreme, certain STIs can result in death. If free condoms aren't enough to convince you to play safe, read on!

Gonorrhoea "The Clap"

It can infect the genitals, urethra, rectum and throat. It can also affect the blood, skin, joints and eyes. Untreated Gonorrhoea can lead to blocked fallopian tubes, long-term pelvic pain and entopic pregnancy (a pregnancy outside the womb) in women and painful and inflamed testicles, inflammation of the prostate gland and infertility in men.

Chlamydia

Symptoms include: vaginal/penal discharge, pain or burning during urination, lower abdominal pain, spotting between periods and swelling or pain in the testicles. Untreated Chlamydia can lead to pelvic inflammatory disease (PID), entopic pregnancies and infertility. In some cases, there are NO symptoms, so please practice safe sex.

Herpes

If you get Herpes, you're stuck with it. It appears as sores inside the vagina, on external genitals, thighs or in or near the anus or on the

buttocks. The sores can rupture to form open sores or ulcers, which can often be very painful. They usually appear within a few weeks, but they should be treated to ensure they are not the symptoms of another disease. There is no known cure for herpes but treatment can prevent further consequences.

HIV/AIDS

Forget what you think you know about AIDS and HIV, in 2005 70% of HIV cases were Heterosexual. HIV/AIDS has become a young, heterosexual disease and universities are prime breeding ground for it. Promiscuity, drug and alcohol abuse and unsafe sex are contributing to the rise of HIV and AIDS in this country. **THERE IS NO CURE FOR HIV/AIDS.** If you are sexually active, proper use of condoms is the only way to keep yourself safe.

Syphilis

Unfortunately, for those who get it, syphilis can be fatal. It starts off when a small painless, pimple like sore appears on the man's penis or the women's external genitals. It may also appear in or around the mouth after oral sex or on the anus after anal intercourse. The woman's symptoms may be internal and unnoticed. If untreated, the secondary stage develops 2-6 months later and various symptoms may occur, the most common being a reddish rash on the skin, headaches, sickness, loss of hair and feverishness. The third stage may not occur until years later. It can involve intense pain, tumours, heart and brain damage, harm to unborn children and death.

So you think you might have an STI? It's essential for anyone who is sexually active to get an STI test regularly. STI testing is available from UL Medical Centre free of charge and also from the Limerick Regional Hospital (061-301111). Testing is done with the strictest of confidence. If you don't know how to go about getting tested, come see the SU Welfare Officer; believe me you won't

be the first. Don't wait to see if you develop symptoms because there might not be any. If you are unlucky enough to get an STI you must tell all your sexual partners. Think of it, would you like someone to know that they might have given you a deadly disease but keep it a secret from you?

Sadly, we live in a country where sex is still seen as taboo. There is nothing shameful or embarrassing about buying condoms (or getting them free from the SU) or getting an STI test... sex is as about as normal as it gets. There is never an excuse for not having safe sex.

Absolute stomach-churning fear

One student's true account of his first STI test...

ABSOLUTE stomach churning fear, that's what made me that take my first test. After more than a few, more than friendly encounters on Erasmus, I decided I would start my life back in Limerick with a clean sheet. So I went to the UL medical centre and did a blood & urine test. After a tense week (or three) I called back into get my results after I wasn't called to collect them by the Medical Centre.

Happy with my bill of good sexual health I continued enjoying my infection free sex life; until a friend informed me that

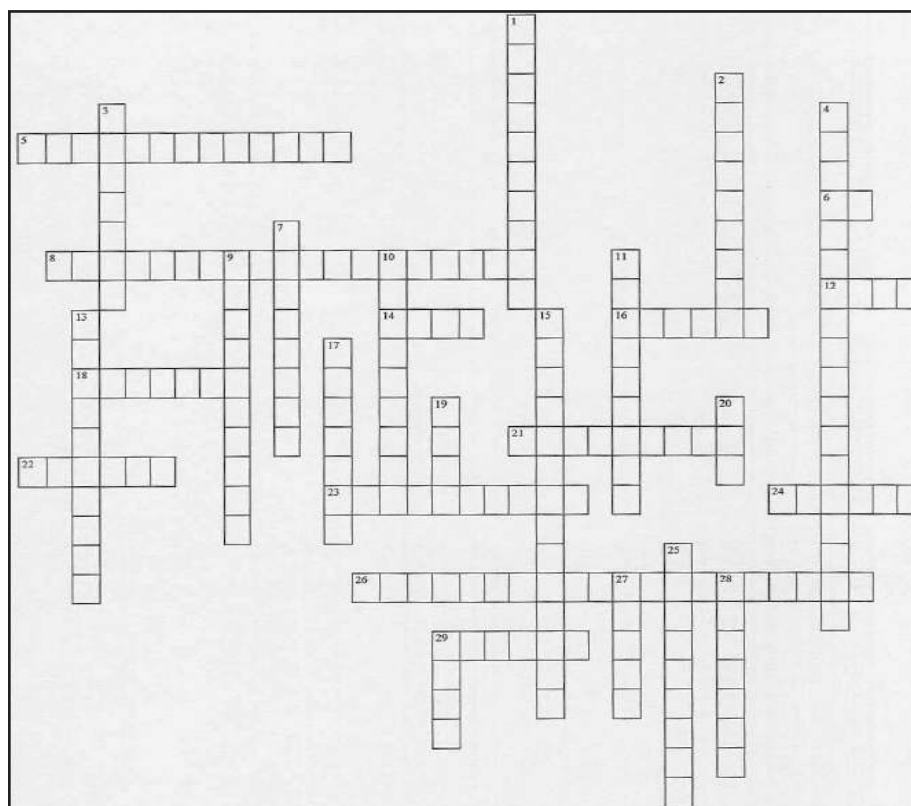
without "the swab" it wasn't a full test. So six months after my first test I made an appointment with the STI clinic in Limerick Regional. It took some persistence but I got my appointment. Couldn't piss for four hours beforehand (Very important) so the irony of 'Fix it Friday' on the radio was almost wasted...but not quite.

I advise anyone reading this to go early because the staff are under pressure as it is and you will be waiting. After a questionnaire about my sordid sex-life and a blood test the fun bit, a penis & anal swab...nice! As uncomfortable as it was, it wasn't as painful as some of the STI's that you are tested for, like the 'severe pain when passing urine' or

Gonorrhoea or the guilt of making someone infertile by passing on Chlamydia which has no symptoms in 50% of men or 80% of women.

Long story short; I got the all-clear again and will be making it an annual visit if needed. If you've been debating with yourself have a look at the symptoms and treatments and decide for yourself if the slightly uncomfortable and embarrassing test that takes a few minutes with friendly and professional nurses and doctors is really worse than the alternative. And I got a free Hep B. vaccination...score! Call 061 482 382 for appointments on Tuesday & Friday mornings.

Sexual Health Cryptic Crossword



Across

5. Bilateral, two-sided regard. (6, 7)
6. ...means no!! (2)
8. Prescriptions and wellness available on campus at this location. (7, 6, 6)
12. A zero score in tennis. (4)

14. Mass agglomeration. (4)
16. To be enjoyed by all, not just for men! (6)
18. The crowd applauded to show their adulation. (3,4)
21. Approaching sexual truth.(6, 3)
22. A viral infection which occurs in the genital region. Not to be confused with the handbag designer hermes..(6)

23. To be born with the wrong sex is to be a...(10)
24. A painful song, not sung sweetly. (6)
26. Student Extramarital bureau. (7, 7, 6)
29. Essential for pencil sketching. (6)

Down

1. Cherish the self. (4,6)
2. Opposite meaning to unconsciousness. (9)
3. Out and about with this UL society. (3, 2, 2)
4. In UL, a place to be listened to and not judged. (10, 7)
7. Sexuality out of harms way. (5, 3)
9. Irrational fear of members of the Gay and Lesbian community.(10)
10. An invasion of shellfish in the nether regions! (8)
11. An aspect of sexual health. Not the physical. (9)
13. ATM machines are more effective. (10)
15. A column in a newspaper or magazine featuring notices. Plus safety. (8, 6)
17. Spider spun mine of information: Student Sexual Health in UL. (7)
19. The Irish for GOD. Plural. (2)
20. Ailment, or ailments related to intimacy. (3)
25. Period of gestation lasting 9 months in humans. (9)
27. To misuse is to ...(5)
28. Verbal about sex. (4,3)
29. To gamble is to risk...(4)

1st person to come into Sinead in The Students' Union wins €50.00



SHAG WEEK 2006

Europeans spend
€8.6 Billion a year on
ice cream.

That same amount could
fully fund the fight
against global AIDS.

www.roseproject.com

Source: World Bank

**PLEASE SHOW YOUR SOLIDARITY AND
SUPPORT FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST AIDS
IN AFRICA.**

**CANDLE LIGHT VIGIL
THURSDAY WEEK 10,
6PM-OUTSIDE THE SU**



The Rose Project
AIDS IN AFRICA | Living and Dying with Dignity

The Rose Project and the African AIDS crisis



BY NIAMH CLOWRY

THE AIDS epidemic in Africa has reached frightening new levels in recent years. Sub-Saharan Africa is more heavily affected by the disease than any other region in the world. It is estimated that over two million people in Africa have died from the disease in the past year alone. The figures speak volumes; over 24.5 million people were living with HIV in Africa at the end of 2005. In the absence of massively expanded prevention, care and treatment programmes, it is expected that the death toll from AIDS on the continent will continue to rise. As part of a growing worldwide awareness campaign, an Irish woman, Mary Donohue set up the Rose Project in 2003. The Rose Project was established to provide medical, nursing and physiological treatment and care to people living with or affected by HIV or AIDS. The principal aim of the project is to fund the delivery of quality medical, nursing and psycho-social care to people living with AIDS and their families.

The project was named after Rose Atieno, a young Kenyan woman dubbed the 16 millionth person to die of AIDS in Africa. It has been estimated by the project that over four million people in sub-Saharan Africa are currently in need of vital antiretroviral treatment, with just over 17 per cent of these people receiving it. While some vital drugs have become available in Africa

in recent years, much more is needed in order to combat the problem.

To date, the Rose Project has helped to build a community based HIV and AIDS health and education centre in Kenya and an acute care clinic in Malawi, along with eight other health programmes across East Africa. The long term goal of The Rose Project is to portray a positive image of Africa and the African people and to give a realistic account of their response to this Pandemic.

In the developed world, AIDS is a chronic but manageable disease, with treatments widely available. For African countries it remains a death sentence for many. Problems in administering medicine are owing to a severe lack of resources and infrastructure.

