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An FOCAL

STUDENTS UNION

University of Limerick



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integration?
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EDITION 3 : WEEK 4

THE OFFICIAL PAPER OF THE STUDENTS' UNION

2ND OCTOBER 2007

Safety driven home to UL



BY SEAMUS RYAN
EDITOR

UL'S main plaza was dramatically transformed into the aftermath of a road traffic accident on Wednesday of week 3 as part of ULSU's safety campaign. Starting at just before 1pm and watched by many UL students and staff, the scene featured Patrick McHugh, Emma Murphy and Paddy English acting out their parts as participants in the accident aftermath. Sirens and screams took over the plaza for the half-hour duration of the demonstration, which was intended as a very accurate depiction of the events following a typical high-speed accident on an Irish road.

Limerick emergency services - ambulance, fire and traffic corps - arrived a few minutes after the demonstration began and followed set road accident procedures, which in this case included ascertaining that one of the participants was dead and a second was heavily injured. Emergency services worked together quickly to cut off the top of one of the cars and remove one of the victims, who was depicted as having sustained heavy injury.

UL students reacted positively to the recreation. James Murphy, a Business student, said that the scene 'looked shockingly realistic' while Sinead Coakley, European Studies, said the demo 'would certainly change the way [she] drives'.

Both cars used in the demonstration had previously

been involved in road traffic accidents. One had been hit by a bus and the other went through a crossroads and hit a car. Families of the victims donated the cars in order that they be used to further awareness of road safety.

Garda Tony Minter told An Focal that in his view, Thursday's road traffic accident scene was 'an image people will take seriously'. He went on to say: 'Whether a motorist drives safely or not depends on whether they want to drive safely. The difference between safe driving and unsafe driving is just attitude'.

The start of the week had been heralded by the placement of five crashed cars placed at highly-visible locations including the main university entrances. The cars were spray-painted with bright warning slogans such as 'Think Safe' and 'Slow Down Girls' in order to raise awareness of the dangers of speed and a lack of care on the roads. Remaining in place for the duration of the week, the cars served as a visual reminder to passers-by of the carnage on Irish roads and the potential result of a lack of motoring care.

As part of the safety week, Garda Liam Sheehan, Limerick's Crime Prevention officer, gave a presentation on Tuesday evening, speaking about crime issues and safety. On Wednesday evening, representatives of Headway, the Irish national association for acquired brain injury, gave a presentation with two fourth year Physiotherapy students, Laura Meagher and Siobhán Horgan, discussing serious head trauma and whiplash in car-related injury situations. Thursday evening featured Garda Tony Minter making a presentation to a packed John Holland Theatre on the realities of road traffic accidents, followed by a debate hosted by the Debating Union on the subject of aggressive road safety



campaigning.

Patrick McHugh, ULSU Campaigns & Services Officer said: 'This event and the safety week have been all about improving safety awareness within the campus community. Heightening awareness of the importance of safety is very important, particularly with so many students driving, as well as those pedestrians crossing the

road near the Groody roundabout in particular, which is still without a pedestrian crossing'. He continued by saying that 'hopefully those of you who see the significance will help spread the important message of safety for all people out there, not just yourself but everyone in the community both near and far.'



Barry calls for Undergrad Revamp

AOIFE BREEN, NEWS EDITOR

CHANCELLOR Sean Donlon may have forgotten to mention the largest member group of UL's campus in his welcome speech at Don Barry's inaugural address, but the new President remembered that students do exist at the University.

Professor Don Barry addressed members of faculty and staff as well as special dignitaries including Minister for Defence, Willie O'Dea and Chancellor of the National University of Ireland, Garrett Fitzgerald, and a large number of students in the Concert Hall on Wednesday of Week 2 to celebrate his first official address as UL's new

President.

Newly-appointed Vice President Academic and Registrar, Professor Paul McCutcheon, opened the ceremony and was followed by an introductory speech given by the Chancellor of the University, Sean Donlon, who told those present that, 'Governing Authority is confident that it has found the right person to lead UL in teaching, learning and research'.

In his address, President Barry praised the University's tradition of 'bolding [setting] the agenda for higher education since its conception in 1972' but went on to lay his thoughts on how UL could lead the way once more in the development of undergraduate

programmes in Ireland.

He introduced a comparative discussion about his experiences of undergraduate curricula in both Irish and American universities. He accused the Irish system of sacrificing 'breadth' for 'depth', which results in students attaining very narrowly focused degrees at the expense of a broader education. He cited Yale's tradition of students taking 11 modules from the 36 that they study over their four-year programme from disciplines outside of their major subject area.

'UL has been at the forefront of excellence in teaching and learning,' Professor Barry told the audience, 'UL led in co-

operative education as an intrinsic part of undergraduate experience.' He went on to argue that 'undergraduate education in Ireland is too narrow. [Universities are] failing to cultivate creativity and thinking outside of the box.'

The President warned that, 'It is timely we renew our focus,' and recalled UL's motto, eagna chun ghnimh - wisdom in action - to ignite the initiative for change.

SU President, St John Ó Donnabháin, issued the vote of thanks to the new president and took the opportunity to wish him the best while also reminding him that 'we'll [students] be watching' his decisions as University head.

EDITORIAL



BY SEAMUS RYAN
EDITOR

SOMETIMES 'all change' turns out to be no change. And sometimes what may later be seen as a significant turning or tipping point in the history of an organisation passes by almost unnoticed, only years later to be recognised as significant. Last Tuesday Don Barry announced that the six constituent colleges of UL were

to be replaced by four faculties (see story on page 4). Some colleges are combining, resulting in a behemoth of a faculty in Science & Engineering, some are being split and we now have to dip our quills twice into the inkpot when addressing a letter to anyone in what used to be called simply 'Humanities'.

One of the dinky powers that a university president has is the ability to combine, rename and split colleges (or indeed, faculties) following a reasonable period of consultation. Professor Barry has chosen to exercise this power with the result that there will be significant change in the configuration of the constituent colleges (now faculties) of UL. There are some minor quirks of course - apparently Professor Barry doesn't like the term 'informatics' and hence it's not the faculty of Science, Engineering & Informatics. As a self-indulgent aside from me, he's right - 'informatics' is an awful term borrowed from German via Russian in the 1960s and was once even registered as a trademark in the United States. Good riddance, it was a terrible term for a university college. The option of course was there to call it the faculty of Science, Engineering and Computery Stuff but that doesn't exactly roll off the tongue in a fluid movement.

Indulgence aside, the big question for the Students' Union and UL students is essentially what difference this change in the academic configuration will make to them.

In the year I started my first degree course at UL, the university prospectus underlined rather heavily that UL was not like other Irish universities and didn't see the point in having stuffy constituent colleges on the grounds that the attached bureaucracy was something that a dynamic fresh university could do without. About two years later that reference was quietly dropped from the prospectus as UL decided what it really needed was a few constituent colleges.

When Don Barry made his inaugural address to the campus community two weeks ago he spoke clearly about the need for greater emphasis on undergraduate education and undergraduate students. His intentions rang loud and clear. The intention to deepen undergrad knowledge of their chosen majors while seeking to broaden their understanding of subject matters outside their core major. The prospect of producing significantly more well-rounded individuals with transferable skills useful in a broader range of working environments. This makes sense - it's been obvious for the past decade that for individuals to thrive and for the economy to survive, people need highly transferable skills. To provide them with less is to fail them. It is important that in the coming months and coming years that these abstract aims continue to be striven for and ultimately achieved.

A rose by any other name still smells like a rose. The significance of last Tuesday's announcement is hard to quantify right now. What is important for UL students is that this should be used by university authorities as a turning point in the administration of this college and a path towards progressive change resulting in a better and more useful university experience for all of the campus community, but particularly the students. We as students are the reason that UL exists as an institution and we should never forget that.

Quotes of the fortnight

- **Thanks for mentioning Mary Harney and Twink, who couldn't be further away from a size zero**
Synan O'Mahony, fashion designer for recent clients Mary Harney and Twink, at the Debating Union's size zero debate
- **I mean, you can kill people so easily, like!**
A fourth year nurse on why she may not use her degree after graduation
- **It's OK, he's being charming - his pants are still on. If they weren't, it would be sleazy**
Class Reps chair Aoife Finnerty following a conversation with G Soc's Paddy English
- **And I'm supposed to know what's going in the university?**
Education officer Alan Higgins on not having time to read An Focal due to work pressures
- **Super Barry Goes Ballistic, Donlon Was Atrocious**
One of the rejected suggestions from the An Focal team for a headline following the Don Barry inaugural address (sung to the tune of Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious)
- **You need 600 points to be PPO**
Ogra Fianna Fail's Derek Daly to a UL student with his eye on the An Focal job. Incidentally, you don't.
- **40% is not a reduction!**
Regina Kelly, future science teacher, standing at the special offer fridge in Superquinn
- **Very good speech, the perfect balance between anarchy and deference**
Dr John Logan of UL's History department on St. John Ó Donnabháin's speech of thanks calling for a fulfilment of the university's promises under the Alcohol Policy at Don Barry's inaugural address
- **We're a socialist utopia... as certified by Joe Higgins**
St. John Ó Donnabháin gets all excited at the stamp of approval for ULSU from Dublin West

✳ Ulster Bank let's do things differently

Dear Ulster Bank

I'm a first year student and I'm living away from home for the first time. My parents pay my rent and bills, but they've told me I'll have to get a job this semester to pay for everything else. I've got a job but the pay isn't great and I'm worried I won't be able to make ends meet, what with events coming up and then Christmas. Is there any way I can cut back on costs so that I can live comfortably on the €60 a week I make from the part-time job?

Dear Student

Your question is very common and applicable to a lot of students who would be in the same position. Your parents are being very supportive by paying your rent and bills, this is one area where you need to have covered. In relation to budgeting for upcoming events and Christmas we have put together a plan that you can use to ensure you can live comfortably on your part-time salary.

As you have mentioned the most important expenses are being covered by your parents ie your rent, bills, food etc. For end of term and Christmas this will be an expensive time for any student. The Ulster Bank Student offer is the student account which offers transactions free banking with an interest free overdraft of €650.00 when you open the account. For example, if you use €350 of the Overdraft you can choose to repay the balance over a number of months which will help with your budgeting and ensuring you are not under any financial pressure. With €60.00 per week from your part-time job you could afford to repay €5.00/€10.00 per week and you would clear the balance over a period of months. If you are earning more during the summer months you can increase the lodgements to the account and repay the balance quicker. As there is no interest charged on this overdraft you will know exactly at any time what you need to lodge to clear the balance.

You could also look at doing a loan to help with living expenses, you would need to meet with one of our Customer Advisors Mike Salle or Sinead and they would be able to structure a loan to suit your own repayment ability and budget. The loan would be done on an interest only basis (this means only the interest would be covered by your repayment, for example if you take a loan of €800.00, this is the capital part, you would make interest payments on that amount, you would not be reducing the €800.00 which is the capital) When you are earning more money we would review your loan and restructure to clear both the capital and interest owing on the loan.

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UL Clubs & Societies

Non-sabbatical elections

AN FOCAL REPORTER

ELECTIONS for two posts on the Students' Union executive were held last Thursday, with polling stations open in the main canteen and the Health Sciences building. Michael Bourke, a taught masters in European Integration student from Clonmel, was the sole nominee for the position of Community Relations Officer when nominations closed on Friday of week 2 and was hence deemed elected. Two students were nominated for the position of Equality Officer - outgoing Equality Officer Kate Nolan, fourth year HPSS and Hamadziripi Munyikwa, fourth year French & Politics.

While the election campaigns were rather muted and hustings sparsely attended, a flurry of last-day campaigning by Mr Munyikwa's team in the main canteen resulted in his election with 76% of the vote.

Mr Bourke told An Focal that as Community Relations Officer he was looking 'to encourage respect for the community, from both the students and the residents'. Mr Munyikwa said as Equality officer that he was 'looking forward to working on the aims of his manifesto'.

Both positions are part-time and unpaid. Officers sit on the ULSU executive and are ex-officio members of Class Reps Council. The Equality officer is responsible

for bringing forward any issues in order to prevent discrimination or exclusion in the Union's policies and activities. Community relations have historically been a difficult area for the Students' Union. The Community Relations Officer is responsible for working with a view to improving relations with all sectors of the community.

Equality Officer:

Valid poll: 317
Spoilt: 4
Hamadziripi Munyikwa: 242
Kate Nolan: 75

Community Relations Officer Michael Bourke elected unopposed



Kate Nolan & Hamadziripi Munyikwa, candidates for Equality officer

Michael Bourke, Community Relations Officer



Mental Health Week 2007

CONOR FORREST

MONDAY October 8 kicks off Irish Mental Health Week 2007 in the South-West. This week is about emphasising the importance of good coping skills, to highlight the link between physical and mental health, promote understanding and a good attitude towards the word 'Mental' and to reach out to all age groups, young people in particular. Between Monday and Friday a wide range of activities centred on mental health will take in several places including Limerick City. This includes workshops, seminars on creative thinking and a theatre performance on mental health.