Tackling the HIV and AIDS crises in Africa is a long term task that requires sustained effort and planning, both in Africa and with the international community. Raising awareness of the campaign is but one small way to help in the global fight against the disease.

World AIDS Day, on December 1st is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV and AIDS. As part of this campaign, a Vigil will be held in the Student's Union courtyard at 6pm on Thursday of Week Ten, in conjunction with SHAG week. It is hoped that students will turn out to support this event and highlight the issue of the AIDS epidemic in Africa and around the world.

Please contact sinead.hickey@ul.ie for more information on the vigil and SHAG week.

Crisis Pregnancy: your options



BY Sinéad Hickey,
ULSU Welfare Officer

CRISIS pregnancy is more common than most people realise, and it's something that can happen to any woman who is sexually active - contraception is not always effective, so remember to always use more than one form of contraception! The pill clinic in UL is a free service to all students, so please use it!

If you do find yourself in a crisis pregnancy, however, don't panic - there are plenty of people here to help.

As the Welfare Officer I can give you information on crisis pregnancy, and discuss the many options available to you. Support during your pregnancy, information on adoption and the option of abortion are available to you when you come into the Welfare Office. All matters discussed are strictly confidential and I can refer you onto different agencies that facilitate the option you wish to take. Remember you are not alone if you are experiencing an unplanned pregnancy. The services set up, are available to help you through this time.

There is also support networks set up by the University if you decide to have your baby and continue your studies. The Counselling Service in the University is a

fantastic asset to UL, and a Childcare Bursary is also available from the Students' Union. Accommodation for student parents and the on-campus crèche are all facilities that can help you.

Please remember if you find yourself in this situation, my door is open to you.

Options...

Keeping the baby.

This may not be suitable for

everybody, but if you feel it is the right option for you, I can talk you through the supports that are there for you if you choose to keep your baby. These supports include childcare bursaries, on-campus accommodation for student parents and on-campus crèche facilities.

Adoption. Agencies such as Positive Options can speak to you about your choices and refer you to

the relevant organisations that deal with adoption in Ireland. Whilst this may be perceived as a slow process by many, adoption can allow you to enrich the lives of other families.

Termination. This is not available in Ireland but you can seek information about

terminations abroad from agencies such as Positive Options. They also provide post-abortion counselling to women who decide to take this step. Again, this option may not suit everyone, and you must do what's best for you in your situation.

Morning-after pill debate hits UL

HOLLY JOHNSON

As the name suggests, the so called "morning after pill," can prevent a pregnancy even after unprotected sex. If the condom broke, birth control pills forgotten or worse if a woman is raped, emergency contraception offers a welcomed alternative to the prospects of abortion or

The president of the Irish Pharmaceutical Union, Mr. Michael Guckian, recently called for the morning-after pill to be made available over the counter in pharmacies. As the pill loses efficacy 24 hours after unprotected sex and is virtually useless after 72 hours, it is essential that women can access it quickly and easily. At weekends, outside of normal working hours and in rural areas an appointment with a doctor may be hard to come by.

Here in UL, a student seeking emergency

the morning after pill, following a consultation with patients. This would speed up the process immensely and give women greater access to it. Approximately 15-20 patients visit Dr. Cahill per week seeking the morning-after pill. These figures inflate at certain times of the year such as RAG Week. Dr. Cahill reported that the majority of students seeking emergency contraception need to do so because of a condom bursting. He sees a drastic need for more sex education on campus and perhaps the establishment of stand alone sexual health clinic. Drawing from the shocking figure that 4% of U.L. students have Chlamydia, one would be lead to believe that the vast majority are unaware of the implications of having unprotected sex.

Sinéad Hickey, Welfare Officer at UL Students' Union told An Focal that, 'This discussion of the morning after pill comes at a time when it has been brought to the forefront of the ULSU Exec Agenda. Both St. John and I have discussed this matter with the Medical Centre Director and intend to contact Bord Altranais with regard to this matter and question their policy with regards to dispensing of the morning after pill.'

Ms Hickey also said 'Students have approached me on numerous occasions in relation to the morning after pill and regular contraceptive advice. I have noted a reoccurring trend with the difficulty that can be encountered in getting the morning after pill and the manner in which it is dispensed. It has now received backing from the president of the Irish Pharmaceutical Union and the time has come for more pressure to be put on the Government in the run up to the General Elections in May next year for this much-needed development.'

contraception must go through the process of going to the Student Health Centre and making an appointment to see the doctor. Depending on availability this could be scheduled for later that day or even a day later, a push when you consider the fact that the pill works best if taken in the first 24 hours after unprotected sex.

Dr. Niall Cahill, director of the Medical Centre in U.L. believes that practice nurses should be legally allowed to dispense

motherhood. It works by stopping the implantation of the fertilised egg in a safe, affordable and effective way with a failure rate of only 1-3%. There's only one problem - try getting it the morning after! The "morning-after" pill, Levonelle, is currently available only on prescription in Ireland. This is currently the cause of great debate.



Irish Solution to an Irish Problem

NIAMH COLEMAN

17,673. This is the number of women who have travelled to the United Kingdom between January 1980 and December 2004 to carry out the procedure known as abortion. The latest figures available are for 2004 when 6,217 women terminated their pregnancies in the UK. This figure equates to 17 women every day making the lonely journey across the Irish Sea. But the shocking thing about this figure is that this does not take into account all those who give fake addresses in the UK. It also fails to consider those who go further a field, such as the Netherlands, where costs to complete a termination are lower.

This issue will not go away. It continues to be an important topic and will do so for the foreseeable future. So why do we keep turning a blind eye to it? Why do we insist that women, when at their most vulnerable, should have to travel to the UK in order to avail of a health

service they cannot avail of in their own home country? Why is it that we boast and show off to all the other nations of the world about how progressive we are now that we have money, when we still uphold this defunct law, with its origins in 1861, which makes all 117,653 of those women criminals in the eyes of the Irish governors?

The Irish Family Planning Association (IFPA) is concerned about the treatment of women who are forced into travelling for an abortion. There three main areas of concern are: the supply of accurate and non-judgmental information about abortion; the amount of money needed to fund a journey to the UK; and how women can fully integrate the experience of abortion in their lives once they return.

In a submission made to the UN Commission on Elimination Against Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in May of last year, the IFPA emphasised the government's failure to implement Article 12 of the

Commissions manifesto, which reads: 'States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure, on a basis of equality with men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning.'

The IFPA's view is that women who want to take the necessary steps to having an abortion are discriminated against because they are criminalised by their own government and forced to travel, which creates all types of hardship. They go on to say that 'the current constitutional and criminal law provisions disproportionately favour the interests of the foetus over the rights of pregnant women'. One of their main arguments about the inequality pregnant women face in this country is due to the forced continuation of pregnancy even in the case of severe foetal anomaly, where women who travel are denied access to vital genetic analysis of foetal remains to determine implications for

future pregnancies.

The IFPA also noted that over the last number of years have seen an increase in illegal and unsafe abortions. This is due to the fact that increasing numbers of asylum seekers fall pregnant in our country because they do not have the health services at their disposal.

Abortion was first made a criminal offence in 1861 under the Offence against Persons act. Since this there have been many different amendments to this law as it were the first of which was in 1983. But it is still seen as many as regressive. In 1986 Justice Hamilton declared that the right to information for those women seeking to obtain an abortion outside the State was in breach of the law because he interpreted that this information undermined the right to life of the unborn. Indeed action was taken to the European Court of Justice in 1991 against 14 members of 3 separate Students' Unions from varying Universities in Ireland due to their distribution about the information detailing clinics and the different methods of termination to their respective students. This case was initiated by the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC). It was ruled that various channels of information, including students' unions, could be prohibited from the dissemination of information

relating to such abortion clinics due to their lack of financial links with the aforementioned. The signing of the Maastricht Treaty, in 1991 also, saw that Ireland's austere abortion laws would not be affected by EU law.

What brought abortion into the mainstream topic of conversation was the much publicised X case, which first hit our papers and television screens in 1992, where an injunction was granted preventing a 14 year old girl, the victim of a rape, the freedom to travel to another state to carry out an abortion. Many of us will remember hearing about it, but very few of us know the facts. A heated argument gripped the nation. Everyone had an opinion on the matter. The government at the time of the X case had, unsuccessfully, tried to exclude suicide as grounds for an abortion within the state of Ireland. After her neighbour raped her, this young girl was then subject to a Supreme Court case. The young girl told her mother that she was feeling suicidal due to the fact that she had to endure pregnancy at such a young age. But the family had the misfortune of asking the Gardai if DNA for the aborted foetus would be deemed admissible as evidence in the prosecution case against her neighbour. The former Attorney General, Harry Whelehan has a lot to answer for. The fact that he sought an

injunction to stop a 14 year old suicidal girl from having a termination shows us exactly the discrimination that women who seek abortion are still facing today. The was further highlighted in 1998 with the similar story of the C case where a 13 year old girl fell pregnant as a result of rape. In both instances the girls were allowed to travel after much public outcry because their pregnancies were viewed as a threat to their lives due to the risk of suicide being prominent in the case of abuse victims. In the X case the young girl had to go through all that and then face a miscarriage before the planned abortion could take place.

There have been many different proposed constitutional amendments in the past in which we have been asked to ratify the wording of Article 40 which deals with this issue but many of these are too complicated and the government does not go far enough to explain in ordinary terms what exactly we are being asked to vote on when it comes to referenda regarding this. The simple fact is that we have never been asked the simple question if we want abortion, in all cases, to be made legal in this state. Until we do this will continue to raise its ugly head every few years. Until then 17 girls will make that journey every single day.



IT'S TIME TO KNOW THE MECHANICS OF IT ALL

ULSU SHAGadelic WEEK

© 1997 New Line Cinema

SHAG WEEK-WEEK 10

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT;

SINEAD HICKEY ULSU WELFARE

061 202519 sinead.hickey@ul.ie

AONTAS NA MAC LEINN



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

With ULSU Welfare Officer Sinéad Hickey

As a Student Parent in UL

THE life of a student parent is not easy; the pressure of being a responsible parent is also exacerbated by the pressures of being a student. Things such as looking for accommodation, paying for childminders or a crèche, and just general living expenses makes it even more expensive to attend third-level education.

Here are a few tips that might make it a little easier for you while attending the University of Limerick

Childcare Bursary: The Students Union annually provide a Childcare Bursary. This means any student parent is entitled to apply for financial assistance for childminding and crèche costs. This bursary is very popular with student parents, but I am aware of some students who are not aware of this facility. For next terms bursary, please call into me in the SU from Week 12 onwards. Post grad students can contact Maja in the PSA office in the Stables Courtyard.

Accommodation on Campus: All 2 bedroom apartments in all of the on-campus villages are designed to accommodate student-parents. It is important to note that these apartments are available to student-parents 12 months of the year.

The price of these apartments is generally too expensive for student parents - however, if you approach the Accommodation Office, a different form of payment can be organised between you and the Accommodation Office.

Student-Parent Group: This year, we are hoping to get a student parent group up and running. This group will hope to offer support and advice to student-parents, address issues that affect student-parents, invite speakers to talk about issues that interest the group, organise social events and meet people in similar circumstances. It also aims to work in coordination with the UL Babysitters Forum.

If you require any more information on the topics discussed or just need to ask a question, please don't hesitate to call into me in my office in the SU building or email: sinead.hickey@ul.ie.

An Ghaelgeoir



BY BREANDÁN
Ó HÉAMHAIGH

A Cháirde Gaeil!!

Bhí coicise gnóthach againn anseo i dTolglann na Gaeilge. Támuid ag eagrú gach rud chun a bheith réidh do imeachtaí eile i dtreo deireadh na semestéir agus tá tús curtha ag plean Sheachtain na Gaeilge chomh maith. Tá cóisir na Nollaig á eagrú againn! Beidh cóisir na Nollaig do Muintir na Gaeilge ar siúl sa Village i mBaile Átha Cliath ar an 8ú Nollaig agus támuid ag dul ann. Sin ar an Aoine agus beidh muid ag fanacht thar oíche. Beidh an-craic ann ar an oíche le cúpla

de na acts is fearr I shaoil na Gaeilge! Rónán Ó Snodaigh, Rattle & Hum, Sult House Band, Traic & Na Fomoraigh so beidh craic iontach againn ar an oíche sin! Beidh cuid maith de na coláistí ann, so bigí I dteagmháil faoi. Támuid ag eagrú ceolchoirm speisialta anseo freisin le cúnaimh dé roimh deireadh na Semestéir. Tá an Ciorcle Chomhrá ar siúl freisin, gach céadaoin ag a 6 sa Tolglann. Bíonn craic agus comhrá ann I gcónaí!

Beidh Seachtain na Gaeilge ar siúl I Sem 2, agus támuid ag iarraidh na pleannanna a chur le chéile chomh luath mar is féidir. Támuid ag smaoineamh ar seachtain craiceálta le gigeanna, cainteoirí agus eile! Ma tá aon smaointí ag éinne, teigh I dteagmháil linn (ancumanngaeilge@gmail.com nó breandan.ohamhaigh@ul.ie)

I rith seachtain a 8 sheol an Ollscoil scéim Teanga na hOllscoille agus bhí a lán daoine I láthair. Tá sé tábhachtach go n-iarraimid ar

seirbhísí na hOllscoille trí mheáin na Gaeilge chun soiléiriú go bhfuil muid anseo agus go bhfuilimid ag iarraidh na seirbhísí a usáid trí Ghaeilge. Tá alt eile sa nuachtán faoi seo. Bhí Paisean Faisean I Luimneach I rith seachtain 8 freisin, agus bhí 4 ón Ollscoil ar. Bhíos fhéin ag labhairt le Aoife Ní Thuairisg agus beidh an agallamh sin I Review go luath. Bhí Glór na nGaeil ar an gCampus agus bhí siad an-shásta leis an obair atá á dhéanamh againn anseo! Támuid sa top 3 cumainn Gaelach sa tír!!

Tá fógraí ceart thart fán Aontas anois chun bealach na Tolglainne a mhíniú! Ar na léarscáil agus tá an fógra ceart ar an Doras. Tá gach rud dhátheangach agus níos fearr ná a iarrann na treorlíní faoin Acht na dteangacha oifigiúla 2006!!

So sin é an scéal! Bigí ag baint usáid as an Ghaeilge! Agus an Tolglann!!! Beidh mé ag labhairt libh! Meas Ollmhór!

Are you a Student-Parent?

Are you interested in addressing issues that affect student-parents?

Would you like to meet people in similar circumstances?

The Student-Parent Group aims to:

Offer Support and advice to student-parents

Address issues that affect student-parents

Invite speakers to talk about issues that interest the group

Organise social events

Work in coordination with the UL Babysitters Forum

If interested please email: ulstudentparents@yahoo.co.uk

Or contact Maja in the Post-grad Office located in the Stables Courtyard

Dhá Chéad Míle Ó Luimneach

CAIRBRE Ó CAIREALLÁIN

IS iontach an rud é an ollscoil ó thaobh bualadh le daoine de. Tagann mic léinn le chéile ó na ceithre hairde le bheith mar chuid de phobal an choláiste, go háirithe in ollscoil chomh mór le hOllscoil Luimnigh. Roimh theacht ar an ollscoil dom is beag aithne a bhí agam ar éinne taobh amuigh de Bhéal Feirste, mo chathair dhúchais, ach anois is a mhalairt an scéal atá fíor.

Tá an ollscoil ag titim síos le daoine ó Ciarraí agus Corcaigh, scaifte mór acu ó Mhalla agus iad uilig glan ar mire! Tá neart ó thaobh seo na tíre, an Clár, Tipp, Gaillimh agus Luimneach san áireamh ar ndóigh, agus ó thoir tá tuilleadh ó Loch Garman, Cill Chainnigh, Baile Átha Cliath agus eile. Leanann an liosta ar aghaidh, chomh fada ó thuaidh aniar fú le Dún na nGall. Agus is iontach an rud é roinnt teagmhála a bheith agat sna háiteanna sin nó ní fíos cá huair a mbeidh leas le baint astu, ar fáth amháin nó ar fáth eile!

Ach is suntasach an ganntanas mac léinn a thrasnaíonn an teorann ó Thuaidh. Ó thús an téarma seo níor leag mé súil ach ar

bheirt arbh as na sé chontae dóibh, duine amháin acu is é mo dheartháir é agus an fear eile is é an cócaire sna Paddocks é. Is fíor go bhfuil achar maith taisteal i gceist agus ní féidir a shéanadh gur pian sa tóin ceart é an t-aistriú airgid agus an darna guthán póca. Ach nach aisteach go bhfuil níos mó mac léinn anseo ó Mheiriceá, ón Fhrainc agus ó Shasana ná mar atá ón dara cathair is mó sa tír?

Shilfeá gur ag caint teanga eile a bhíonn muid cibé nó cuid mhaith den am ní thuigeann mo chomhscóláirí focal a thagann amach as mo bhéal. An miníonn an easpa teagmhála seo an t-aineolas atá le sonrú go minic i measc muintir na hollscoile i dtaobh cúrsaí an Tuaiscirt? Is ábhair gáire é den chuid is mó ach mar sin féin, is trua héalach an scéal é nuair a chuireann duine éigin an cheist ort 'An dtiomáineann na carranna ar an taobh eile den bhóthar thuas ansin?'

Uair eile gur tháinig sé chun solas gur Béal Feirsteach mé, tháinig tonn iontais ar chailín áirithe sa Teach Gaeilge agus dúirt sí 'Oh i never knew ye spoke Irish up there'. Mar a dúirt cara liom a bhí ann ag an am- sin abairt chonspóideach duit! Ní chuirfeadh sé iontas orm dá

mbá rud é go bhfuil drong beag amuigh ansin den tuairim go bhfuil cogadh fíochmhar ag dul ar aghaidh sa chathair go fóill. Rud nach bhfuil, dála an scéil!

Ach níos measa arís na aon rud eile ná an dhá fhocal sin, dhá fhocal a chluinim go minic thart fán ollscoil is atá gan sárú mar mhasla ag mo léitheid, is é sin 'Northern Ireland'. Níl cónaí orm i 'Northern Ireland' ach in Éirinn na nGael féin. Is gráin liom na focail sin, a thugann aitheantas don Stát a bhunaigh na Sasanaigh, i ndiaidh dóibh sé chontae de chuid na tíre seo a sciobadh uainn gan cheart. Ach ar ndóigh, ní hé go bhfuil muid i measc lucht tacaíochta na n-aontachtaithe, níl san fhadhb ach nach bhfuil daoine eolach a dhóthain ar chúrsaí.

Mar fhocal scoir, ba mhaith liom a luaigh libh gur b'fhiú go mór daoibh cuairt a thabhairt ar Bhéal Feirste am éigin, cathair iontach atá inti. Is féidir leat dul ag siopadóireacht go dtí go dtiteann tú, tá pobal bríomhar, gníomhach Gaeilge ann agus bíonn ceol caithréimeach na nGael ar fáil i dtithe tábhairne fud fad na cathrach. Agus ar dóigh, ní gá buairt a bheith oraibh: bíonn na carranna ag tiomáint ar an taobh céanna den bhóthar agus gach rud!

Apathy once again alive and well in UL

NIAMH CLOWRY

APATHY in UL has been a persistent and prevailing problem for some time. Despite the high number of students attending the University, many issues can go unnoticed by a large majority of students. With the advent of a new sabbatical position of Campaigns and Services Officer, there has been a significant increase in the awareness of campaigns on campus. Issues such as the increase in the car parking costs have been met head on and already there has been a petition, a march to the White House and various protests around college on the issue. However it appears that apathy is still alive and well here in UL if the Students' Union AGM is anything by which to measure

student participation in the politics of the college.

The low turn out at the AGM is disappointing, given the positive feedback that there has been from students on the work already undertaken by this years Sabbatical Officers. The AGM is an opportunity for students to come out and show their appreciation of the work that has already been done, and also to make them aware of ongoing and upcoming issues and events. A rather disappointing aspect of the AGM was the fact that this year there are 165 class reps, yet there were only 130 students at the AGM, and not all of these students were class reps. The problem of apathy thus seems to have transcended into the Union's decision-making body also.

With over ten thousand

students in UL it is rather disappointing to report that there was not even the required two hundred students at the AGM in order to reach quorum. Students are certainly very busy, especially at this time of year, with essay deadlines and FYP demands on fourth years. Yet it seems somewhat disheartening that the vast majority of students are not willing to give up one hour of their day to learn a little more about all the work that is going on behind the scenes on their behalf. All that we can hope for is that the next AGM will show a vast increase in the number of students present and that the issue of apathy amongst UL students will be addressed in some positive way in the coming weeks and months.