This is a very important week for raising awareness about good mental health,

especially among school and college students. For students it is very important to be emotionally healthy so they can study effectively. However many students do not know what to do or where to turn to if depression or other mental problems hit. According to the College Lifestyle and Attitudinal Survey, while most students rated their mental health as good or really good, when asked how they would cope with depression or anxiety, one-third said they would ignore the problem and one in ten said they would get drunk or take drugs to cope.

Part of the problem is that there is still a stigma attached to mental health problems and many people believe they will be excluded from society if they tell anyone about their problems. In a recent report

commissioned by the National Office for Suicide Prevention (NSOP), it was found that 'while most people acknowledge that mental illness can affect anyone, more than half would not want it known if they had a mental health problem. 20% believed that the mentally ill should be excluded from their neighbourhoods.' This is what the organisers plan to counteract. According to Mental Health Week.ie, 'Mental health promotion is necessary in order to challenge the stigma surrounding mental distress and promote positive mental health.'

For further information on mental health issues or on Mental Health Week 2007, visit www.mentalhealthweek.ie

Class Reps Get Trained

AOIFE FINNERTY

TRAINING for UL's 100-plus class reps took place within the college grounds on Friday and Saturday at the end of week 3. The class reps were trained in a variety of different skills, including negotiation and public speaking.

Its organiser, Education Officer Alan Higgins, commented on the training and the class representatives programme itself, 'We view class reps in their crucial role to act as a link between the Union and the University. It is also an opportunity to meet with fellow class reps with whom you can share ideas and experiences. It also reflects the Union's commitment to developing the Class Rep system for the students, the Union and the University as a whole.'


The reps took three seminars on Friday which detailed their place within their class, the Union and within the university as a whole. In their evening they enjoyed a social gathering and a 'get-to-know' session, which developed the bond within the class reps. On Saturday they learned the ins and outs of

Council and how to have their voice heard on a range of issues.

All in all this years Class Reps Training seems to have been a big success. One class rep commented 'this is my first time being a class rep so I didn't really know what it was about or how to do it; I just

knew I wanted to be involved. I have to say all the sabbats made me feel really at home asking questions. The older class reps were really helpful too. They gave me tips on how to handle difficult lecturers or classmates. I'm really glad that I went. The Friday social was really good too.'

UNION GENERAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY WEEK 7



DON'T BE LEFT OUT OF THE GAME

MOTIONS WITH 200 SIGNATURES TO SEAMUS, VP/PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLICITY OFFICER
MONDAY WEEK 6, 5PM

AONTAS NA MAC LÉINN
ULSU
Office of Learning

Quiet, please!



BY AOIFE BREEN
NEWS EDITOR

THE Library is undertaking a campaign to reduce noise in the building following the results of last year's LibQual Survey which showed that noise management was a key factor for those who use its services.

Circulating an email to all students informing them of the initiative, library staff

have introduced a number of changes relating to noise control. The Noise Policy outlines key rules that will be strictly enforced throughout the building by staff and security. The policy has also established a 'silent zone' on level two which, it is anticipated, will be a completely noise-free area.

Education Officer, Alan Higgins, has welcomed the new policy and hopes that it is implemented entirely to ensure a silent study area for students. 'The issue of people talking and making noise in the library has always been one which has concerned students, particularly as the semester progresses and students have projects to complete. I hope that this initiative

is successful and will ensure a more suitable environment in which students can study peacefully. It's important to note that for it to work every student must take the responsibility of keeping noise to a minimum,' he commented.

Students are asked to keep noise levels to a minimum at all times while in the building. The use of mobile phones is limited to texting while phone calls can only be held in the stairwells or in the bathrooms, except in the silent zone on level two where mobile phones are completely prohibited. Laptops are also forbidden in the silent zone. The Noise Policy in full can be accessed from the library's website.

UL Academic Reconfiguration

AN FOCAL REPORTER

SPEAKING at last Tuesday's meeting of UL's Governing Body, President Don Barry announced the outcome of his deliberations on regarding academic reconfiguration in the university. For the past decade, UL has been administered under a system of six constituent colleges. The new academic configuration will see this number reduced to four and the 'colleges' renamed as 'faculties'. While there is no change for the Kemmy Business School, all other former colleges will see administrative changes, some of them major. The colleges of Engineering, Informatics & Electronics and most of the college of Science will be combined to form the new faculty of Science & Engineering. The remainder of the college of Science will be combined with the college of Education to make up the faculty of Education & Health Science. The college of Humanities has been renamed to the faculty of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences.

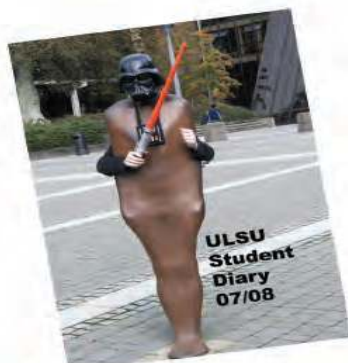
When the process is implemented each faculty will be headed by a Dean who will report directly to the President. The current setup is that each college is headed by a

Dean who reports to the university's Vice President/Academic & Registrar. The Deans of the new faculties will be members of the university's Executive Committee for the first time.

The reconfiguration has resulted in a number of academic departments being moved. Notably these include the college of Informatics & Electronics being folded into the new faculty of Science & Engineering and all medical departments being moved from the college of Science to

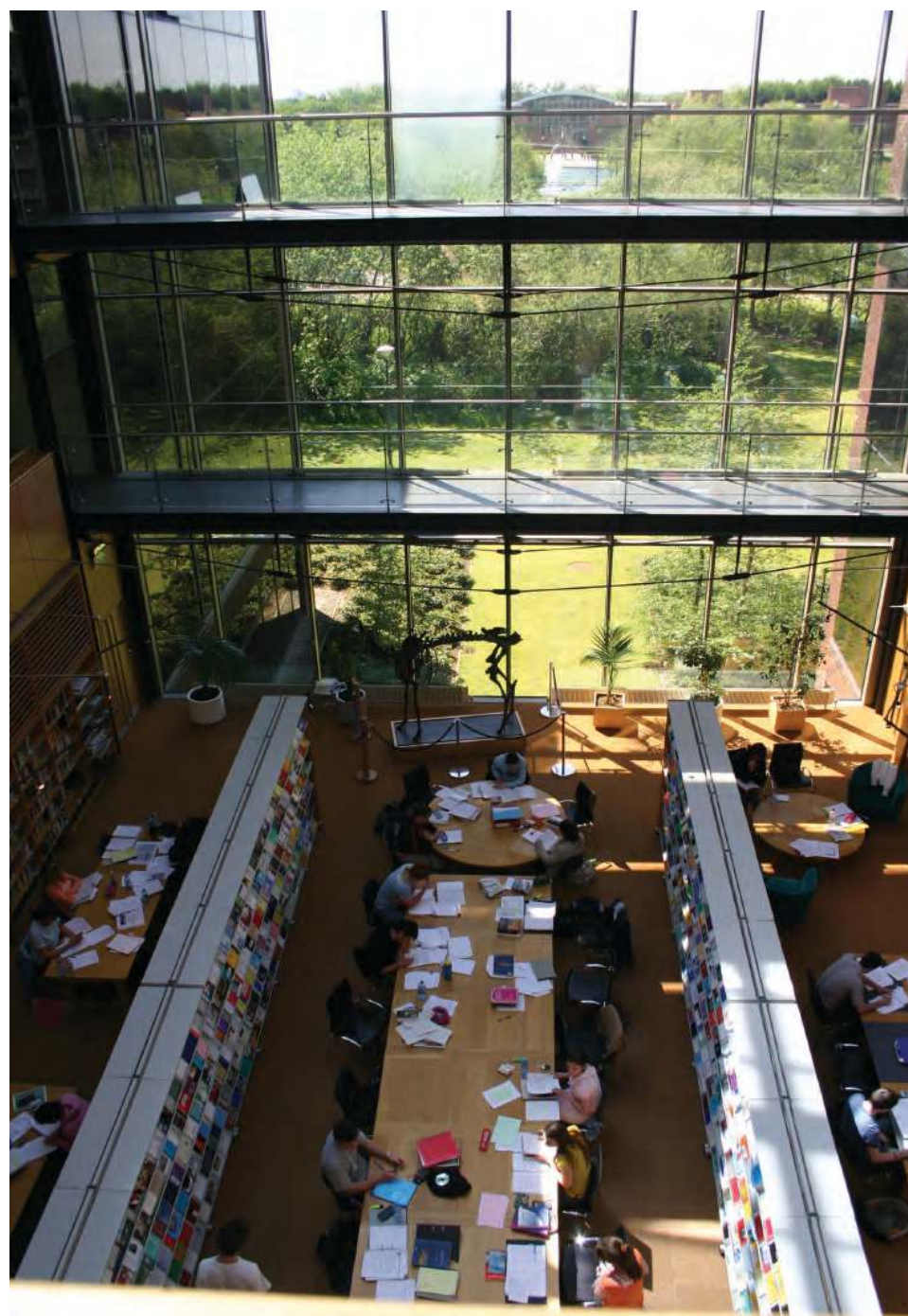
the new faculty of Education & Health Science. The arrangements for the Irish World Academy of Music & Dance still have to be made. In an email to all staff, Professor Barry said 'Naturally I received conflicting advice on a number of matters but, on the whole, I think that my proposals reflect the views of the vast majority of the community at UL.'. He went on to say that he hoped to have the new configuration in place as soon as possible.

ULSU Student Diary 07/08



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Available at the Students' Union



Talking a closer look through education

JAMES KENNEDY

EDUATION Officer Alan Higgins has kept busy these last few weeks, helping to bring in a number of educational reforms. Using feedback from students and statistics taken over the last academic year, a ten point plan has been drawn up promoting 'Transparency in Education'. The topical 'Anonymous Marking' scheme has appeared once again under this plan. Despite past Class Reps' claims that students don't want this, the education department has reason to believe otherwise. Having examiners outside the college correct college papers is seen as fairer. A system 'based on what they know, as opposed to who they are' says Alan.

Of interest to all students is the proposed feedback sys-

tem. Many students complain that a simple exam grade is not enough. Many students are left asking themselves 'which particular subject areas need work?' This issue is now being tackled by Alan and others who agree that 'Feedback is an essential part of the learning process'. He suggests that 'Lecturers should be made available for student feedback', suggesting a more 'personalised feedback system'. This would mean students would be better informed as to where they could improve themselves in future projects and exams.

Postgrads should note the proposed 'Guidelines for Supervisors' initiative. This sets out clearly the expectations of supervisors overseeing Postgraduate projects and Thesis' as well as what is

expected of the student. This move will help to avoid breakdowns in communication between faculty and student, which has been an issue in the past.

Following the theme of 'Transparent Education' the setting up of a Committee for Teaching and Learning has also been proposed. This will see greater communication among faculties to better teaching methods and incentives. 'Faculty needs to educate faculty in initiatives in teaching and learning', says the Education Officer.

This 'Transparent Education' plan will be carried out over the coming weeks, parts of which are already up and running. Reaction to the plan has been 'Positive' says Alan, who has high hopes for the success of the scheme.

Welfare in UL

JUDITH LYNCH, WELFARE OFFICER

WORLD Mental Health day is fast approaching. It takes place this year on October 10. On that day, the grass won't grow any greener, the appalling traffic conditions in Limerick won't appear any better and it's unlikely that large crowds of people will go dancing in the streets. This day doesn't work miracles - but I would contend that it contains a most important message - one could argue the most important message for people in their day to day lives. There is no health without mental health!

We are very conscious today of physical health and well-being - we know what we should and should not be doing - whether we choose to live our lives that way or not! However, we rarely seem to reflect on our mental health in quite the same way. So ask yourself the following questions:

- How do you feel about yourself?
- How do you feel about others?
- How are you able to meet the demands of life?

To enjoy mental health, it is essential to maintain a realistic but positive view of oneself. The way we view ourselves has a

direct bearing on what we believe which can affect relationships and our expectations of the world.

There are many factors that affect how we perceive ourselves including self-esteem, diet, sleep, communication, relationships, alcohol and nicotine, exercise and relaxation. Developing an awareness of stress points and responses, which enable us to take control of potentially damaging issues, can help prevent the build-up of worries which can affect mental well-being.

Mental health means so much more than simply the absence of mental illness. It is about physical and emotional well-being, about having the strength and capacity to live a full and creative life, and also about the flexibility to deal with its ups and downs. This year, mental health awareness week focuses on 'creativity' so get creative whether it's joining a club or society, playing some music or going out to the club and dancing your heart out. Also, watch out for different events and activities running from October 8th to 12th.

For more information check out www.mentalhealthireland.ie or www.spunout.ie. You can also call in to the Welfare Office in the Students Union or check out www.bebo.com/welfare-in-ul.

Don't Let Your Tensions Take Over

Learn to live with them - master them!