AONTAS NA MAC LÉINN
ULSU
Ollscoil Luimnigh

NiteLink Bus

In association with

SUPERQUINN
&
Courtyard Student Village, Brookfield Hall Student Village
Thomond Village, Kilmurry Village
Dromroe Village, Cappavilla Village, Plassey Village

Route A: On the hour
7:00 8:00 9:00 10:00 11:00

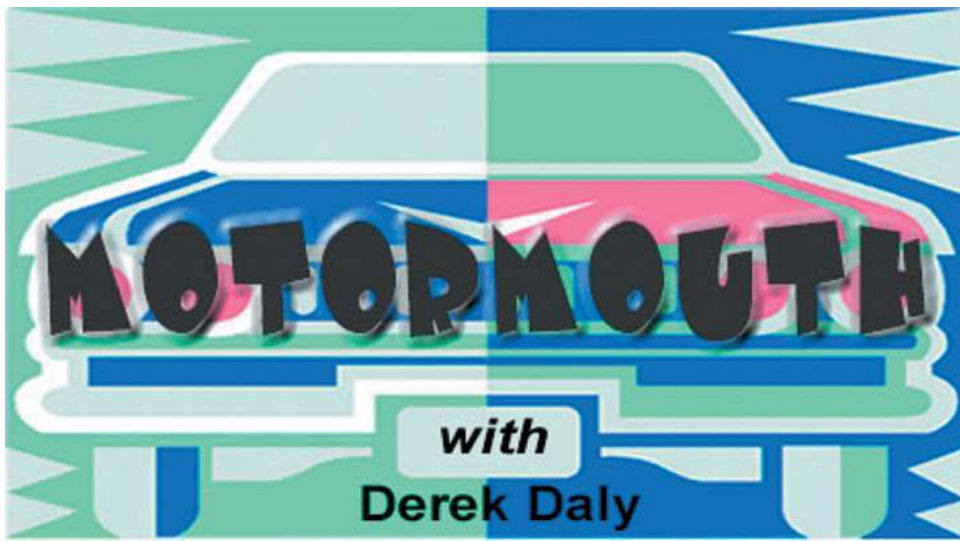
Start @ Stables Arch way
Stop 1: Dromroe Village
Stop 2: Thomond Village
Stop 3: Cappavilla Village
Stop 4: Plassey Village
Stop 5: College Court
Stop 6: Courtyard Student Village
Stop 7: Brookfield Student Village
End @ Stables Arch way

Route B: On the half hour***
7:30 8:30 9:30 10:30

Start @ Stables Arch way
Stop 1: Kilmurry Village
Stop 2: Elm Park
Stop 3: Oak Lawns
Stop 4: Kilmurry Lodge
Stop 5: Superquinn
Stop 6: Briarfield
Stop 7: Courtyard/Brookfield Roundabout
End @ Stables Archway

***Milford Grange On Request

Route C:
11:30 Only
All Route A & B Stops on Request
Please note: Route C is a drop-off-only route



HAVE a break, have a coffee!! Has anyone seen that new Lyric FM ad? The guy in the armchair who's really driving that girly Micra convertible? Anyhow I'm getting at something with this. Tiredness, radio distractions, passenger distractions; throw them together and you get bad driving. Tiredness alone is enough of a driving no no to

warrant taking a break. If you feel tired; especially over the next few months with the dark evenings compounding the problems; pull in and take a break. Falling asleep in a car park is a lot less life threatening than falling asleep at the wheel. There might not always be a shop to get a coffee, especially long distance, so take a break; relax and unwind for 15 minutes,

stretch your legs. The importance of knowing when to take a break could be the difference between making it to your destination or not!! This advice applies to not driving when on drowsy medication, or to people with diabetes who haven't had their insulin... So take a break and arrive alive!

Will the execution of Saddam Hussein make the world any safer?



BY NIAMH CLOWRY

FORMER President Saddam Hussein was sentenced to death earlier this month for crimes relating to his role in ordering the deaths of some 148 Shia civilians from the town of Dujail, north of Baghdad following an assassination attempt in 1982. This week the international Human Rights Watch campaign group has said the trial of the former Iraqi leader on charges of crimes against humanity was fundamentally flawed and that its verdict was unsound. Whether this will result in a re-trial remains as yet unknown. However with his execution date fast approaching even with a possible re-trial in the offing, the question remains, is the world any safer now than it was before his arrest, trial and sentence?

The 11th of September 2001 is a date that is forever ingrained in the memory of millions of people around the world, yet it is the actions following the terrorist attacks that many will also remember with great clarity. The Bush administration along with their British allies began with Afghanistan and swiftly moved on to Iraq in the fight against terror. Now, some five years since the battle against terror commenced can anyone really say that the world is safer now than it was five years ago?

The decision to execute Saddam Hussein may seem to be the only logical outcome, an eye for an eye so to speak. Yet if the invasion of Afghanistan and the war on Iraq prove anything, it is that retaliation does not solve a problem or rid the world of evil and terror, it only serves to increase the gravity of the situation. Certainly in light of 9/11a response from America was needed but looking back now, have the choices that

were made really done anything at all except subject the 21st century to further wars following on from the colossal wars on the 20th century

The execution of Saddam Hussein proves little. He will certainly not be a martyr, however will his execution really serve to have him pay for his crimes? Long after he is dead, his crimes and the people whose lives he so badly affected will still linger in the memory of Iraq's people. By killing him, it is almost like giving him a sure fire way out. In no way should Saddam Hussein be allowed to suffer no consequences as a result of his actions but by sentencing him to death it serves to highlight the prevailing attitude, that killing one man will make the problem go away. Certainly this does not seem to have worked in the case of Osama

Bin Laden. While there is no concrete evidence to prove he is dead, it seems likely he is, yet the activities of his Al-Qaeda followers has continued. Similarly in Iraq insurgency continues on a daily basis against the British and American occupation. The arrest of Saddam Hussein did little to relieve this insurgency; his execution will not put a stop to it, in fact it may only escalate it further.

The world has changed beyond recognition in the past five years, yet resorting to execution in order to solve a problem will not only fail to solve the problems the world faces, it will only intensify an already volatile situation. In the long run, we must all ask ourselves who will benefit from his execution, the answer is probably closer to us than we care to realise or admit, but certainly it is not the Iraqi people or his victims' families.



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American Mid-term Election Results

-Niamh Clowry explains what it all means

THE United States is perceived by many as the sole remaining superpower in the world, something which is a strongly contested viewpoint from many sides, however whether you agree with this or not, there is certainly a world wide preoccupation with American politics. Perhaps this is due to the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington on September 11th 2001, or due in some way to War in Iraq. Whatever the reason, international eyes are once again focused on America,

particularly in light of the recent mid-term election results. Support for George Bush has never been significantly strong in Europe, and if anything political spectators watched with pleasure as the Republican Party saw its support falter in recent times. The most recent elections have seen the Democratic Party take control of the House of Representatives, for the first time in 12 years with a far greater majority than many had expected. Democratic control of the lower House is

likely to halt the Presidents legislative agenda in his final two years of office and give Democrats a chance to investigate the Bush administration's most controversial policy decisions such as the war in Iraq. Significantly, the new speaker of the House of Representatives is a woman, Nancy Pelosi. She is the first female speaker of the house, and her appointment will no doubt have many wondering if the significance of a woman in such a position is paving the way for a female candidate to

run for Presidential Office in 2008. Hilary Clinton won her campaign for re-election to the Senate by a 67 per cent majority and although she is still undeclared as a presidential candidate, many feel that it is only a matter of time before her nomination is announced.

The Mid-term elections are significant in the global context given the current political climate of our time. There may have been bewilderment from all sides when George W. Bush was re-elected for a second term as

President in 2004, however in light of the lack of a strong challenger for the office, the result should not really have surprised us. The future of American politics is beginning to look far more optimistic, change can only be good, particularly now, as it will open up the debate on the War in Iraq and perhaps even bring some kind of closure to the whole debacle.

The next Presidential election is some two years away, however the results from the mid-term elections so far, have indicated that

Americans are once more becoming engaged in the political process. The Republicans and the Democrats will have a long and challenging two years ahead, what is abundantly clear however is that Americans seem ready for change and whether that means a Republican President again, or a Democrat or rather more significantly a woman in the the Oval Office, only time will tell. For now we will sit and watch with interest.



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ULSUENTS

ULSUENTS



Campus Sport

Fresher Failure, Senior Success



BY TOMÁS MCCARTHY

THERE is mixed news on the campus hurling front with the Seniors through to the semi-finals of the League while the Fresher B side suffered a heavy defeat to Mary I.

The Senior maintained their unbeaten run in the League with a draw against CIT. Trailing by 0-9 to 0-7 at

half-time UL fought back to earn a 0-14 to 0-14 draw. Forwards Alan Egan and Airle O'Cairealain really impressed scoring five points each. This results means UL will now have a home semi-final and with the winning form they are in now who would bet against them having a good year.

Things didn't go quite so well for the Fresher B side who played against Mary I on November 8. This was a spirited display by UL and they matched Mary I in the first half. Unfortunately they squandered numerous chances and were punished with two Mary I goals. This left them trailing 2-4 to 0-4 at half-time despite a good score from Stephen Delaney. Mary I

utterly dominated the second half with the UL backs under fierce pressure. Mary I's centre-forward Brendan Maher gave an exhibition and is one to watch for the future. UL continued to fight hard with Gavin Morrissey landing a fine long-range score and Enda Walsh accurate from frees. But Eamonn Cregan's skilful side were most impressive and deserved their 2-10 to 0-8 win. Backs Michael Rafter and Lester Ryan were best for UL.

Improvements in the forwards especially will be needed before the next encounter but this was still a battling display from UL against a class Mary I.



The UL team in action against CIT
Photo: Paudie Scanlon

UL Athletic Club on the road again

CIARÁN FITZPATRICK

UL Athletic Club made their annual trip to Maynooth for the IUAAs intersarsity road-relays. With four teams entered, the university was well represented and despite the inclement weather conditions most UL athletes improved on the times they had recorded in last year's championships. The Men's 'A' team finished in 6th place to record their highest finish since 2001. Given that four of the team are still eligible for at least two more years, the future looks bright.

Led by Rory Chesser, they were to the fore from the gun. Chesser has been showing fine form in recent weeks and will be hoping to be rewarded with a place on the Irish team for the European Junior Cross Country Championships to be held in Italy in December. He handed over to Kevin O'Brien in third place

after an impressive 4:26 mile. O'Brien, who will also be aiming to make the team for the Europeans, covered his two mile leg in 9:34, 15 seconds faster than his time last year with conditions much less favourable on this occasion. Year down athlete, Niall Sheehan, was below his best in the three mile leg but nonetheless came through in sixth position. Gavin O'Sullivan and Kevin Moriarty consolidated this position with times of 9:35 and 4:37 for two and one mile respectively.

The women's team finished a credible 7th with Siobhán O'Doherty's time of 11.14 for the first 2 mile leg ranking her 3rd fastest. O'Doherty is another UL athlete who will be hoping to make the Irish team for the European Championships with a place on the under 23 team quite possible.

UL had the fourth 'B' team (12th overall) and the second 'C' team (13th) across the line, showing the great

strength in depth present in this squad.

Next up is the intersarsity indoor championships to be held in Nenagh on the 2nd and 3rd December. Traditionally UL has been strong in this event and they will be hoping to regain the overall title they relinquished last year.

Results - IUAAs Road Relay Championships, Maynooth, 18 November

Men: 1) UCD; 2) DCU; 3) Queen's; 6) UL - Rory Chesser, Kevin O'Brien, Niall Sheehan, Gavin O'Sullivan, Kevin Moriarty; 12) UL - Colin Butler, Micheál Keane, Shane Fitzpatrick, Robert Baer, Greg Kroleski; 13) UL - Seán Kelly, Séamus Gilhooley, Jordi Riera Pol, Paul Cotter, John Beehan.

Women: 1) DCU; 2) UCC; 3) UCD; 7) UL - Alice O'Sullivan, Siobhán O'Doherty, Carol Finn, Éadaoin O'Neill.

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SPORT

An Focal is looking for a
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Current sports editor Patrick Mannix will be on coop next semester.

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The position is ideal for anyone considering a career in sports journalism.

Contact deirdre.oshaughnessy@ul.ie if interested.

International Tae Kwon Do master visits UL

U.L. Taekwondo (TKD) club was host to a seminar on fighting techniques and self-defence, by Master John Darcy of Action International Martial Arts Association (A.I.M.A.A.)

Master Darcy is the European Director of A.I.M.A.A. Having trained for over 30 years, Master Darcy is a 6th degree black belt in TKD, with expertise in a range of fighting, including stand-up, clinch and ground fighting. In-between holding seminars and gradings all over Europe, he often trains with the head of A.I.M.A.A.,

Grandmaster Cho, in the A.I.M.A.A. headquarters in Hawaii.


The two-hour intensive training Seminar took place in the PESS Building on Thurs. 9th of Nov. of Week 7. We welcomed members from other faculties of A.I.M.A.A., lead by a strong contingent of our own members. It covered various fighting techniques, including Boxing, Kicking drills and Self-defence, with a strong emphasis on the importance of fitness and stretching. Master Darcy rounded up the session with a lecture on life ethics.

The Seminar was fully

subsidised for U.L. TKD Club by the club. The seminar marked one of many of such events on the TKD calendar this year, including inter-club competitions which will take place throughout the year. We will also be holding club fundraisers, such as a Christmas Table Quiz, and the club's annual charity fundraising kick-a-thon, in aid of the Limerick Rape Crisis Centre, which will take place in second semester, so keep an eye on the notice boards for news on such up-coming events.



UL SHOTOKAN



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&

THUR 8.15 - 10.00 PM

PESS BUILDING GYM

Volleyball - UL perform well at this year's IV in UCD

AOIFE WALSH

Bad Luck Stalks the Girls' team.

THIS year's intersites where hosted by UCD and had the daunting task of living up to NUIG's excellent display last year. The convoy of cars left UL amid the fog and dampness of Limerick at approximately 5 am on Thursday morning of Theyek 8. Unfortunately, some of the girls team were delayed for the first match which meant that they had to forfeit the first set. It was crucial that they won the next one as the group stages involved a 'best out of three set' format. They just arrived in time for the second set but due to unavoidable stress and fatigue levels from unpredicted delays, and lack of an adequate warm-up, the team narrowly lost against NUIG. The next two matches against IT Tallaght and NUI Maynooth were easily won, however. That saw the team qualify for the cup competition on Saturday, coming 2nd in the group. Friday was slightly less

pressure fuelled however as it saw both teams play matches to establish seeding for the finals. They firstly played DCU (who ended up in the final), and although it was a draw after 2 sets, they were unfortunate not to win the deciding third set as it seems the UL did not play to their full potential. The next match was against UCD (the eventual winners for the 6th year in a row), and although they played some excellent volleyball, they came up against a far superior team with a much larger squad and significant coaching staff. This saw UL in the play off for the semi-finals on Saturday against NUIG. Bad luck seemed to stalk the UL team this weekend however, as two of UL's starting players dropped out at last minute on Tuesday and another player had to return home on Saturday, leaving the team short one player who could not be replaced. This meant that they had no choice but to withdraw from the competition at such a late stage. To make the situation more frustrating, they played an unofficial game against this NUIG team minus one player and

drew with them, so fantasies of 'what might have been' linger.

The Men's Path to the Final

The men's team had a slightly less bumpy journey through the various stages seeing them unbeaten all the way to the final! They played some outstanding volleyball and easily defeated NUIG, Queens University Belfast (who included a Great Britain squad member travelling to the Olympics in two years time!) and on Friday they played even more impressively against a strong Royal College of Surgeons team. This saw them qualify for the semi-final on Saturday morning but the repeated Queens challenge was quickly quashed in a straight set victory placing them in the prestigious final against University of Ulster Jordanstown. The first set went to UUJ, but the UL men's team retaliated by winning the second. They theyre defeated in the third set but won an impressive fourth.

UL Ladies Volleyball team prepare



UL Ladies Football

With Norita Kelly

UL: 1-11
UCD: 2-08

UL ladies football team played their third league game on Tuesday last on home ground against old rivals UCD. UL were quick to settle with the opening score coming from UL full forward Kasey O'Driscoll. However, UCD were fast to react and from the word go UL were under pressure with UCD looking as dangerous as ever. Five minutes into the game UL keeper Claire Rooney pulled off two great saves but UCD managed to get a point out of the attack. Fiona McHale at wing forward was alert and combining well with the midfielders Margaret O'Donoghue and Norita Kelly. She made a darting solo run from the wing and finished the ball over the bar. The ball was going from end to end with great defending being shown from UL. Brid Stack at centre back was controlling the half back line. With the help of Geraldine O'Flynn and Miriam Liston at wing back it made it very hard for UCD to break down the defence. UL replied again with a pointed free from Kasey. Again Fiona McHale attacked the goal and added another point to the scoreboard. UL however had most of the possession but failed to put the game out of reach. Several balls were dropped into the goalie's hands giving UCD the advantage again. Laura Walsh was working hard, trying to get ball into the

forwards. Ten minutes before the half time whistle Laura gave in a great direct ball to Aileen O'Loughlin at corner forward and she didn't waste the opportunity. UCD broke down the defence on three occasions but the score at half time could have been a lot worse only for great blocking from full back Michelle Glynn and corner backs Jenny Johnston and Jackie Mulligan. Going in at half time the score read six points to five in UL's favour.

It was all to play for in the second half and UCD were not a side to give up easily. UCD opened the half with a point coming from their corner forward. UL then worked the ball up the field with good linking from Margaret O'Donoghue to Mairead Kelly and Mairead kicked it over the bar. UL were on the attack again. Geraldine O'Flynn won possession from the UCD kick out and laid it off to Fiona who then combined with Laura Walsh who slotted it over the bar. Anne O'Dwyer came on at wing-back and Geraldine O'Flynn went in to corner forward. UL attacked again, resulting from Norita Kelly blocking a ball and put Kasey O'Driscoll through on goal. However UCD goal keeper pulled off a great save to keep the sides neck and neck. Two more points from play came from Kasey and Mairead Kelly. UL were starting to take control around the field. However, this didn't last for long. UCD defender

supplied a long ball into their forwards and it ended up in the back of the net. UL were now only the slightest of margins ahead. Then a few minutes later UCD rattled the net again. UCD midfielder took a sideline free which lobbed the UL keeper and put UCD into the lead in the closing stages of the game. UL managed to get a pointed free from Kasey O'Driscoll to reduce the lead. However UL had many other chances to go ahead but still failed to show it on the scoreboard. UCD then added two more points. UL's last effort, with great linking throughout the field saw Mairead Kelly in on goal. Her shot was stopped by another excellent save from the keeper. Luckily Fiona McHale was in on the rebound and fired it into the back of the net. UL now leading by one point. UCD finally managed to kick one more point in the last kick of the game to end it in a draw. The final result was a reasonable result for UL in the end. However, UL had much more possession but were just not clinical enough.

UL: C. Rooney, J. Jenny, M. Glynn, J. Mulligan, M. Liston, B. Stack, G. O'Flynn, M. O'Donoghue, N. Kelly, F. McHale, M. Kelly, L. Walsh, S. Egan, K. O'Driscoll, A. O'Loughlin.

SUB: A. O'Dwyer

UL Clubs in Trouble?



BY PATRICK MANNIX
SPORTS EDITOR

IT has come to my attention that smaller sports clubs in UL may be in trouble both membership and funding wise. Highly disciplined, intense and physically demanding are just some of the words used to describe this sport. Chess I hear you say. You may be right but leaving aside the kings and the pawns; the sport in question is volleyball. On the weekend commencing the 17th of November last the UL Volleyball team took part in the Intervarsities tournament, which was held in UCD over three days. Now this was not your usual tournament. Competition aside the ladies and fellows teams were even lucky to make it up to the venue. The club is managing to keep its head floating above the water considering their membership numbers are dwindling and they didn't receive a budget last year due to administrative problems. Now don't get me wrong - football, hurling, soccer, basketball and even American football are thriving in the college but it seems to me that the smaller clubs are being neglected. UL is a college with a rich sporting tradition, so why not be the pioneers of a new and better initiative to look after and support our smaller clubs which also play a vital part in this tradition.

The fiasco involving the volleyball club concerns the lack of coaching staff and facilities. The club have to rely on the main players to coach the training sessions as well as catering for their own game. Facilities-wise the arena provides a court every Monday from 6 to 7.30. Time-wise this is perfect for any team who have no desire to be competitive but the volleyball team do. This time span has to cater for 24 to 30 members all of who can not fit on the one court. This forces the club to travel to Shannon during the week to train. All difficulties aside the men's team still managed to come second in the

tournament to UUU who have the strongest team in the country and have won the tournament now two years in a row. They went down three sets to two in what was the best of five sets. This is a fantastic achievement and full credit to the lads for putting in the effort. As for the ladies excellent progress was being made through the group stages which led to a semi-final berth. However, unfortunately, due to the unforeseen commitments of a certain player, the team had to withdraw from the tournament. This is rather unfortunate as who knows, the team could have progressed to the final against a much fancied UCD team, who have now won the tournament six years on the trot.