Tensions and anxiety are natural reactions to anything that threatens to upset our safety, well-being and happiness. Accidents, violence, financial troubles, problems at work, or family disputes can all provoke anxiety and tension. Sometimes, however we become tense and anxious when no real danger exists. We get worn out, on edge and can't reason things out or control our feelings, as we usually would. Outlined below are twelve suggestions which can assist in overcoming tensions. Remember as you read these suggestions that success will come only with determination, persistence and time. Also remember that where your health is concerned, your doctor is your best guide so discuss any concerns and anxieties with him/her.

Talk it over

When something worries you, talk it over. Don't bottle it up. Confide your worry to a person you can trust: a partner, a family member, a good friend or family doctor. Talking things over helps to relieve the strain, enables you to see your worry in a clearer light, and often helps you to see what you can do about it.

Escape for a while

When things go wrong, it often helps to get away from the problem for a while; to lose yourself in a film, book, sport or a brief break away for a change of scene. Making yourself 'stand there and suffer' is a form of self punishment, and is unlikely to solve the problem.

Work off your anger

If you feel yourself using anger as a general way of behaviour, remember that while anger may give you a temporary sense of righteousness, or even of power, it will generally leave you feeling or looking rather foolish.

Give in occasionally

If you find yourself getting into frequent quarrels with people and feeling obstinate and defiant, remember that frustrated children behave that way. By all means stand your ground on what you know is right, but do so calmly and always allow for the possibility that you could turn out to be wrong. Even if you're right, there is nothing wrong with giving in occasionally. If you yield, you'll usually find that others will do so too.

Take one thing at a time

Take the most urgent tasks and

pitch into them, one at a time, forgetting the rest for the time being. If you feel you cannot tackle things in this way reflect - Are you sure you are not overestimating the importance of many of the things you have to do?

Don't compare yourself to others

Constant comparison to others can be very debilitating and eventually will lead to feelings of failure. Instead of comparing yourself to others, recognise and applaud your personal strengths and qualities.

Don't be too critical

Everyone has unique virtues, shortcomings, values and the right to develop as an individual. People who feel let down by the shortcomings, real or imagined, of others are really let down about themselves. Instead of being critical about another person's behaviour, search out his or her good points and help to develop them.

Give the other person a chance

When people are under emotional tension, they often feel that they have to be first - to edge out the other person, even if the goal is as trivial as getting ahead on the road.

Competition is contagious but so is co-operation.

Make an effort in social situations

Many of us have the feeling that we are being inadequate, excluded, slighted or neglected when in the company of others, especially when meeting a new group of people. Instead of shrinking away and withdrawing, occasionally try making the opening move yourself, rather than waiting to be introduced by others or drawn into conversation.

Plan your recreation

Many people drive themselves so hard that they allow too little time for recreation which is an essential for sound physical and mental health. They find it hard to relax. Find yourself a hobby that you can throw yourself into completely and with pleasure. While you are doing so, make a positive effort to forget all about your work. You'll find that if you do this, you will return to your responsibilities with renewed enthusiasm, drive and initiative.

Article provided courtesy of Mental Health Ireland. For more information check out www.mentalhealthireland.ie

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

JUDITH LYNCH

Why it's important to always wear a condom!

Everybody wants a good sex life but what about a healthy sex life? Do you know as much about contraceptives as about pulling technique? It's important to feel confident, informed and happy about sex and your sexuality but if you do find yourself in difficulty don't panic. If you have any questions or queries call into the Welfare Office or check out www.bebo.com/welfare-in-ul.

It is important that you use a condom each time you have sex. Whether it is a one-night stand or a long-term relationship, it's easier to prevent problems, such as unplanned pregnancies or STI's by being safe and informed. Remember - you can get free condoms from the Welfare Office in the Students Union all year!

This week's STI column features: **Gonorrhoea**

What is it?

Gonorrhoea is also known as 'the clap'. This is a bacterial infection in the area of the penis and vagina, throat or bum. This infection can cause infertility in men and women if it is not treated early.

What are the symptoms?

Most people experience symptoms if they have Gonorrhoea. But these symptoms are far more noticeable in boys than girls.

Symptoms for females:

Change in normal vaginal discharge. This may increase, change to a yellow or greenish colour and develop a strong smell.

Pain or burning sensation when urinating; Irritation and/or discharge from the anus; Pain during sex.

Symptoms for males:

Yellow or green discharge from the penis; Irritation and/or discharge from the anus; Inflammation of the testicles and prostate gland.

Prevention:

Use a condom!

(Please note - for oral sex it is also important to use a condom or dental dam to prevent gonorrhoea of the throat)

Treatment:

Gonorrhoea can be easily treated with antibiotics.

Where do I get tested?

You can apply for an STI test at Limerick Regional Hospital - 061-482382

The waiting list is currently 3-4 weeks although there are slots available for emergency case

Suicide - it's not a joking matter

DONAL O'DRISCOLL

I don't know how people who do that ['whinge' about the economy] don't commit suicide'. These were the ever eloquent words of An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern, at this year's ICTU conference of all places. Perhaps Mr Ahern's answer lies in the fact that many of these 'whingers' may have friends or family members who have become part of the national epidemic that is suicide. Perhaps the sight of another young person being carried away in a coffin far too young is what stopped them from taking their own lives. Perhaps for some, it was a previous failed attempt and the dark memory of that moment?

For the purpose of this article, I am not too interested in people who are perceived as 'whinging' about the economy. I am not even overly focused on Mr Ahern's comment per se. What is of more importance here, in the context of this comment (which, for what it is worth, I found

grossly offensive) is what it says about the official attitude to the issue of suicide.

That something as serious as suicide can be mentioned in such a blasé manner, does not say much for the seriousness the matter is held in. There is a depressing finality to suicide, particularly in relation to younger people, which does not make it 'A' material for impromptu stand up. I laugh at pretty much anything, but suicide is not one of them.

However, in fairness to Bertie, this rather relaxed attitude to the issue of suicide is nothing new in Irish society. Certainly, it is not new in official speak. Physical scars and illnesses are visible and hence easily identifiable. Mental scars however, run deeper and as such are easier to overlook or ignore. Just thinking about it, few people would dare to abandon or isolate those suffering from cancer. To do so would be to risk an instant backlash for being cruel or inhumane. If however, we were to avoid people on the

basis of their mental health problems, it would be quite easy to find a way to justify it. They are 'high maintenance' they have issues, they are too intense, etc etc. This can be somewhat understandable and I don't seek to condemn this attitude, particularly among the ordinary person, but it is important to remember the impact that suicide, particularly among young people, can have.

It is well documented that in the 26 counties, suicide kills more people than road accidents do. For many people however, looking at it that way is too abstract. 409 people died by suicide in 2006. Of these, 78 per-cent were male, a large proportion of these were in the 15-24 year old age bracket. While I could not obtain the exact figure for 2006, in 2005, 15-24 year olds accounted for 18.5 Per-Cent of the overall suicide figures with 80 out of 431. In cold statistics, this may look bad enough, but if we just really think about this for a minute,

in 2005, 3 people under the age of 24 took their lives every two weeks. Between 25-34, the total was 94. So between 15-34 year olds in 2005, 174 took their own lives. Just under 1 every 2 days. So, is this a big enough issue now?

For families affected by suicide, the issue is more than statistics. Stats don't matter when your young son or daughter, when your brother or sister, is being lowered into the ground.

That is the problem here, when people of the stature of Bertie Ahern (who, like it or not is the head of government of this state.) make off the cuff remarks, they dehumanise this very human issue. If Mr Ahern wants more information on the more human side, away from the statistics, he could try talking to the parents of some of the many young people who have taken their own

lives in recent times. He could start with the parents of my friend Gareth. I'm sure he will have no problem getting in touch with them, his uncle is a Fianna Fáil member of Cork County Council.

What it boils down to is that acknowledging the problem of suicide on an official level and even for most people on a micro level, is not something people want to do. It takes us as a society, away from the feel good factor of the 'Celtic Tiger' and the Peace process, etc. Every thing is meant to be fine now. We Irish don't have problems now. Emigration, conflict, these are all things of the past. So why spoil things by talking about young people taking their own life? Why mention the S word (Suicide) or even the D word (Depression)?

Unfortunately, the issues of suicide and mental health problems, particularly among

the youth, are real and do not seem to be going away anytime soon. People who suffer from mental health problems are not lepers to be avoided. For most, they get through these issues and live full lives, they don't want special treatment, just acknowledgement that the problem exists. For the families of those who have taken their own lives, they need to see that something is being done. There is no panacea for this. People realise that you can't just wave a magic wand and stop people taking their own lives. However, it is essential that there is a level of trust that those in official circles take the issue seriously. Judging by our esteemed leader's 'gaffe' and his almost dismissive 'apology' afterwards, it seems that trust cannot be established yet.



SO, WHAT DO YOU DO IN COLLEGE?

Last year over 200 students made the decision to run for Class Reps Council; to represent, campaign and party for their class.

Every Course has a right to a least one Class Rep. To become a Class Rep, pick up a nomination form at the Students' Union Reception or PSA Common Room.

**CLASS REPS COUNCIL-
A STUDENT LIFE LESS ORDINARY**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT ALAN:
CALL: 061213491 E-MAIL: education@ulsu.ie**



Homework with Alan Higgins, ULSU Education Officer

Bring it all together - joining the dots in teaching and learning

THE fanfare of Don Barry's augural speech may be slightly faded, but its message must not. The role of teaching and learning within the University has been identified as a key objective for the new President's term. The success of developing the teaching and learning environment on campus must involve all members of the campus community, the faculty, the students (both undergraduate and post-graduate) and the staff who provide the various supports to be engaged in identify the goals which must be set.

Teaching and Learning has been traditionally seen as a one-way relationship between faculty and student - faculty imparting the year of accumulated knowledge to willing (and not so willing minds). In recent years it has been identified that this

interaction can often be enhanced through the engagement between the faculty and student, with the student participating and the faculty member seeking feedback. This dynamic can be even further developed through the recognition which the various support services, both academic and non-academically related have to offer to the teaching and learning experience.

It is this partnership between students, faculty and staff, which has been key in developing the UL of today and it has to be this same partnership which develop the future growth of teaching and learning on this campus. There are a number of brilliant initiatives being run by both faculty and support services and various levels of student engagement. These existing and new projects need to be linked together to share in the

experience and create new focuses for teaching and learning in UL.

The contribution which each group can make to teaching and learning must also be recognised and that it is to be valued. In a changing world with new developments in technologies, the development of the whole person needs to be a coordinated approach to teaching and learning to maximise the students' learning potential now in the future, the reputation of the University and its faculty and the service which support staff provide. Through this learning through action the academic reputation is not only nurtured, but only adds to an already dynamic campus identity.

Letters to the editor

AN FOCAL, UL STUDENTS' UNION, UL, CASTLETROY, LIMERICK
PHONE 061-202363, FAX 061-213476, EMAIL SEAMUS.RYAN@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.

Sir,

I wish to refer to Mr Sean O Sullivan's letter in the last edition of An Focal. I will not as per Mr O'Sullivan start off on a mindless attack on his letter published 'apologising' for the Ms Caitríona McGrattan's 'Fanta fuelled' article on the 18th of September.

I will merely express my belief that Fanta Fuelled was Ms McGrattan's effort to let any member of UL's student body know that a choice exists on a night out. But to describe an article outlining a free choice available to all as being 'ill-conceived evangelicism' is completely over the top.

Why need one get on any high horse in relation to the drinking topic? There is nothing wrong with a drink on a night out. One may even over celebrate on occasion. Are we now living on a campus environment where it is wrong to express that one does or does not wish to drink? Need one feel self congratulated that a pint of Rock-Shandy costs €4.80 or that a pint of Guinness costs € 3.90 I think not.

Why congratulate somebody for making a free choice?.. Need it be an issue? If it is...is there not a more pressing question to be asked... Mr O Sullivan obviously does not like being a non drinker so perhaps he should try a social beverage with his friends and loosen up. Maybe the fear of 'waking up with a hangover after an embarrassing night of alcohol-induced-erectile-dysfunction' as Mr O'Sullivan describes it is more his issue.

In the meantime need I feel special, quirky, ashamed, insulted or any other emotion offered by Mr O'Sullivan as a non drinker I think not !!

On my behalf no apology was or is required for Ms McGrattans article. Need one stand out from the crowd as a non drinker? Not in my experience.

Yours

Cillian Burke

Sir

For the recent address by Professor Don Barry, all lectures on 19 September were cancelled between 2pm and 6pm. Given that the date in question was a Wednesday and even under the university's lip service to their own alcohol policy only labs and tutorials are supposed to be scheduled on Wednesday afternoons, why did university authorities feel the need to cancel lectures that are supposedly not scheduled at that time?

Yours

John Fitzgerald

Sir,

I must admit to some surprise at the reporting on the front page of An Focal Sept. 18th of the comments of Senator Donie Cassidy in regard to securing voting rights for UL graduates. His predecessor Mary O'Rourke T.D. made much the same commitment when the 12th report on Seanad reform was published all of 3 years ago and no action was taken. Note that was the 12th report and Senator Cassidy has previously held a leadership position in the Seanad and no legislation in this area resulted during his stewardship.