The point I am trying to make, by using the Volleyball team as an example, is that there should be more support offered to the smaller clubs who are representing UL on a national level. They are doing a fantastic job of carrying the sporting flag of the college and are a credit to the sporting tradition instilled here. It is an awful shame that a group of players have to travel in cars to Dublin at 4.30am in the morning due to numbers dwindling so much that they couldn't get a bus. My sources estimate the cost of the weekend at 1400 euros and they admit that possible fundraising will be needed in the future to finance the weekend. The college was asked to

host the event this year but couldn't due to the lack of support and preparation that was required. This means that UL is losing out on key sporting events, which is a disgrace. Luckily enough the club have applied to host the tournament in two years time and it is a high possibility, thanks the commitment of such people as the chairman Enda Miley, that volleyball intervarsities will take place on campus.

We need to support our student athletes by helping their respective clubs and this goes for all disciplines. Players such as Audrey Kean and Niall Madden have both represented Ireland in volleyball and with the lack of interest shown it may dampen their future progression onto the national scene. This in turn has repercussion for our national teams. Ireland does not have an Olympic volleyball team as of yet but if events on a small scale such as this keep happening then we are actually taking two steps backwards instead of progressing at all. With obesity and other illnesses major issues in the country at present, sport has a big part to play. I would like to start an intense discussion on sport in general in the college involving the SU, clubs (including PRO's), players and general sports enthusiasts. See sport on the ULSU forum.

It's about time the college and the students acted as one on the sporting issue.



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Golden Age For Irish Rugby



BY TOMÁS MCCARTHY

SHOUT it from the rooftops Ireland are now a serious force in world rugby. With two comprehensive victories over Southern hemisphere opposition and a world ranking of No3 Ireland are no longer the whipping boys.

For the first time Ireland have a wealth of world class players. In the backline D'Arcy, O'Driscoll and Horgan are on fire and would make every team in the world. Time and time again they make line breaks and create tries out of nowhere. They have strength, skill and intelligence. Remember O'Driscoll's pass to Horgan for the last try against South Africa or Horgan's presence of mind to feed Geordan Murphy for his try against the Aussies. Sheer class. Also what can you say about O'Gara? This guy is just getting better and better. For me he was man of the match against Australia. He controls the game so well and nearly always takes the right option. His ball handling skills are immense and he is now even making breaks. He adapt to whatever style of play whether it is kicking the corners or spreading it wide. He is the one player we cannot afford to lose. When you look to the forwards there is outstanding quality. Obviously you look to

O'Connell a sheer giant and colossus in the second row. We are spoilt in the back-row. Leamy and Wallace especially do so much hard work and are lethal with ball in hand. I could go on and on but you can see that we are going through a special period when so many quality players have arrived on the scene at once.

Great credit must also go to the manager Eddie O'Sullivan. 12 months ago certain sections of the media were calling for his head after dismal performances against New Zealand and Australia. But O'Sullivan knew what he was doing. During that series he had made a start in changing the style of the Irish play. Up to that point Ireland's game plan was to play for territory, kick the corners, the Munster style of play. O'Sullivan wanted to change this. He wanted Ireland to play more expansive style spreading it wide, like Wales had done. It took a while for the team to adapt and the experiment went horribly wrong during the first half of the Six Nations match against France. But O'Sullivan persisted and is now seeing the fruits of his labour. A Triple Crown and these two major scalps are proof of his success. The Irish now ooze confidence with the ball in hand and all the players are now well able to off-load in the tackle attack at different angles make dummy runs etc. Eddie certainly deserves the plaudits for turning Ireland into a serious attacking threat.

A sign of the good times we are experiencing is the competition for places. Over this series new players and old have put themselves in the frame for a starting spot. In

the pack Neil Best has shown he has got what it takes with two power packed displays. Hooker Rory Best hardly put a foot wrong and his throwing was very accurate and impressive considering the conditions. Isaac Boss at scrum-half is now a real rival for Stringer after his performance against Australia. It was his unpredictability which made him so elusive. He made numerous breaks that Stringer wouldn't make and kept the defenders guessing. Two of the older guard Hickie and Murphy also threw their hat in the ring. Denis Hickie has always had blistering pace and has never let Ireland down. His try against Australia was so coolly taken. Geordan Murphy also kicked well and showed signs of returning to form. It is a great headache for Eddie when there is many pushing for places.

It is not all positive unfortunately as I have some minor concerns. Injuries are always a big concern. We cannot lose O'Gara or John Hayes. These are two people we cannot replace. O'Sullivan has made an error in not giving another out-half like Paddy Wallace a chance on the big day. Also the scrum looked a bit dodgy and creaky against the Aussies. These are minor issues that show that we are not the finished article yet.

All in all the outlook is extremely positive for Irish rugby. We are now well capable of winning the Six Nations and that is a realistic goal. Looking even further ahead to World Cup 07 Ireland should not be afraid of anyone and on their day can beat the best in the world.

Irish Rugby at an all-time high

BRIAN O' LEARY

IRISH rugby has hit an all time high in this country after spending years being starved of the limelight by other sporting codes such as GAA soccer and even golf. A lot of this is due to Munster's fantastic victory in last May's Heineken Cup which caught the imaginations of millions. This victory was long overdue in a competition where Munster have suffered heartbreaking agony on all too many an occasion. Many believe it was destiny but I believe that the formation of the Celtic League has to take huge credit for this achievement. With the formation of the Celtic League all four provinces can work with a group of professional athletes hungry for success. Alright we did

have the inter-provincial series before but this only provided the players with games now and again, the Celtic League has brought about competitive rugby week in week out for the four provinces which has been ideal preparation for their respective European competitions. The overall picture for Irish rugby is good with Ulster carrying their great Celtic League form into Europe by thrashing Toulouse recently. The picture is also good for Munster despite a poor run of form in the Celtic League the opportunity to blood new players has proved very beneficial. If it wasn't for the Celtic League you wonder would we have ever heard of the likes of Barry Murphy or even Jerry Flannery. The Celtic League has also captured the imagination of

the public and media resulting in unanticipated coverage and record crowds. The recent Leinster, Munster game for example saw a crowd of over 27,000 file through the Lansdowne turnstiles. Most teams now have a solid fan base which is in excess of 5,000 at most clubs. The League is now seen as one of the best in the world and many believe that the standard on offer is better than on offer in the English equivalent. This could be proving by the results of week 1 of the Heineken Cup with all Celtic League teams bar Edinburgh winning their games in turn only one English side achieved the same. Who knows with the continued growth of Irish rugby maybe we can be considered major threats for next year's World Cup?

Third best in the world?

CONOR MCGRATH

THE Irish are better than the Aussies, the English and the South Africans?? This is a question people maybe asking themselves but in rugby terms, this is utterly true. The Ireland rugby team is now officially the third best team in world rugby, behind France and New Zealand (of course!). This all stems from the fact that Ireland have evolved into a world class rugby team over the few months.

Against South Africa, Ireland were completely dominant as the 32-15 scoreline showed. Ireland made the Springboks look like the Connacht u-14s. They ran four tries in, one of which included a stunning pass from Brian O'Driscoll to put Shane Horgan in the corner to finish off the contest. That was definitely a Leinster try. In fairness, South Africa did have key players enjoying the sun at home but this squad did beat the All Blacks in the Tri-Nations during the summer.

Next up was Australia. The pundits predicted a close one but that didn't happen in the slightest. Instead, we were

treated to the finest 40 minutes of rugby in recent times on probably the worst day of recent times! Playing into a gale force wind, Ireland used every blade of grass to breakdown and put tries past the Aussies. This included a superbly worked try which was started by O'Gara and finished off by Geordan Murphy. Denis Hickie (plays for Leinster!) also got his name on the scoresheet when he caught a cross field kick (from O'Gara obviously) and weaved past three defenders for the touchdown. When asked at half-time about O'Gara's performance, George Hook didn't have a single criticism up his sleeve. Ireland closed out the match for a 21-6 victory against Australia (former world champs) which meant that it was the first ever time Ireland had recorded back-to-back wins over Southern Hemisphere opposition. At least some GAA diehards were happy with the result!

The Autumn Internationals have been a resounding success for the Irish team. Not only have the team performed brilliantly but many new players have also

been given a chance by Eddie to show their worth. Players like Isaac Boss, Rory Best and Neil Best have now experienced Test match rugby and will obviously strengthen the squad for next year. In truth, we did expect a good Autumn Internationals campaign because Ireland have been in great form all year. This included moments such as beating the English in front of their own crowd to win the Triple Crown in Twickenham (had to say it!) and giving All Blacks a good run for their money in their own back yard. The only worrying factor at the moment is injuries. As the Australian coach, John Connolly, rightly pointed out "Injuries to Hayes, O'Connell or 10, 12 or 13... that's going to be Eddie O'Sullivan's main concern" If Ireland can continue this kind of form and stir clear of injuries next year then they should realistically win the 6 Nations by doing the grand slam and maybe just maybe, challenge New Zealand for the World Cup. Its just a case of handling the pressure as favourites in February.

Chants of the Week

"There's only one Emile Heskey, there's only one Emile Heskey, he used to be s**t, but now he's all right, walkin' in a Heskey wonderland." Wigan fans to Emile Heskey (to the tune of Walkin' in a Winter Wonderland)

"S**t ground, no fans." Cardiff fans at Colchester...

"S**t ground, three points!" Colchester fans to Cardiff

"Paul Le Guen's gonna get the sack, The league was won before the clocks went back" Celtic fans taunt struggling Rangers.

"You're just a fat Freddy Eastwood!" Southend chant aimed at Wayne Rooney.

"You're not fit to referee!" Arsenal fans to referee Mark Clattenburg after he went down with cramp during the game with Liverpool

Harrington: The Unsung Star of Irish Sport

KEVIN CORCORAN

SINCE Europe beat the USA in the Ryder Cup, and since Pádraig Harrington became Europe's number one player, it seems only natural to suggest that the Dubliner is the best player in the world. Now this was just a laughable theory until a week or so ago. But Harrington's victory over Woods in a head to head match-up in Japan proves beyond any doubt that Ireland's greatest golfer has the beating of the world number one.

For years now Harrington has been taken for granted in this country and has often been overshadowed by less significant events. We produce few genuine world class sportsmen and each one should be cherished in equal

measure. Ok golf may not be the most popular sport, but when Pádraig contends for titles across the world, I am never more nervous, and when he wins, we should never be more proud. Huge media attention is always given to our mediocre soccer team, praise is heaped on our rugby team for being third best in an eight country sport and we make a song and dance about some amateur GAA sport where the same counties meet in the final every year. All the while Harrington fills up space somewhere in the middle of our sports pages, hidden away in case we might actually feel a bit of pride.

Although yet to win a major, Harrington currently occupies 8th position in the world rankings and of course claimed the

European Tour's Order of Merit title last month at Valderrama. His rise through the rankings has been sensational, given his late entrance to the professional game. The Irishman is one of the most exciting players on tour at the moment, owing that reputation to his ability to rescue any situation and also his ability of getting himself into difficult situations.

The confidence he gains from winning the Order of Merit will help his attempts at the majors next year. If Harrington can add one of these big four events to his C.V. then he will become an Irish legend and will finally and deservedly join our current list of world beaters, such as Ken Doherty, Brian O Driscoll and Bernard Dunne.



Sporting Quotes of the Fortnight

"For those of you who don't know me personally, and have labelled me as prehistoric, a caveman and a bigot, can I ask you this? Is having traditional values sexist? Values such as holding a door open for a woman, helping a mother off a train with a pushchair or up an escalator, worrying what time my daughter will be home and whether she is escorted, buying flowers and paying for dinner, etc. If all of these are sexist and prehistoric then I am guilty of them all" - Mike Newell comes out firing in the official Luton programme for tomorrow's game against Derby

"One of his mates muttered how he had been with his wife. Paddy's face turned purple and he jumped up with a bottle and smashed it over his mate's head. His pal took a chunk out of Paddy's eyebrow. There was blood all over Paddy's shirt" - a source in the Sun explains why an almighty chunk is missing from Sheffield United keeper Paddy Kenny's face.

"The other day I was on the internet and I saw this piece about me being among the 55 players nominated for the European Player of the Year award. Next to my name there was a cartoon, with me in an orange shirt, falling on the grass. The piece said that I had been nominated for an Oscar, not for the Golden Ball but for the Golden Dive. Cartoons are supposed to make you smile, but this one hurt so much" - Arjen Robben proves that old adage about the truth always hurting, before falling over and rolling theatrically on the ground while clutching his shin.

"I promise you if one day I have a ball that is two metres inside my goal and the referee doesn't allow it I won't speak about referees for two years." Jose Mourinho hits back at Sir Alex Ferguson, who accused Chelsea of getting special privileges from referees. Mourinho was referring to the disallowed Pedro Mendes goal against United last season.

"Glenn is going to bring a couple of sumo costumes down so we might have a dust-up in the technical area, that should make good TV." Stuart Pearce's take on the Wenger-Pardew row ahead of Manchester City's clash with Glenn Roeder's Newcastle.

"We didn't see Sir Alex but we could hear him and I think the old hairdryer must have been out." Southend's Steven Hammell reveals how Fergie took defeat.

"It's about time us managers had a fight. I wouldn't be daft enough to have a go at Sam Allardyce but me and Bryan Robson would be decent. I'd have to kill him or he'd keep coming back at me!" Steve Bruce wants to take a leaf out of the Pardew-Wenger book

"Against Liverpool I hit a shot that was going in until it hit Jamie Carragher's shoelace. I had another shot and that bit Steven Gerrard's a***. I might have to ask for a loan move to Rochdale if it carries on." Reading's James Harper bemoans his goal drought.

"He said 'Come on you ***** Aussie ****'. I said '**** you, you Pommie ****wit'. He said 'Let's go, let's go, I will belt you, you Aussie T****'. Australian rugby league star Willie Mason tries to defend the punch that floored Britain's Stuart Fielden.

"I watched Arsenal in the Champions League the other week playing some of the best football I've ever seen and yet they couldn't have scored in a brothel with two grand in their pockets!" Ian Holloway in his BBC Sport column.

"Fiorentina have barely had a sniff tonight...probably not the best thing to say with Adrian Mutu on the pitch." Serie A commentator, Fiorentina v Roma



University Arena
AIRÉANA NA hOLLSCOILE

Sporting question of the edition

Who am I?

- 1) I was born on 25th May 1979 in Surrey, England
- 2) I made my International debut coming off the bench to play against Ireland at Twickenham when I was 18 years old
- 3) My Rugby World Cup debut was against Italy in 1999, and I scored 32 points in that game which we won 67 - 07
- 4) I'm most famous for kicking the drop goal that won the Rugby World Cup in 2003 for England against Australia at the Telstra Stadium
- 5) I trained at the University of Limerick with my team, the Newcastle Falcons, in 2004

Answer: Jonny Wilkinson



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Ireland's 2006 - the year of Stan, Cyprus and Kevin Doyle

LIAM TOGHER

IRELAND may only have played seven matches in the whole of 2006, as many as the four World Cup semi-finalists had in less than a month, but it's been a far from uneventful 12 months for soccer in this country. It was a year of the new manager, friendly woe and a certain 5-2 collapse in Cyprus. The balance sheet isn't all negative, though. There have been good times for Irish fans this year, with some creditable performances against European heavyweights. All in all, let's review the first year of Steve Staunton's tenure and analyse where we are going in 2007.

The 102-times capped former Liverpool and Aston Villa defender couldn't have wished for a better start to his spell as Ireland coach. Sweden, tipped as a potential dark horse for the World Cup, had no answer to a rampant Irish side in the 3-0 friendly win last March. That was followed by a home loss to

Chile towards the end of May, but the players hardly gave it their all after nine months of club football. Staunton hit his first 'crisis' after we were subjected to a 4-0 home defeat by the Dutch. We entered the Euro 2008 qualifiers on a downer but only a pure fluke of a goal from Lukas Podolski denied us a point against Germany. That preceded the infamous debacle in Nicosia, which yours truly wrote about in this paper a few weeks ago. In stark contrast to the Cyprus faux pas was a battling display against the Czech Republic in Dublin, when we drew 1-1. It still left us well adrift of the top two in Group D but it restored badly-needed pride to this country. The year ended with the simplest of 5-0 victories over an admittedly awful San Marino. Nevertheless, we can look forward to the remainder of the qualifying campaign with confidence.

A common complaint this year was that we don't have the players to challenge for major tournament

qualification. The stalwarts such as Niall Quinn, Staunton and Roy Keane had retired while the likes of Robbie Keane and Damien Duff had left behind their youthful exuberant days and lacked the leadership qualities necessary to take the team forward. It seemed as if we had no young players coming through and we were stuck with 'passengers' like John O'Shea, Kevin Kilbane and Andy Reid. Thankfully, we have seen the introduction to the senior team of Kevin Doyle and Paul McShane, two precocious talents with plenty of mileage left in the tank. Finally, we boast a goalkeeper that could walk into any team on the planet, namely Shay Given. It's no coincidence that Newcastle's recent slide down the Premiership table coincided with the Donegal man's injury and, on his return to the Geordies, made several world-class saves to deny Arsenal a home win.

I look forward to 2007 with confidence that the European Championships are

more than just a pipe dream. Our last two qualifiers yielded positive results and the next three or four games are all winnable. If we do pick up maximum points from those matches, we are back in the hunt for Euro 2008. Besides, it could be worse. Those England fans are gone quiet, aren't they?

"We love you Ham-Kam, we do!"

A collection of unusual names of football clubs from all around the world.

Al Jazeera (Saudi Arabia)
Cementarnica (Macedonia)
FC Tom (Russia)
Body Brno (Czech Republic)
Keith (Scotland)
Braintree Town (England)
Martina (Italy)
Ham-Kam (Norway)
MY-PA 47 (Finland)
Happy Valley (Hong Kong)
Kaizer Chiefs (South Africa)
Red Bull Salzburg (Austria)
Gimnasia y Esgrima de la Plata (Argentina)



Steve Staunton with consultant Sir Bobby Robson, thankfully out of hospital and back with the Ireland setup

Colo Colo (Chile)
Go Ahead Eagles (Netherlands)
Gloria Bistrita (Romania)
Cosmos (San Marino)
Birkirkara (Malta)
Ba (Fiji)
Constructorul (Andorra)
Kansas City Wizards (United States)
Pumas UNAM (Mexico)
Naval 1o de Maio (Portugal)
3 de febrero (Paraguay)

AUGUST 20th 1945 will be forever remembered as a day when every goalkeeper in international football was officially unleashed to the mighty left foot of Ferenc Puskas. He was short, stocky, barrel-chested, overweight, couldn't head and only used one foot yet Puskas was known as 'the Galloping Major', a reference to the fact that he was an army officer playing for an army team. Later, when he was exiled in Spain, he became known as 'the little canon'. For that one foot, his left, packed such a thunderbolt shot that he scored 83 goals in 84 internationals and he remains the only player to have scored four goals in a European Cup Final. To those who complained that he was too left-footed, Puskas answered "you can only kick with one foot at a time. Otherwise you fall on your arse." In 1948 he was also the top goal scorer in any European league.

On Friday November 17th the football world was struck with the untimely death

The Galloping Major Marches On

Sports Editor Patrick Mannix describes the life and times of Ferenc Puskas

of the Hungary and Real Madrid legend who died at the tender age of 79. Puskás played for Honvéd and Hungary before joining Real Madrid and going onto play for Spain. After leading Hungary to the 1952 Olympic Gold medal, he was captain of the Mighty Magyars who became the first overseas team to beat England on home soil in 1953, scoring twice in the 6-3 win at Wembley.

Hungary then rolled England over 7-1 in Budapest and were consequently installed as favorites for the 1954 World Cup in Switzerland. But injury to Puskas severely hampered the Magyars and they lost in the final to Germany. First they beat South Korea 9-0, and then handed out an 8-3

hammering to West Germany - one of the more fancied teams in the competition. However, Puskas was injured by the West German centre-half Werner Liebrich and missed the quarter-final against Brazil, a shameful match that became known as the Battle of Berne. Apart from the ferocity of the tackling, the Brazilians invaded the Hungarian dressing room after the match claiming that Puskas, a spectator on the touchline, had attacked and wounded their centre-half Pinheiro. Fighting broke out, bottles were thrown and players hit each other with football boots. Mayhem apart, Hungary were 4-2 winners. Puskas's damaged ankle kept him from the semi-final against Uruguay, which

Hungary won 4-2 in extra time. And so to the final - against West Germany, the team they had annihilated in the early rounds. Captain Puskas declared himself fit, but it was a controversial decision. Hungary led 2-0 after just eight minutes, the second goal coming from Puskas. But their game began to go awry. Germany pulled back to 2-2, and then took the lead through Rahn. The turning point came when Puskas found a gap and slid the ball past the German keeper Turek. Welsh linesman Mervyn Griffiths had his flag up. The goal was disallowed for offside. West Germany had won 3-2 and caused one of the football upsets of the century. Hungary, having conquered all before them, but had lost

the one that really mattered - the World Cup Final.