During the recent NUI Seanad elections, which I as a UL graduate contested but was not able to vote in, I observed various outgoing candidates telling all and sundry how much they cared about this issue yet none cared to take the opportunity to introduce a bill themselves. Until such time as a bill is published and timetabled for debate in the Oireachtas I would prefer that predictions of this nature especially coming from someone who isn't even honest with himself about his hairline would be better placed amongst the horoscopes.

Yours

Daniel K. Sullivan

Sir

It may well have been an oversight but at the inaugural address of Don Barry, every single group of attendees was welcomed by UL Chancellor Sean Donlon in the opening speech except for one. The forgotten group? Students. In my view it's a group that's hard to miss or omit. There are twelve thousand of them on the UL campus and they're the reason the university exists in the first place. An unintentional omission almost certainly but rather a telling one.

Yours

Steve Madden

ULSC Beginners Weekend

Fri 5th to Sun 7th October

Star Sailing Centre, Kenmare, Co. Kerry.

Experience the exciting world of sailing, Ideal for beginners!

ULSC

Cost: €70 per person

Contact ulsc.email@gmail.com for more details

El Presidente

Cycling and Public Transport

CYCLING is the best form of transport for a campus like UL, and its surrounding areas. Quick, cheap, good for your health and for the environment, it is top class for the urban area. Which is why the Students Union Bike Scheme has been such a success, with over 200 bikes bought and sold in the last few sales. There's a real appetite for cycling here, and hopefully the next sale (at some stage next month - you can put your name on the list at the Reception in the Students Union) will be as well received.

Public Transport is another issue that we've been working on here - with the most visible improvement being the shiny new Bus Stop, as well as the new shelters at the East Gate Car Park for students going home on Fridays. There are also plans for two new routes in the Castletroy area, one going to Annacotty (due before Christmas) and the other to Cappavilla Village (due February/March), following demands from the Students Union and others for better service in the area. This won't stop the current buses being late, due the traffic problems in the city, but it will make for a more regular service which should have an impact. Bus Lanes are badly needed, but the City Council are dragging their feet on this...we'll let ye know as we hear more.

The issue of transport on campus needs and deserves to be top of the agenda. UL now needs to follow up its work by putting new Bike Sheds in at the heart of the campus, to make it more attractive to cycle, and also to put in further Bus Shelters, at the main entrance, the University avenue, and on the North Campus for when the new route across the river opens. If we really want to promote the best forms of transport for UL and Limerick, then they need to be supported by the college, and made as attractive as possible - we look forward to a new, better served, greener University!



Postgraduate News



BY EMMA MURPHY
PSA PRESIDENT

Hi All,

I hope I am finding you well!
The last few weeks have been a bit hectic with all of the settling in and everything.

Just a few points to note for you in the coming weeks.

PSA AGM

Firstly the PSA AGM will take place at 1pm in the PSA Common Room (just off the Stables Courtyard) on Wednesday 10 October 2007 (Week 5). The meeting will elect all of the new officers of

the PSA executive committee and relieve the out going officers of their responsibilities. The positions of Deputy-President, Treasurer, Publicity Officer, Events Officer and Mary Immaculate Representative are all vacant so elections will take place at the General Meeting. There are also college representative positions which are also vacant, so I would encourage anybody who is contemplating becoming visibly involved in the Association to come along to the meeting also. Should any members of the Association have any items which they would like to address at the meeting can they forward them by e-mail (emma.murphy@ul.ie) to me.

I would really encourage you all to attend and participate in the meeting as it is your Association

Meet and Greet

The first event of the year took place on September 20. The Meet and Greet in the PSA Common Room was highly successful and very well attended by all factions of the Postgraduate Community. The event signalled a want for such events to be a regular occurrence and the desire amongst Postgraduates for the Common Room to become a vibrant Postgraduate venue was widely talked about. The photographic evidence from the night is available for all to view at <http://PSA-UL.bebo.com>.

Keep posted to the website and to the BEBO page for more events in the coming weeks.

Postgraduate Careers Service

The Postgraduate Careers service is a valuable entity for all postgrads on campus and I would highly encourage all postgraduate students to avail of the service provided. There are events coming up in the coming weeks so keep an eye on your e-mails and on the notice boards in the Common Room in the PSA. Also I'd like to congratulate Joanne Holland on her appointment as the new Postgraduate Careers advisor. If you have any queries in relation to the careers service you can contact Joanne at Joanne.Holland@ul.ie.

Ok, folks that's all from me this week!

Any questions or queries, drop me an e-mail and I hope to see you all at the AGM.

Is mise, *Emma*



PSA/U LSU Reintegration

EMMA MURPHY, PSA PRESIDENT

THE subject of the re-integration of the Postgraduate Student Association into the UL Students Union has once again reared its head. The PSA Annual General Meeting is due to take place on Wednesday of Week 5 at 6pm in the PSA Common Room and the subject is the primary item on the agenda once again. The need for a quorum for the meeting is once again the imperative difficulty, yet judging by the interest shown in recent weeks there is a strong interest in the topic.

It is the opinion of three of my predecessors that the implications of the split between the two organisations were not wholly thought out and the results have been negative for the association. The PSA was set up in order to fulfil a representative and social role necessary for postgraduate students in the University. Yet due to separation from the ULSU this role has become distorted and lacks the substance to fulfil its social representative role to the full. In the opinion of one of my predecessors Maria McHale 'branching off from the Students' Union has meant that the PSA President has, in essence become a full time administrator'. As the PSA President is the sole employee of the PSA, they have the responsibility of dealing with all accounts for the Association including the paying and declaring all taxes of the PSA.

These administrative tasks, as well as the numerous other roles that the President is expected to perform, are extremely time-consuming. In essence they detract the President's focus away from their main job, i.e. the representation of postgraduate students on campus. Therefore, a reintegration into the Students' Union would reduce this administrative burden considerably and allow the President to focus on a restructuring of the PSA to ensure its main role is fulfilled - actually representing postgrad students

The issues of transparency and accountability tend to be at the forefront of the debate in question. In the current situation, the PSA President is the sole person in control of the capitation fee which is received by the PSA each year. There are no controls on what cheques are issued and where money will be spent. The President is the sole signatory on the PSA chequebook which could very easily allow for a mismanagement of funds. The possibility of a breach of PSA funds has been dealt with and made more accountable in recent months yet the level of accountability which is portrayed is at the discretion of the President. It is not in the interest of the Postgraduate community for so much power to be vested in one person. Although in theory the PSA executive and the college reps should keep checks and controls on the President, in reality this tends not to be the

case. In reality, the only body that has been willing to regulate financial matters in the PSA is the Students' Union, its Sabbatical Officers and current and previous Secretaries-General, which has been done in recent times through various agreements.

The extent of responsibility on the President of the Association is immense and it is unrealistic to assume that every PSA President will be an accomplished manager and has the skills to run an organisation. The PSA President has little or no accountability, is only loosely bound by employment law and does not even sign a contract when they take office, therefore if a PSA President were to walk out of the job it could leave the entire future of the PSA in doubt. Although the PSA is responsible to the University for management of Postgraduate capitation, the University has never asked for an account of the money, assuming, I believe, that the SU acts as a watchdog in these matters.

There is a prominent need for the issue of the PSA to be rectified in the immediate future, as any of my recent predecessors will highly substantiate. The AGM in Week 5 tells its own story with regard to the attitudes of the Postgraduate Community in relation to the accountability of their capitation fees and to the transparency of their representative association which is imperative to the foreseeable future of the association.

UL Mens Hockey Club

The club has reformed we are looking for new players experienced and beginners

Training times

**Tuesday - 6pm
on Astro turf
Thursday - 5.15pm
on Astro Turf**

We will be signing up new members at a stand in the canteen from 2pm-5pm on Thursday Week 4

Poker's Richest

Student Poker tournament is back!

Presenting the 2008  Student Poker Championships

Featuring:


- \$75,000 in guaranteed prizes
- Live Tournament Final (no expense spared) in Prague
- Insane Post Tournament Party at the Spearmint Casino
- Qualify online @ vcpoker.ie or live at your own university tournament

You don't have to play poker
to make money from it.

The VC Poker Brand Manager Programme
vcpoker.ie/success



 vcpoker.ie Presents The VC Student Poker Championships

Let's  you in Prague



An Focal Profile: Careers

SEAMUS RYAN

STARTED in 1997 with 25 attending companies, the UL Careers Fair in the University Arena on October 18 is this year poised to be the biggest yet, with 108 companies attending. The fair has been a popular event with UL students since its inception, attracting 2000 students last year, and it now firmly the biggest campus careers fair in the country.

An Focal met with Mary Sweeney, head of careers at UL to talk about the upcoming fair. For many students, thinking about a future career may seem like a decision that can be left aside for a few months or even a few years but Mary is quick to dismiss that thought. 'It's important that students from every year come to the fair, start thinking and exploring early so they've time to make a choice before they feel they're forced into one', she explains. 'If they leave it till just before they graduate, people end up with less choice and feel there's very little left for them'.

She stresses that the fair is not just for final-year students and certainly not just for students of business and engineering. Half of the companies contacted over the summer by Mary said they'll recruit any discipline. If anything she believes that graduates are too tied to their degree title. Advising students to 'think broad, then narrow down rather than holding tight to [their] discipline' she explains that as many recruiting companies won't be familiar with the particular modules being studied by students as part of a degree programme, the fair is a marvellous opportunity for students to sell themselves to companies by explaining what subjects they are studying rather than merely walking up and saying 'I'm doing a degree X' and leaving it at that.

The careers office has been striving to achieve a balance of companies at the fair and there will be

companies there of all sizes and from virtually all disciplines. Mary strongly advises students to prepare before going to the fair and have particular companies in mind to target. It's your time and your opportunity so use it wisely.

Having moved into moved into new premises in E-block last year, the careers office is well-prepared to deal with queries from students. About 1000 students use the office for consultation each year and the careers office also has specialist people who work specifically with mature students and students with disabilities, as well as a new person to deal specifically with postgrads. Mary emphasises that students calling in don't have to know what they want to do, they're interested in talking to anyone who's trying to decide what they want to do.

Additionally the office will run three further fairs in the Spring semester - the Spring careers fair (with more focus on the volunteering sector, the arts and the media. There will also be plenty of presentations from visiting companies throughout the year.

The biggest destination sector for UL graduates is in the financial services sector and it's a sector that is interested in graduates from all disciplines. Google is one of the most sought-after companies to work for by graduates and they too are interested in graduates from across the board - anyone who's a good team worker, good communicator and has a 2.1 degree. For the first time this year they are attending a campus fair and it's in UL! Google have said that 70% of the jobs that they will have in two years time and 90% of the jobs they will have in two years will be redundant so it's obviously an exciting company to work for.

The most recent data from April 2007 surveying graduates from 2006 reveals that the employment rate of UL graduates 11% above the national average. At that time, of the 2006 UL output, 69% were employed, 22% in

further study and a mere 3% seeking employment.

Traditionally about 50% of UL's graduates have worked in Dublin after graduation with only a quarter staying in the mid-west. There has been a change in this in recent years as graduates seek a better quality of life. Of the UL graduates from 2006, 34% are working in Dublin and 34% in the mid-west region.

Mary spoke of the importance of involvement in extra-curricular activities as something that will make a candidate stand out. Urging students to become involved in college life, she said that 'an absence of that doesn't produce the well-rounded person that companies are looking for'.

As a parting word, Mary said that 'students should be very positive about their opportunities but that doesn't mean they should be complacent and should turn up to the careers fair with an open mind'.

The UL Careers Fair takes place on Thursday October 18 at the Sports Arena from 2pm to 4pm. It'll take students quite a bit of time to get around to as many companies as possible so Mary advises students to get there early!

The careers office, located at E0-019 is open from 10am to 4:30pm daily. The careers website is at www.ul.ie/careers.

Drink, the curse of musicality

PATRICK MCHUGH (CSO) & MICHAEL BOURKE (CRO)

SINCE when did being an ass become cool? Well, it seems that it comes to pass at stupid o'clock in the morning, when certain local idiots feel that all of a sudden they have voices like angels rather than the usual out of tune and overly stretched vocals somewhere between beating small animals and snaring a wild cat. Yet again, we here in the Union are receiving the endless phone calls from residents of the community complaining about lousy inconsiderate neighbours being public annoyances, but alas this time is short.

That's right; the new by-law will put an end to all the

unbearable singing and general socially negligent actions of certain incredible imbeciles found mostly in students with the consideration of the Black Death. This law will allow residents to have you (the drunken Eejit) hauled before the courts for being an idiot, so bear this in mind before you loose your geographical location and start to reminisce o'er yonder fields of Athenry with half the words missing and not a note in your head.

Yes it is a rant, but also one worth heeding. We might have some sway with the authorities here in the University but when arrested by the local Gardaí, we are powerless to do bugger all, so you're on your own mate. At this stage we could only loan

support to you through our contracted solicitor, now that sounds distant but that's the system outside of the Campus, so keep this in mind if you're tempted to break the law.

Remember, the people of Castletry are not all students; many have very young children who we all should set good examples for and also if the day of caring and minding the older generation is over then we have moved to a sad state in this overly cruel modern Ireland so full of pressure, panic and postulating. Leave your idiocy in the parishes from whence you came and grow up with the rest of us and learn to respect your neighbours and the community you reside in, even if it is Elm Park.

Seanfhocail na Seachtaine *Tús maith leath na hoibre*

Bhuel! Tá suil agam go raibh tús iontach don téarma ag gach éinne. Muna raibh níl sé ró dhéanach chun sult a bhaint as, táimid fós sa cead leath!

Nach ait é go ndéanfaimid an rud céanna gach téarma, mé fhein ar aon nós. Ón chéad nóiméad táim reidh chun an obair a chur isteach. Tá gach rud agam eagraithe í gceart. Beidh na notaí ó gach léacht agam. Beidh na tionscaideal críochnaithe seachtain roimh an spriocdháta (deadline). Hmmm!!! 'Good intentions pave the path to hell!' - Más

fíor é an seanfhocal sin is ceann ór é mo bhealach! Níl aon rud fágthe anois seachas é a éiríonn níos faide, táim dóchasach mar sin go bhfuil seans maith go rachainn thar an ifreann (hell) chuig an áit eile!

Deirtear linn go bhfuil an iomarca am againn san ollscoil rudaí a dhéanamh. Ach chun an fhírinne a rá, ní feidir tosu ar na mbeart (projects) gan an eolas a bheith againn ó na léacht, an féidir? Nach leir go bhfuilimid go léir ag iarraidh tús maith a

cur le n'ár noibre. De gnáth éirigh linn (succeed in doing) ach nach uafásach é. Táimid go léir sa mbád céanna!

Measaim fhéin gur seanfhocal níos fearr é an cheann seo: 'It's the thought that counts'. Comh fada is a cheapaimid go bhfuil an obair déanta againn fáighimid amach nach mbaineann sé leis an ábhar i gceist(it is irrelevant) nó nach bhfuil sé déanta ar chur ar bith!



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A STUDENT LIFE LESS ORDINARY**

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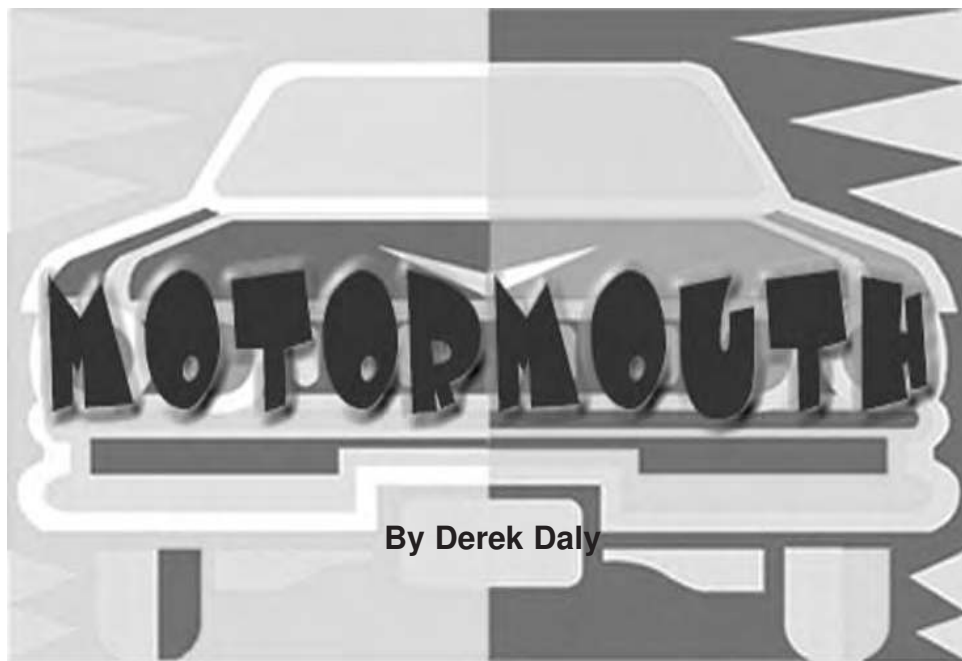


**SO, WHAT DO YOU DO
IN COLLEGE?**

AGNTAS NA MAC LÉINN
ULSU
Ollscoil Uladh

Last year over 200 students made the decision to run for Class Reps Council; to represent, campaign and party for their class.

Every Course has a right to a least one Class Rep. To become a Class Rep, pick up a nomination form at the Students' Union Reception or PSA Common Room.



By Derek Daly

THIS week I have been asked to do a good old fashioned rant about some of the things that have annoyed me while driving over the past week or so.

1. Why don't we do speed tickets for sally slowcoach doing 85 in the 100 zone!!!! It's an Irish thing that we just rant about bad drivers and this behaviour being unacceptable. In the US Sally would have a ticket for holding everyone else up.

2. Dear GOD people turn on your lights!!! That setting for side lights is useless!! You might as well light a candle and pop it inside your wind-screen. Headlights on ALL THE TIME please....that way

I can see you even if the sun is glaring behind you and I won't hit you head on!!! Wouldn't that be great if we could all avoid head on collisions!!

3. Make your passengers wear their belts you idiots! The majority of rear seat passengers who DIED on our roads weren't wearing seatbelts. Most of them would have had a much higher chance of survival, or even avoided serious injury if they WORE THEIR SEATBELT!! This applies particularly to people letting kids stand in the rear seat...well little Johnny WILL, most likely, end up in intensive care if you brake suddenly at 60km/h and he's playing monkey between the 2 front seats.

4. To people who took too much heed to point 1. Slow down to the speed Limit in 80,60 and 50 zones please!!! I don't make the limits and if I did they'd be very different...but the law's the law.

5. Finally, There is no such thing as a fast lane! The right hand lane of a dual carriage-way or motorway is for OVERTAKING! When you've finished overtaking; MOVE IN.

So the messages from this weeks rant are: Speed up; light up, belt up, slow down and for the love of GOD KEEP LEFT!!

Looks Can't Kill DebU

FINN MCDUFFIE

Week two saw the Debating Union host their inaugural event - 'Size Zero, If Looks Could Kill.' The event took place in the Jonathan Swift and featured model agent Celia Holman Lee, former Miss Limerick and model Olivia Stapleton. Also featured were clinical psychologist of UL's student counselling, Dr. Declan Aherne and Fashion Designer, Synan O' Mahony.

After a brief slideshow introduction to the Debating Union, the event began with each guest speaker making a ten-minute case either for or against the idea that the fashion industry should be held accountable for eating disorders. Professionals in their field, the guest speakers offered plenty of interesting, first hand information and opinion. Naturally, there

were a number of contrasting views. After the speeches, the floor was opened to the audience so they could vent their views and opinions too. For one hour, the audience directed a stream of opinions and questions at the guest speakers, some questions more difficult than others!

In a brief summary, the Hollywood lifestyle was singled-out, as the main size zero influence by all of the guest speakers. They were also unanimous on the model-welfare idea, singling out the model's health as a paramount issue in today's Irish fashion industry. Celia Holman Lee did not accept, however, that the Irish fashion industry should be held accountable for influencing weight loss and eating disorders. 'Size Zero is an American thing,' she stated, adding 'I've been in the industry for

forty years... size zero is just a new buzz word for an old problem.' However, Dr. Declan Aherne argued that peer pressure is a major player, and the fashion industry does have a part to play in that. The guest speakers were full of answers and an obviously interested audience was only too happy to ask questions. Around 70 people attended the event.

Last week, the Debating Union ran the motion 'This House Believes Aggressive Road Safety Campaigning Has Failed' in association with the ULSU's road safety awareness campaign. The debate featured guest speakers CSO Paddy McHugh and Garda Tony Minitor. Keep an eye out for the DebU posters, as there's more on the way!

Ógra Set for a Busy Year

DEREK DALY

THE Con Colbert Cumann has 3 meetings under its belt as you read this in Week 4. Our AGM took place on Monday October 1st and details of the new committee can be found on our website atfiannafail.csn.ul.ie. In the coming weeks we will be hosting speakers on a wide range of topics and hope to have a few ministerial visits this semester. Following a steady start we will be recruiting again in week 4 and 5 on Wednesdays in the Student Centre Courtyard or Red Raisins Canteen depending on weather conditions.

We have already seen great potential in a number of first year members; some of

whom will, no doubt, make excellent parliamentarians one day. The enthusiasm and drive shown by this intake is something which has not been seen in my time with the cumann. Giving generously of their time, they have gotten straight in at the deep end, assisting with recruitment at IT Tralee and LIT (where Ógra Fianna Fáil was the only political party bothered to offer membership to the students at societies day).

Following the recent recruitment of 44 members at Magee University of Ulster to Sinn Féin's 11; the Con Colbert Cumann will be travelling to Stormont in the coming months to view the organs of devolved government in operation and meet with some of these new members. Other

activities such as bowling are in the pipeline, with a local TD offering a paintball session in return for a few hours canvassing. We're not all as sad and boring as some would have you believe!!

A Munster wide consultative conference will take place at UL on the weekend of the 24th of November, where a number of policy issues will be discussed. A charity 5-a-side Ógra soccer tournament is planned for this weekend to raise funds for local charities.

We are delighted to once again welcome all students to the UL campus and hope to see them all soon for some heated discussion. Meetings take place on Mondays at 6pm, with venues publicised by email from ul@ogra.ie

UL DRAMA SOCIETY PRESENTS:
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Under the auspices of Drama League of Ireland



How to get ahead in the jobs market!

Attend the UL CAREERS FAIR - 18 October 2007

The Cooperative Education & Careers Division is organising a major on-campus Careers Fair on Wednesday, 18 October. This is a key event in the graduate recruitment activity with more than 100 organisations attending, making it the largest of any of the university-based careers fairs in the country. The Fair will take place in the Sports Arena and will be open to students from 12.00 p.m. until 4.00 p.m. Many sectors of employment will be represented so there should be something of interest to students of all disciplines.



What's it all about?

For those of you who have never attended a Careers Fair (or Recruitment Fair), this provides you with a unique opportunity to meet with a number of employers who plan to recruit graduates in the year 2008. Some of these employers will also have immediate vacancies to fill. Representatives of these companies will describe their organisation and typical vacancies with a view to encouraging you to apply when vacancies arise.

What companies will attend?

We will have more than 100 organisations participating in the Fair. This will include large and small companies, local, national and international companies, across all disciplines. What they have in common is an interest in meeting students who may be potential employees in the year 2008.

Why should you attend?

The Careers Fair gives you the opportunity to

- Make personal contact with leading graduate employers
- Get expert advice on what a career with a particular company might involve and how you can get the job you want;
- Collect company literature and information to help you compare companies;
- Find out what qualifications, skills and experiences are required by employers

- Determine which organisations you would like to apply to.

Be Prepared!

To make the best of this opportunity you will need to be prepared. It is highly unlikely that employers will offer you a job on the spot but if you make the right impression this will be to your advantage at the interview stage. Here are some tips to help you on the day:

- Do some research on companies you want to see. Read the company entries in this publication carefully and check the company websites.
- For help in preparing a CV, attend the seminar on 'Making Effective Applications' on October 1st at 6.30 p.m. in DG016.
- Book a slot to have your CV checked at the lunch-time CV Review sessions in E0019 during the week beginning October 8th.
- Take along several copies of your CV to leave with employers.
- Make note of the names of any contacts you make on the day.
- Think about your experience, strengths and skills and be able to tell an employer what you have to offer.
- Think about what questions you want to ask them: What vacancies do they have? What are their requirements? What training opportunities do they offer?
- Be sure to visit the stands of less well-known organisations also as they often have very challenging opportunities to offer.