Puskas was with the rest of his Honved team-mates in Spain when the revolt of 1956 took place. He defected to the West and within a year had been signed by Real Madrid, then Europe's leading club. Puskas proceeded to form a sensational partnership with Alfredo Di Stefano and they became the heart of an outstanding Real side. This was the legendary Real Madrid team of the late 50's. Puskas along with Alfredo di Stefano, was the inspiration behind a string of domestic and European titles. While playing with Madrid he won four Pichichis and scored seven goals in two European Cup finals. The high point of these 'Galacticos'

achievements was their display in the 1960 European Cup final in front of 135,000 at Hampden Park. In a truly memorable match, Real Madrid defeated Eintracht 7-3. Di Stefano scored a hat-trick, Puskas went one better with four. In all, he scored 512 goals for Real in 528 matches and in 1962 he took out Spanish citizenship in time to play for his adopted country in the 1962 World Cup. In 1966 Puskas retired from the beautiful game he loved so much.

So how good was Puskas? He had the scoring prowess of Pele yet the deftest Maradona touch but also loved the Bestian highlife but his record speaks for itself. A modern day Ronaldo. Quite similar I think? With an Olympic gold, a World Cup silver, five Hungarian league titles, five Spanish championships and a Big Cup, plus the fact he was top scorer in Spain four times, his achievements dwarf those of Best and almost everyone else in football history. May he rest in peace.

Ireland - England's B team?

TOMMY TUOHY

JACK Charlton brought the glory days to Irish football, albeit with an obvious lack of style. In my opinion the outstanding features of Charlton's teams were the amount of players on it that were not Irish. This could be seen through the examples of Aldridge, Townsend and Cascarino. Charlton's poaching pedigree is best highlighted by the capture of Tony Cascarino who was born in England to an English mother and an Italian father and qualified to play for Ireland through his paternal grandfather, Michael O' Malley. As it turned out, O'Malley was not in fact his grandfather and Cascarino had played for 12 years with no qualifications whatsoever, through blood or sporting ability. Of course Ray Houghton was another prominent member of the 'granny rule' club and was an important player in Irish teams under Charlton and scored many spectacular goals (Ray's impact on Ireland did not end there as he has proceeded to analyse football for RTE with remarkable incompetence).

This trend has continued since Charlton's departure and Staunton appears particularly attached to it. The manager has been placing a particular emphasis on the acquisition of players to the squad who have an Irish grandparent or any viable link to Ireland. It could be argued that this is not the only Charlton tactic that Stan has taken, as Ireland have adopted a pretty ugly style of play also. The best example of Staunton's energy being wasted on this task is in Ireland's search for a striker. While most managers would be trying to uncover the next star from the Eircom League such as Kevin Doyle, Stan decided to pick Terry Dixon. This appeared to be an extremely puzzling choice as the 16 year



old Dixon is yet to make a single reserve appearance for Tottenham Hotspur. On further examination the reasoning became clear; Dixon in fact was born in London and there had been rumours that interest was being shown in the player from the English FA. Staunton decided to try and cement Dixon's allegiance to Ireland by placing him in the first team squad and somewhat outrageously claiming the boy was there 'on merit'.

However, the real crime of such tactics is Staunton's continued refusal to promote genuine Irish hopefuls in a similar manner. The case of Anthony Stokes provides a glaring example of his inadequacies. Stokes has impressed greatly at Falkirk, scoring back to back hat-tricks as well as being named SPL young player of the month for October. When quizzed on the youngster's inclusion in the B squad the manager stated that Stokes had 'gone backwards' at Arsenal. While failing to displace

Henry at Arsenal is seen as being inadequate, Staunton did not seem to view Terry's failure to progress beyond Spurs Under 18 side in the same light. If this trend is to continue it is difficult to see emerging Irish talent being nurtured and progress being made. Sub-standard English players such as Sean St Ledger will benefit from the granny rule and get the international football they crave, despite no obvious allegiance to the country. The standards in Ireland are rising and with this are expectations. Most Irish supporters expect victories in the qualification campaign, no matter what the composition of the team may be. I, for one, would prefer a real Irish team with authentic Irish players competing on the international stage rather than a squad consisting of some genuine Irish talent mixed with English rejects. Charlton's days of 'putting them under pressure' are over, so too should the days of British rejects playing in the green jersey.

Liverpool - Where Did It All Go Wrong?



BY TOMÁS MCCARTHY

AFTER all the pre-season hype 13 games in to the Premiership season Liverpool find themselves in 9th position, 16 points adrift in the title race. So what is the problem on Merseyside?

Rafa Benitez

If you don't field your best 11 consistently you are looking for trouble. Benitez cannot claim to know his best team with all the chopping and changing from one game to the next. Man United and Chelsea have reaped the benefits from fielding their strongest sides week in week out. Liverpool's form has been utterly inconsistent due to this tinkering. Players have not been able to gel as a team especially the strikers. Squad rotation is no help to player's confidence whatsoever. Also Rafa's wrangling with Gerrard has been of no help either.

Poor Signings

Liverpool continue to squander money on average players and this summer has been no different. Pennant, Agger, Aurelio and Gonzalez are by no means world class. All of these have failed to deliver for Liverpool so far. Surely players like Damien Duff or Andy Johnson should have been brought in. These join a growing club of mediocre players at Anfield such as Garcia, Kewell, Zenden etc.

Steven Gerrard

Steven Gerrard is not a world class midfielder player. On

his day he can produce moments of sheer brilliance and inspire his team mates around him. Gerrard though has not been scoring this season and that has been the problem. Last season he scored 20 odd goals all competitions but this season he has struggled. In central midfield he doesn't impose himself on games while on the wing he seems disinterested. His attitude needs to change because he is of immense importance to Liverpool.

Strikers

Can you really bank on any of the Liverpool strikers to consistently find the back of the net? Kuyt, Bellamy, Crouch or Fowler are not going to fire 20 goals a season. Goals are what really count in this league and that has been a major headache for the Reds. 1 goal away from home tells its own sorry tale. A solid partnership also hasn't been formed yet. They need a striker in the Henry, Rooney or Drogba mould if Liverpool are seriously going to challenge for honours.

Away Form

One statistic says it all 2 points from a possible 21 won

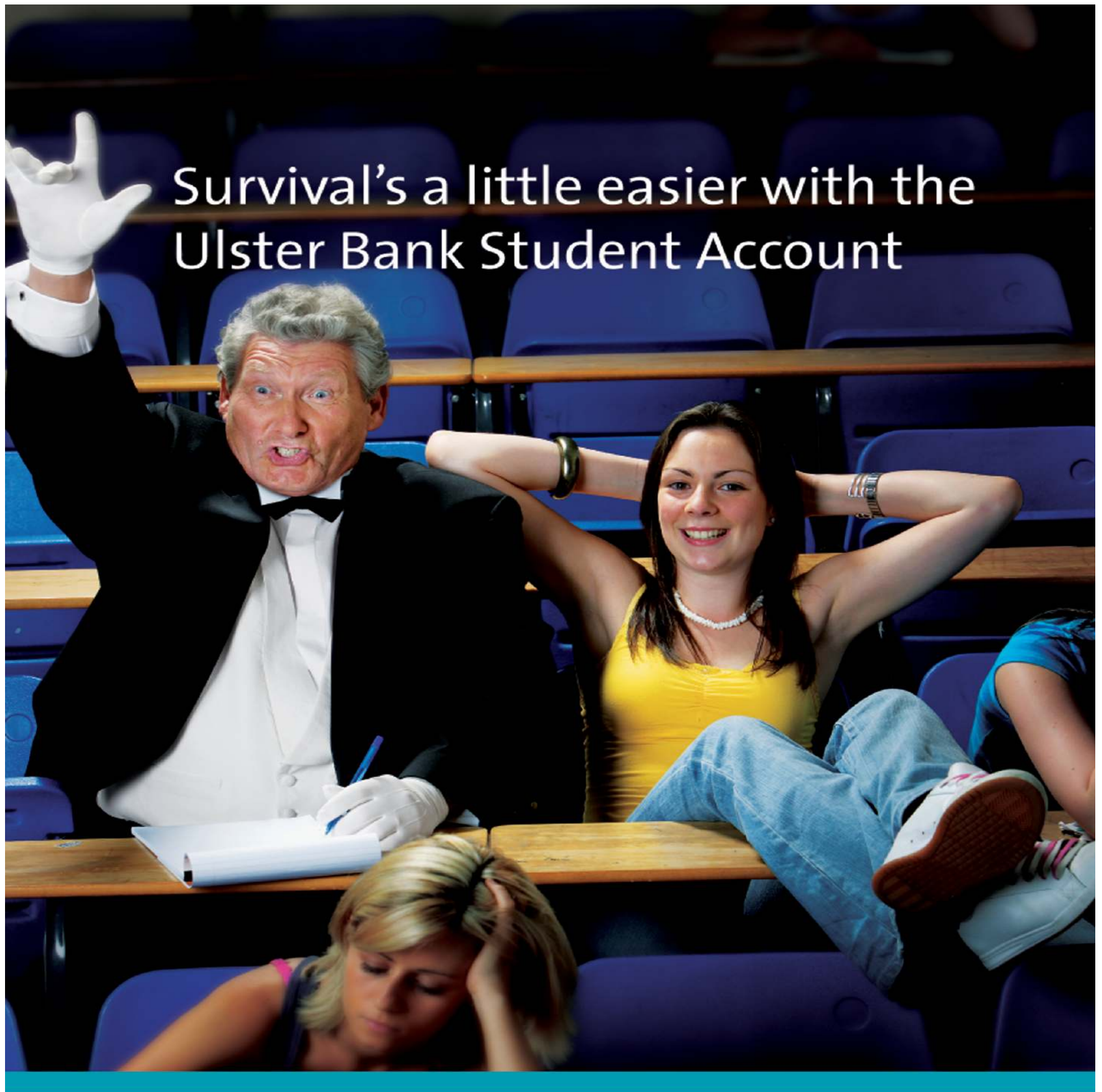
away from home. A soft centre has been exposed when Liverpool play away from Anfield. At tough grounds such as Goodison and The Reebok Liverpool have been found out. They have the required battling, fighting attitude that is required to get results at these grounds.

Weak Defence

This season has seen the Reds' defence leak badly. Reina has been extremely shaky between the posts. He seems over anxious and lacking confidence, remember the third goal against Everton? Hyypia is past it at this stage and is making numerous basic errors. Carragher beside him also hasn't seemed too convincing at times either.

As you can see Liverpool have a lot of work to do before they can seriously regard themselves as title contenders. They still have a long way to go before they can challenge the Chelsea's and Man United's of this world. However all that said the Reds can still turn it round and are well capable of salvaging a 3rd or 4th placed spot from their season.





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