List of companies participating in the UL Careers Fair - 18 October 2007

Abbott Ireland	Canada Life	EMC	HSBC	Kerry Group Plc	Perot Systems Ireland Ltd	Toyota Motor Europe
ACCA	Chipsensors Ltd	Engineers Ireland	IBEC/EOP	Kingspan Group	Pfizer Ireland Pharmaceuticals	Ulster Bank Limited
Accenture	CIMA Chartered Institute of Management	Enterprise Ireland	IBM	Kinnear Chartered Accountants	PricewaterhouseCoopers	USIT
AIB	Accountants	Enterprise Rent-A-Car	IIB Bank	KPMG	Proscion	VHI Healthcare
Airbus	Cisco Systems Ireland	Ericsson Ireland	Institute of Certified Public Accountants (CPA) in Ireland	Lehman Brothers	Public Appointments Service	Xilinx
Aldi Stores Ireland Ltd	Citico Funds Services	Ernst & Young	Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland (ICAI)	Limerick City Enterprise Board	RehabCare	
Analog Devices	Commission for Energy Regulation	Fas Overseas Graduate Programme		Lufthansa Technik AG	Russell Brennan Keane	
Anglo Irish Bank Corporation plc	Cooperative Education & Careers Division	Fidelity Investments		Magico.ie	Sabis Schools	
ARM Ltd	Dairygold	Genworth Financial		Mazars	SAP SSC (Ireland)	
Avery Dennison Ireland Ltd	Davy	Glanbia plc		Medtronic	Schwarz Pharma	
Bank of Ireland	Dawn Meats Group	Global Shares		Merrill Lynch	Shanahan Kinirons Marsden	
Bank of Ireland Securities Services	Dell	Google Ireland		Microsoft	Shannon Development	
Bank of New York	Deloitte	Gradireland		Murex	Siemens Ireland Ltd	
Bank of Scotland (Ireland) Ltd	Distinct Business Consulting	Grant Thornton		Musgrave Limited	Sisk	
BDO Simpson Xavier	Dunnes Stores	Hertz Europe Service Centre		Northern Trust Company Limited	Smurfit Kappa Group	
BearingPoint Ireland	Eagle Star	Hewlett Packard		Novartis	State Street Corporation	
Bombardier Aerospace Belfast	EI Electronics	Hibernian Group		O'Donovan Caulfield Lavin	Stryker Instruments	
Boston Scientific Ireland	Element Six Limited	Horwath Bastow Charleton		Oracle	Tesco Ireland	

In summary:
The UL Careers Fair is an ideal opportunity to make contact with a significant number of employers who have real jobs to offer. By preparing for the event, you stand a better chance of using the time and opportunity effectively. Know what you want from the fair; know what you have to offer, and be prepared to consider everything. You don't have to be a final-year student to attend. This is an open event. All students are welcome. Get a preview of what kind of work will be available to you when you graduate. This is your chance to make some useful contacts and see what opportunities are out there.....SO DON'T MISS OUT!

Further Details

Details of the participating companies are included in Careers by Degrees which is available from the Careers Service in E0019. This document can also be downloaded from the Careers website at: www.ul.ie/careers. Links to the website addresses of individual companies are provided.

Finally, please take this opportunity to visit the new premises of the Careers Service at E0019 and check out the wide range of careers booklets, directories and handouts. Opening hours: 10.00 to 1.00 and 2.30 to 4.30 Monday to Friday.

Any queries can be directed to Mary Sweeney, Head of Careers, Cooperative Education & Careers Division at: mary.sweeney@ul.ie.



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*Terms and conditions apply. Please refer to our student brochure for full terms and conditions. €100 Offer 1. The offer is only available to full time third level students who are commencing, or have already commenced, their first full time Higher Education course of at least one year in duration and who open a Student Account with Ulster Bank between 7 August 2007 and 31 October 2007. 2. Ulster Bank will lodge €100 into new student accounts which meet the requirements set out above in two separate instalments. The first instalment of €50 will be paid not later than 30 November 2007 and the second instalment will be paid not later than 31 January 2008 provided the customer has continued to operate the account in accordance with these terms and conditions until that date. 3. This offer is subject to change and may be withdrawn by Ulster Bank at any time. Ulster Bank Ireland Limited is regulated by the Financial Regulator.

STUDENT SPEAK

"Where do you like to eat on campus?"

Ronan Walshe & Ronan Cassidy - 2nd yr Business - "The bins"

Vivion Grisewood - 3rd yr Science Teaching - "Well I pick my nose and bite my fingernails so I'm always fed"



Sharon Brosnan - 2nd yr Digital Media Design - "Pasta a la Pot does it for me"

Niall Drieviers - 3rd yr Nursing - "This roll is cat boy!"

David Kennedy - 2nd yr English and History - "I eat at home"



Niamh Butler - "SU shop is gunge"

Sean McTiernan - 2nd yr MMPT - "I'm on the Kate Moss diet, a fag and a laxative"





ULSU ENTS

www.bebob.com/ulents

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€100 cash - good idea, or a great one

Declan O'Rourke Gig

Before we get into whats happening for the next few weeks we want to apologise again for the late postponement of the Declan O'Rourke gig. Once again it was due to circumstances beyond our control and both ULSU Ents and Declan O'Rourke would like to apologise for any inconvenience caused. The revised date for this gig is October 24 and all tickets are valid for that date. If for any reason the new date does not suit then call into the SU and we will provide you with a full refund.

Ents in General

Hello once again, it's three weeks down and time is kind of flying - there's lots happening and lots more yet to happen.....some of the stuff we can tell you about other stuff we can't or if we did we'd immediately have to silence you or something like that.....

We hope you're having a good time! It certainly is great to see big crowds at all the events, keep on supporting them and we'll keep putting gigs on. Hope you all had a good time at Karl Spain last night (I'm writing this six days before the gig, don't you just love print deadlines...).

The highlights of the last two weeks for me have been Green Sessions. Fred on the 18th and The Flaws on the 25th were an example of just how healthy the live music scene is in Ireland. Coming up in the next few week we have a double bill this Tuesday(tonight) two of Limerick's finest Vesta Varro and Walter Mitty & the Realists take to the stage in the Stables. Tuesday Week 5 sees the Spikes giving us a sample of their wares.



The comedy circus at Schnitzel continues with Maeve Higgins from the Ray Darcy show and Naked Camera doing her thing and towards the end of the month we will do our first show in the new Java Café Bar. The first act to appear there will be Jarlath Regan who is the hottest young act on the Irish comedy circuit. He is hotly tipped to make a big breakthrough this year - make sure you come see him in a small room at a cheap price before he goes and gets all famous on us.

Ross O'Carroll Kelly Comes to UL



One of the highlights of the year last year was the visit of author Paul Howard to read from his latest Ross O Carroll Kelly epic. He is joining us again this year, on Wednesday 10th October to be precise.

He will read from the latest installment in the ROCK series. This one is entitled 'Tthis champagne mojito is the last thing I own'. Get ready for a side splitting affair and an interesting discussion with the wonderful Mr. Howard

Its 6pm on Wednesday in the Jean Monnet. Tickets are free!!!! Collect them from the Students Union . See you there

Remember to join us on BEBO. We're Ulents it's the easiest way to stay in touch with us and a sure fire way of knowing exactly whats happening on campus.

Some More details



Dirty Sanchez

"we make jackass look like the Royal Shakespeare company"

If you don't know who Dirty Sanchez are then you definitely don't watch enough TV. Dirty Sanchez are four depraved slightly insane Welsh lads who took advantage of the phenomenon of reality (or in there case non-reality)tv to get famous for carrying out some truly outrageous stunts and pranks. The four are Matthew Pritchard, Lee Dainton, Michael "pancho" Locke and Dan Joyce.

They came about as the two founding members Pritchard & Taintion videoed various pranks and escapades on each others phones. MTV got hold of some the stunts and decided that this was the ideal follow up to Jonny Knoxville and the Jackass crew. Pritchard & Tainton are basically two pro skateboarders who decided to go in a new direction in terms of extremes.

That was 2004 and here we are three years later which has seen three series on MTV , a movie in 2006 and now the live stage show. The stage show was a massive hit at the Reading festival this year as the lads lowered the tone on the cabaret stage and wowed the crowd with a series of unspeakable live stunts. The live show is a this stage a polished event as well as the Reading festival there is the fact that they had a Monday night residency at Bar M in Ibiza throughout the summer.

Jackass set the standards (or lack there of) for this kind of shock TV. There were many imitations but very few of those imitation matched the Jackass boys. Dirty Sanchez kind of surpassed the jackass lads they brought their car crash brand of depravity to new highs/lows.

Some of the craziness they have indulged in include (these are the printable examples ie. we won't go into any details about beer enemas and genital piercing)

Generally abusing Pancho i.e. throwing bricks at his head, clamping a bike lock around his neck and having Joyce swallow the key. He eventually broke free after Joyce excreted the key several days later (the boys left Pancho to find the key for himself inside the toilet bowl).

Naked paintball
Naked races over hurdles with barbed wire across the top.

The list goes on but you get a chance to see them in the flesh and there probably will be lots of flesh..... I don't think we need to point out that this show will be slightly offensive and will undoubtedly contain high levels of nudity, so be warned! If you're a fan this is unmissable if you're slightly disturbed by what you've heard then it's your choice, see you there.

Cornmarket. Monday 8th October .Tix 10 Euro

Green Sessions

Free Gigs in the Stables Tuesday Week4 & 5
Vesta Varro

Fresh off the NME's Hotlist for 2007, not bad for a bunch of Limerick lads, Vesta Varro's debut album 'Exit Here' was released on June 8th 2007. The first two singles entered the Irish Top 40. The album was recorded in legendary recording studios, Windmill Lane in Dublin with producer Richard Rainey (U2/Mansun) and engineer Kieran Lynch (REM/Elvis Costello). Their first single 'Blue Mirror Boy' was recorded and produced by Crowded House bass player, Nick Seymour.

Vesta Varro's voracious live performances have led to a multitude of supports with the likes of Editors, The Thrills, Hal, Sultans of Ping FC, BellX1, The Frank and Walters, Stiff Little Fingers, The Wonderstuff, Damien Dempsey, Dave Course and The Republic Of Loose. They also appeared on the Bud Rising Festival line up, O2 Wireless Festival and the Hard Working Class Heroes Festival.

Their Hot Press award winning video for their first E release Believe has been screened on MTV2. Their track, Blue Mirror Boy, also hit the No. 1 spot in Irelands first underground MP3 charts.

Their growing legion of fans includes Paul Cook, drummer with the legendary Sex Pistols, who approached the band after one of their London shows and bought a round! Vesta Varro are currently touring in support of their debut album and while also finding time to work on new songs with The Cranberries guitarist Noel Hogan.

Vesta Varro are: Damien Drea (vocals), Keith Forde (guitars), Peter Forde (guitars), Rod Smith (bass), and Shane Lee (drums). Though relatively new, having formed in 2004, a number of Vesta Varro band members have been writing and performing together for a few years.

Launching clay pigeon shooting targets at Pritch's head, causing deep cuts to the skull.

Dangling their testicles over the pockets of a snooker table, to have snooker balls pelted at them at high speed.

Each member running on a treadmill, collecting their sweat into a jar, and then holding hot stones for as long as possible. The loser is the person who drops it first, and must drink the jar of sweat, Joyce lost.

Tying Pancho to the top of a ladder then pushing it over



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€100 cash - good idea, or a great one

Their new single 'Weighted Love' is coming out on October 19th before that you get a chance to see them live and remember its free!!!! For this Green session we're giving you two for the price of one support on the night is from Walter Mitty and the Realists check them out at www.myspace.com/waltermittiandtherealists.

Having tasted some of Limerick's finest we head back to Dublin to catch

The Spikes

They arrive here on October 9th for Green Session 5

...The smart money around the music scene is on The Spikes these days - an Irish rock band who have catapulted themselves to considerable success in a short time through a mixture of hard work, an ear for a 'killer melody' (Metro), an undeniable ability to 'mine a groove' (HotPress) and a live show that is undoubtedly 'energetic' and 'stylish' (Irish Times).

Behind this style though comes considerable substance - the band's four members brought experience from just about every musical genre with them when they came together as a unit in 2005. And the combination quickly proved to be a winner - The Spikes have released three singles in a period of less than a year, already racking up chart success, critical acclaim and regular radio airplay. Coupled with this the band have had tracks featured on the hugely successful Ceol '07 album and the official Munster Rugby Heineken Cup commemorative DVD, the video for their last single 'Ninja Girlfriend' was produced by the Tisch School of



the Arts in New York, in conjunction with HotPress magazine.

After a whirlwind 12 months the lads are about to step off the stage and into the studio to put some more time into their debut album - which has always been their focus. "All the success of the past year kind of took us by surprise, and meant that we had a lot of touring to do, supporting the singles" says frontman Tom Dunne. "While we're very proud of those singles and the reaction they have gotten we've

reached the point where we need to take a little bit of time to concentrate on the album, to give it the commitment it deserves. We want to produce the kind of quality that is always at the core of what we do, and that takes time.

Snippets

Remember the gig of the year is on the way. At the end of the month we're joining up with all the gang from Mary I, LIT & Art College to have the Halloween Ball. Tickets will go on

sale sometime round the 22nd October (TBC) the gig is absolutely fancy dress no civvies allowed so start thinking about ur costume now!!!! If your too lazy to do something original check out the Argos catalogue.....

Howard Marks is confirmed for an appearance at the Jonathan Swift Theatre on Monday November 5th. For those of you who don't know who or what he is, he is better



known as Mr. Nice and his biography called "Mr Nice" details his life as one of the major (maybe the major) cannabis exporter/importers in the world throughout the 70's & 80's. One of the unusual aspects to his story is the fact that he ran his operation from a flat in Catherine Street in Limerick. The Oxford graduate definitely has a story to tell so get along to the Swift to hear it!

Class Parties/21sts/Parties in general

If you are trying to organise a party or just a night out for a group of people then feel free to drop into the Enst office we have a selection of options available to you ranging from Pubs/Clubs to karting/paintballing and all at price ranging from favourable to free!!

Bebo

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Legalise It!

Diarmuid Healy argues the case for legalising cannabis

ORGANISED crime gangs are taking the law into their own hands more and more, undermining our police force and our liberty and safety. Most of these gangs are involved in drugs trafficking or supply. And of this, more than 70% of all drugs trafficking (possibly much more) is cannabis. Like prohibition in America in the 1920's and 1930's, having drugs illegal does not stop people using them. In fact the amount of drug users in the country steadily increases each year despite the Gardai's best efforts to fight the war on drugs. This alone should make legalisation a very real option.

Legalisation would stop organised crime due to drugs, stop the sale of poor quality, dangerous drugs as they could be quality controlled, increase government tax revenue and reduce crime. The best plan would be to legalise them and have mandatory drugs education in schools, to increase awareness, and this could be funded with the tax revenue from cannabis sales. Drugs are made infinitely more dangerous due to them being illegal, such as impure hashish (or bad "E", cocaine and speed cut with rat poison and so on...) causing serious brain dysfunction due to petrol and plastic fume inhalation. The war on drugs is one the police will never win, so why kid ourselves and pour billions and billions of our much needed tax revenue into trying to accomplish the impossible. When the gardai confiscate a shipment of Cannabis, most of the users will either turn to other drugs or be stuck with an increase in price, but they most certainly will not just lie back and say "screw it lads, the guards just hauled in a load of drugs, lets never smoke again."

Most of the problems in drug ravaged areas are not due to people committing crimes while on drugs, especially not cannabis (which when used would make the user much more likely to sit and watch Spongebob then hit someone), it is due to the drugs being supplied by massive organised crime gangs across the country. These gangs are using their drugs revenue to

arm themselves better and commit violent acts against other gangs and the gardai. Therefore, making them legal would help eradicate this organised crime.

If you are someone who views cannabis legalisation as some sort of apocalyptic slippery slope scenario where the numbers of drugs users will increase massively and the economy will grind to a halt in the face of legions of

Drugs are made infinitely more dangerous due to them being illegal

giggly, bleary eyed stoners then take the following example. In Holland, the legalisation of cannabis does not lead to everyone using it. In fact the vast (vast) majority of the Dutch population do not use drugs and are quite conservative but tolerant. The biggest risk associated with drug legalisation is attracting foreign drugs tourists, which is why i would support an EU-wide legalisation if any were to occur.

There are of course some health risks associated with cannabis usage. Cannabis contains twice as much tar as tobacco and as such can cause cancer if smoked, though this problem is negated if the cannabis is consumed. Some of the extra strong laboratory strains such as Super Skunk are known to cause schizophrenia after prolonged

use (over several years), and it is suggested that other strains can cause mild to severe mental problems, although no conclusive tests or studies have ever been conducted to prove this. Another possible problem with legalisation is that smoking while stoned is dangerous and is harder to police than drink driving.

Even with these health risks, cannabis should be legal. Firstly, like with tobacco and alcohol, people should be allowed to choose to use it despite health risks. Secondly if its legalised it can be taxed so it will be making money instead of costing money in policing. Any health risks associated with cannabis are in no way alleviated by having it illegal. In fact they are made much worse due to the poor production procedures and a lack of quality control.

In Holland, the legalisation of cannabis does not lead to everyone using it

If cannabis were legalised, the revenue from cannabis sales could be used to research all kinds of medical advances, not least of all ways of counteracting the bad effects that cannabis may have on some people. Continuing to have cannabis illegal is just burying our heads in the sand and failing completely to deal effectively with the problem.



The throat - thethroat@gmail.com.
Telling the truth so you can go on lying to yourself.

Bicycles bicycles everywhere

WELL, they're all over the place. Every few Wednesdays the SU courtyard is turning into a second-hand bike shop. The SU is also turning into a purgatory for bikes. Look, it's a good idea, it's El Presidente St.John O Donnabhain's pet baby, but can ye not find somewhere to put the bikes and boxes before the sale? The whole thing looks like my granny's garden shed. We'll ignore the other scooter nutter who apparently takes his push scooter out into the courtyard for a few laps at 4am for a break while doing all-nighters in his corner office (you thought we didn't know but we have spies everywhere, you were caught on camera pushing the thing around and you're not 20 anymore, you'll break something) so while it's a Very Good Thing, won't someone please think of the children and tidy the place - it's beginning to look like the SU common room after lunch (and if you haven't seen that, go look, it's a sight to behold)

Money Money Money

We've managed to find out why Seamus Propaganda the An Focal editor has been occasionally seen with an uncharacteristic worried look on his face over the past few months. The advertising budget was done by last year's administration with the assumption that Ulster Bank

would continue to pump a very high level of advertising cash towards keeping this esteemed journal going. The report Ryan sent to class reps in week 2 reveals that our local bankers have decided to cut back on that in favour of the 100 euro bribery game for new accounts (not that we're knocking it, we took it) and have given 65% less than last year. At Throat Towers we wouldn't be all that surprised if we see some very odd companies promoting their wares on campus one way or another as time goes by as he doesn't appear to have asked for any extra budget money so apparently thinks he can plug a budget deficit of about 15 thousand euros on his own. We'll be keeping an eye on this one as if he manages to pull this one off he'll deserve a gold watch and a box set of the Beverley Hillbillies on DVD. Someone else can buy them, like the PPO we don't have any money.

To JJB or not JJB

With that in mind it was interesting (and frankly, refreshing) to see JJB sports pimping themselves and their gym in the courtyard a few weeks ago. They were paying cold cash for the privilege of course, and not taking money just names, which was nice as all the advertising budget for the Arena appears to go into the Limerick Post. In our opinion, and we're speaking just for ourselves, if an on-campus company (you did all know that the Arena is a separate company?) won't support the local news sheet

then you'd be nuts not to let competitors advertise. It seems that in the afternoon there was something of a terse exchange in the courtyard itself between people from the Arena and the JJB sports crew. The JJB crowd had a megaphone with them, to be given away in a draw. And they used it. The Arena sent in the heavies, mistook CSO Paddy McHugh for PPO Seamus Ryan (always good to keep up with the faces on campus), had something of an interesting exchange there as McHugh explained why monopolies are bad before they agreed with Ryan that the JJB crowd would be leaving at the time they were originally supposed to leave in any case. The funniest (or best if you like) thing of it all is that we've found out that the winner of the megaphone was one Patrick McHugh. It would have been wasted anywhere else.

Safety Campaign

It was good. Blood and gore. Always good. For a change there was a campaign running on campus that people noticed, at least on Thursday. More please.

Email us at ulthroat@gmail.com

Mark My Words?

Seamus Ryan introduces this fortnight's An Focal head2head debate

Every UL student will be aware that when sitting exams your full name goes on your exam script, making you clearly identifiable to the person marking the paper. For a number of years, the issue of anonymous marking has been raised by the Students' Union, many students and some teaching staff. Obviously a system of anonymous marking would cause a reasonably significant amount of extra work for the relevant university authorities. The question is whether a majority of students

want such a system introduced whereby the student would be largely unidentifiable to the exam marker or are happy with the current system where a student is identifiable to the person marking the exam. Some universities have chosen to adopt a system of anonymous marking and some have rejected the notion. The idea of this week's head2head is to open a coherent debate on the topic.

No!

RECALL your Junior or Leaving Certificate State Exams. You might remember a short five or six-digit number by which you became known. You no longer wrote your name on your answer booklet, but instead you pencilled in that number each and every time as the clock's second hand ticked its way through the eternal silence of the exam hall. You lost your identity; you became your number. No one knew who that number represented and no one had any way of telling. You were just one number of so many: showing no difference from any other student pencilling in their own identity number at the same time as you. You were no longer a person sitting an exam, but a data holder spewing out the required information in the exam hall. No longer having strengths or weaknesses; purely robotic; completely anonymous.

Anonymous marking is credited for disallowing discrimination when it comes to the correction of exam papers. True, lecturers cannot tell who wrote the paper; they cannot distinguish between student A or student B. It suddenly becomes irrelevant whether you had a run-in with the lecturer during the semester and obvious clashes of character sent you both spiralling in the opposite direction, destined never to see eye to eye again. What matters even less is whether you are male or female, black or white, Asian or Australian, gay or straight: this is the marking of equality. No other system can ensure a fairer way of allocating grades to exam papers. Or so they say.

So, going back to the exam hall, this time for your end-of-semester exams. There you are, sitting there in the ghostly silence, the answer book in front of you and that clock tick-tick-ticking the minutes away. A spluttering cough disturbs you from the panic that has enveloped you as you read the exam paper once again. True, it's not what you had hoped for, but you manage to get your answers down on paper anyway. Disappointed, you leave the hall in a hazy gloom and hope for the best. Perhaps the fact that you attended all of your tutorials and contributed to the classes will help. Perhaps the fact that you actually got up every Friday morning for the 9am lecture and were one of the ten people who regularly made it will prove its usefulness now. But only if the lecturer knows who wrote the exam paper.

Anonymous marking doesn't necessarily benefit students when it's taken into consideration that the system in place in UL calls upon external examiners to recheck papers submitted by UL students. This means that no

one student can be obviously discriminated against purely on the grounds that the examiner knows who he or she is simply because an extern will be able to pull the University up on such discrimination. However, for the student who attends lectures and tutorials regularly and is a consistent worker throughout the semester, but cannot perform in the final exam to a similar standard to that produced during the semester, having anonymous marking may be detrimental to the overall grade achieved if the lecturer is unaware of the type of student that sat the exam.

Leaving a student's name and ID number on the front cover of an exam booklet can make a huge difference to the outcome of a student's time at UL. Education isn't an arena of competition in which gladiator students must fight the lion that roars and bites at them demanding a regurgitation of information. It is about assisting students to achieve their abilities, to increase their potential. This can hardly be done if Student X presents himself in the exam hall and forever remains anonymous.



BY AOIFE BREEN
NEWS EDITOR

Yes!

WHEN drafting the proposals to create a more transparent education in UL, I received strong representations that anonymous marking should be a priority in this set of proposals. Such a situation is in contradiction with the current Union position which does not favour anonymous marking. However such a position I do not believe supports one of the core aims of the Students' Union: to work for an equitable education system in this country. If you take the view that all things should start at home, we should be seeking an equitable education system here in UL. I believe that the introduction of anonymous marking would contribute to a fairer and more equitable marking system.

Anonymous marking is a method of assessment, by which the identity of the student is not known by the marker, this is done by a variety of methods both electronic and manual. The practice is extensively used internationally and with in Ireland, with UCC, DCU, UCD and Trinity all operating anonymous marking for their students. Their primary argument for anonymous marking is that it creates a fairer and more equitable assessment of students' ability based on merit of the submission rather than external circumstances. Say this, however,

I would not wish students who due to a disability should be covered by this policy. In



ALAN HIGGINS
ULSU EDUCATION OFFICER

Trinity for example students registered with disability services have the option of being marked anonymously. However as the National Union of Students (NUS-the UK national Students' Union) has stated:

'Anonymous marking reduces the risk of suspicion on the part of the marker and minimises the tension between students and tutors. It also increases the level of confidence student have in the impartiality of the system. Ultimately it can be seen as a means of safeguarding both teaching staff and students.'


In the NUS's campaign they have recognised criticism that the anonymous marking could impact on the staff-student relationship and possibility of personalised feedback. However it is argued that a relationship free of bias is preferred. I would also argue that such a practice does not have to mean the elimination of personalised feedback, but rather personalised feedback can continue once the results have been released done in a objective manner.

The practice of anonymous marking is now being expanded in many UK Universities to not only end of semester exams by also to continuous assessment modes used. I would suggest that UL first operate a system successful for end or term assessments before adopting for all assessment modes.

As an Education Officer of an Organisation who believes in the equity of an education system and who represents and advocates on a daily basis for the University systems to be fair to students, I must stand over the proposal to introduce anonymous marking. I would not support the introduction of anonymous marking if I was not confident that it would create a more equitable system or that it was secure and that students would have confidence in it. Obvious the details of such a system would have to work out that it would be easily operated by the University and the students.

I hope that Class Reps Council will support this aspect of the proposal for creating a fairer and more transparent education system in UL and in the interest of the Students' they represent support the equity in marking that anonymous marking would provide.

UNION GENERAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY WEEK 7



DON'T BE LEFT OUT OF THE GAME

MOTIONS WITH 200 SIGNATURES TO SEAMUS, VP/PUBLICATIONS AND PUBLICITY OFFICER
MONDAY WEEK 6, 5PM

AONTAS NA MAC LEINN
ULSU
Ollseoil Luimnigh

Campus Sport

UL Archery hosts Euronations Qualifiers

PHILIP MURPHY

TOP Irish archers from across the country converged on UL on Sunday, 16th September to compete in a major qualifying round for the 2008 Euronations Championships.

The shoot was held on the playing fields behind Kilmurray Village, where targets were set at various distances up to 90 metres. An efficient and hardworking group of volunteers from UL Archery worked for the entire weekend to make sure that targets, distance markers and safety barriers were all prepared in advance of the 10am start on Sunday morning. This was UL Archery's first time hosting a major IAAA outdoor shoot.

Because of its classification as a National Qualifier event, the shoot was confined to IAAA members. Nonetheless many interested spectators turned out for what was a fantastic display of archery. Archers who qualify for the Irish team may qualify to compete on behalf of Ireland in the 2008 Euronations

Championships; and success in the Euronations in turn can lead to qualification for International tournaments.

The standard of shooting was exceptional. Notable performances included Keith Hanlon and Eoghan O'Donoghue in the Male 1200 category, both of whom shot excellent scores of 1208 and 1180 respectively. Noel Campion led the way in the Compound class with a score of 1260, while Sinead Cuthbert showed why she was picked as ASI Archer of the Year at the IAAA awards in 2006 with a dominant score of 1123 in the Female 1100 class.

UL Archery Club can be satisfied both with the high standard of shooting on show and the fantastic praise and support given by competitors and IAAA representatives alike. This year's shoot was a fantastic success for all involved.

Top Results in main Categories

MALE 1200 (Recurve)
Keith Hanlon

1208
Eoghan O'Donoghue
1180
David O'Brien
1162

MALE 1100 (Recurve)

Kevin Killeen
971
Ger Daly
966
Brendan Ebbs
906

COMPOUND

Noel Campion
1260
Joe Malone
1250
Barry Faulkner
1021

FEMALE 1000 (Recurve)

Maeve Reidy
948
Mairead Cuthbert
876

FEMALE 1100 (Recurve)

Sinead Cuthbert
1123
Jacqueline Bowles
981
Linda Higgins
898



Photo Will Lyons, UL Photo Soc

Exciting season ahead for UL basketball

MICHAEL DOWD

THE upcoming season promises to be very exciting one for UL basketball. With both the men's and women's teams boasting some of the best talent around for a number of years, this could be the season that UL finally do the Varsity 'Double'.

After last years semi-final defeat to eventual winners UCD, the men's team will be looking to bounce back with a stronger season overall. After the resignation of Coach Paul Kennedy mid-season in 2006, and the introduction of Limerick Lions player/coach Matt Hall as his replacement, the UL men will be looking for more continuity and stability this season with a new English coach. Boasting 4 Super-

League players and 3 Division One players the team are not short on talent. However, the task of the new coach will be to mould this talent into a Varsity winning team, something the men haven't seen in over 15 years. Like the women's team have done over the years, the men will be hoping to use a successful league campaign (which starts in three weeks) as the platform for a victorious Inter-varsity's in DCU in March.

Despite the loss of several key players, the UL Women's team is once again a formidable force. With a host of Superleague players, including Irish senior international Fiona Scally, the women will be looking to take their fifth title in six years, especially after their shock exit to UCC in last years semi-final. Expe-

rienced veterans such as Louise Galvin, Lisa Palmer and Miriam Liston should give them the edge, though with last years winners DCU having home advantage, it's harder than ever to pick a winner.

Elsewhere, UL were hosts to the U18 Boys club finals last weekend. After a series of entertaining games, Ballincollig of Cork were victorious after defeating Belfast in the final. Also congratulations to Steven King and Fiona Scally on their selection to the Irish Senior basketball teams. Both played in a series of competitive games throughout the summer, including King matching up against Chicago Bulls starter Luol Deng against England.

UL Hurling Case Closed

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

THE disciplinary controversy surrounding UL hurling club is seemingly at an end An Focal Sport can reveal.

After being in contact with officials in Croke Park it has emerged that the charges on Kieran Joyce, the player at the centre of the matter, have been dropped. The decision was taken at a GAA Central Appeals Committee to

reverse the Kilkenny man's lengthy suspension. However, the game in question, the All Ireland Intermediate Final, has been forfeited. Hence, LIT are now, by default, the champions. The other members of UL hurling club who got entangled in this case have also been cleared of any wrongdoing in the matter. Both the chairman Peter Tiernan and secretary Brendan Bugler had their 12 week suspensions wiped out. The club were able to prove that the duo

had no direct involvement with the Intermediate team. This case which has dragged on and on since the final was played in March is now at an end. Joyce and Bugler are now available to play for their clubs.

The club will hope to put this behind them this season as they look to make headlines on the field where it matters most. At An Focal, we wish them all the best.

UL Sports Roundup

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

Basketball

Senior men's training takes place at 8 o'clock Tuesdays on Court 1 and Thursdays at 9.30 on Court 2. Senior women's training goes ahead on Mondays at 9.30 and also Wednesdays at 9.30.

OPC

The Outdoor Pursuits Club made their way to the Burren on Sunday 23rd September for a spot of rock climbing and it proved to be an enjoyable trip for all involved.

Soccer

In the past week UL Soccer club hosted a novel 7-a side competition at the Maguire's fields. 16 teams with crazy names like Dutch Gold and Kilmurray Street

Elite fought it out for ultimate glory. The tournament has provided the perfect opportunity for upcoming freshers to display their skills. Don't worry if you have missed out as further trials will be held on Wednesday October 3rd at 5 o'clock at the same venue.

Clubs And Socs Night

This annual event attracted a huge crowd with clubs receiving a huge boost in terms of membership. One thing that struck me though was the ridiculous rates some clubs were charging. For example the GAA club charged €20 for non fresher members. I know insurance was included but this is crazy given that other clubs which have extra burdens in terms of equipment were able

to go lower. €5 is more than enough in my opinion.

Email

Frustrated with the sports editor? Fed up with Togher's antics? Have your say! Email your comments to mossy.mccarthy@gmail.com

Words Of Wisdom

An Focal sport reporters sometimes say things that they live to regret.

"Ireland are headed for the euro finals methinks" (1 month ago)

"The team I'm tipping to emerge as champions though are Mayo." (4 months ago)

UL Trampolining

FIACHRA HORAN

AFTER months without trampolining, UL Trampolining club members were itching to get back in action and the week 1 courtyard demonstration piqued quite a bit of interest from the students and staff that were passing by. We're looking forward to another bouncethon in the courtyard (weather permitting) on Wednesday October 3 and we should have a lot of our new members up and about showing off their newly acquired skills. We've noticed a few people who've started training with us have a lot of promise, which will be great for upcoming competitions

(the club loves medals) and we're hoping to beat the 10 awards we picked up over the 5 different competitions that we competed in last year. Not one competition did the club walk away from empty handed last year and we're not about to let that change.

This year Queens Belfast is hosting Intervarsities on November 23. Of course we'll have a dozen or so competing and with Queens it's never a dull moment. We also have plans to fly over Scotland in February to compete in the Scottish opens as a few of us did last year. The Irish student opens is in April and is being held in Cork again this year. This is the biggest Irish Trampolining competition and

is greatly enjoyed by everyone who attends each year. One doesn't leave Cork without picking up a new trick or two, the UL and UCC clubs are very close. It doesn't matter if you have any experience on a trampoline, you should come to one of our training sessions and have a look.

The Trampolining Club trains in the gym hall of the PESS building Mondays at 18:00-19:30, Tuesdays at 20:15-22:30 and Thursdays at 19:00-20:30 and there's loads of room for new people to drop by. If you've any further queries our bebo is www.bebo.com/ultrampolining and our website is www.csn.ul.ie/~trampoline/



UL Men's Rugby - A club to be taken seriously, once again

ÉAMON HEAVEY

WELCOME all UL rugby enthusiasts to what will unquestionably be the men's rugby club most successful season in recent years. I would first like to extend a well deserved thank you to John O Grady for his tireless work in rebuilding the men's rugby club. Had it not been for John's commitment last year the club would merely be an empty mail box in the clubs and socs room. Thankfully that is not the case and with over 100 sign ups on the clubs and socs open evening we can look forward to an eventful rugby season.

Having been out of the colleges rugby scene for the last number of years it is our aim to come back this year with something of a bang. Through

cooperation between ourselves and the sports department of the university we have secured Mike Story as head coach. Mike's background saw him play with teams such as the Auckland Blues and Saracens. From the few training sessions that Mike has had with us we see that this man is both passionate and focused and we're very glad to have him with us.

Training has been ongoing since Monday of week 2 with huge numbers (45+) attending sessions. New members are still welcome, we ask only that you bring the five euro registration fee as to cover your insurance costs. As it stands training is at 6.30 on Maguires pitch every Monday with training on Wednesdays to be confirmed on the Tuesday by e-mail.

UL men's Rugby club is

made up of two teams, the, the Freshers comprising of 1st year students under 26 years of age and the senior team comprising of 2nd-4th year, Erasmus and post grad students. Teams are entered into the IRFU colleges rugby league beginning in group divisions and progressing then to the final stages.

Another huge ambition this year is to build a supporter base within the college. In the few games we played last year we found only a few wet and miserable subs on the side of the pitch. We'd like to see some real supporters out by our side. Such crowds will also lead to better nights out.

Further info on fixtures, nights out and league standings will be made available on the UL men's rugby club's web site: ulrugby.skynet.ie

ULSC & the World

KARL COONEY

CONOR Byrne, a graduate of wood science and Karl Cooney, an aeronautical undergraduate, both members of ULSC, travelled to northern Italy to compete in the Fireball pre-world championships, which took place on lake Garda from August 19-21. They came a very respectable 21st of 53 overall, in an international fleet which included professional sailors. The weather ranged from beautiful sunny and warm days with shifting but gentle 5-10 knot breezes to thunder and lightning with cold showers and erratic 20 knot breezes.

Following this event they competed in the Fireball World Championships on Lake Silvaplana near St Moritz. The world championships fleet consisted



Conor Byrne and Karl Cooney at the Fireball Worlds, Switzerland, (Number 14719)

of 95 boats from as far as Australia, and of the professionals who made the boats and sails used by everyone in the fleet. The wind was unpredictable and angry ranging from an un-raceable 0 knots to 25+ knot

gales with 50 degree wind shifts. Despite the strong possibility of equipment failure due to weather conditions, Conor and Karl managed to finish 37th overall in the world.

Taekwondo Times

OLIVER TAHENY

AFTER a very successful recruitment drive in the University Arena, UL Taekwondo Club training has taken off with our new instructor, Mr Will Power, showing all the 'newbies' the ropes.

With a lot of up coming events, there is a strong push on in the club to get up to speed with the various aspects of Taekwondo. Beginners are learning a range of new techniques that cover self defence, sparring and doctrinal techniques associated with a traditional martial art. Our more experienced members are polishing off their sparring for the upcoming Munster competition, hosted here in UL by the Taekwondo Club. This competition will include sparring and breaking, some of the more exciting aspects of the martial arts. This competition is on in October - for anyone around on the weekend of October 20 we would greatly appreciate your support.

Mr Power is also dedicating time to two members who are participating in black belt gradings in the coming months. Michael Johnson, a dedicated member of the committee, is travelling to Hawaii to grade under the head of the Action

International Martial Arts Association (AIMAA), Grandmaster Hee Il Cho 9th Degree (www.aimaa.com/grandmasterflash.html), for his second degree black belt this November. Oliver Taheny is also grading, but for his first black belt, and is due before

judge and jury in December. In concluding I would just like to welcome again all of our new members. We, as a club, have noticed the enthusiasm that is being shown and hope to make your semesters with us as enjoyable as they have been for ourselves.




Outdoor Pursuits Club

Are you just hanging around?

Why not try it at the Climbing Wall?
Call in to the PESS building every
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evening
from 7-10 pm!



Take A Parachute And Jump

MAIRTIN LALLY ON
SKYDIVEUL

UL'S newest club is now proving to be one of the most popular! The club, which only began last March, now has over 230 members. This is a dramatic leap from just 78 members last year.

In the past few weeks 30 new skydivers have done their first jump courses and have done their first jumps. And the addition of new and larger aircraft to Skydive Ireland will help SkydiveUL grow further. Some of last year's members have progressed as solo free-fallers in a matter of weeks at

the beginning of the summer and are currently planning a trip to a wind tunnel in England in mid-October, an intervarsity competition in Belfast in November as well as a trip to Florida in January. Not only that but you get to see these thrill-seekers when they drop in for Rag Week, literally!!

SkydiveUL is going to great efforts to help its newest members, predominantly first years, to feel welcome and comfortable in their new surroundings. Events planned include a "Get To Know Ya' Night", a Pro-Evo tournament, table quizzes, poker tournaments and other surprises which the club has up its

sleeve... These events are also aimed at reducing the financial burden of this expensive but addictive sport.

After talking to Damien Cahill, the club's founder and President, An Focal has learned that his motivation behind setting up the club was "to make Skydiving cheaper and more accessible to the general student body, not only in UL but all over the country". He also believed that everyone should have the chance to feel what he felt after his series of jumps in Holland only this time last year.

Damien is now a happy jumper due to the great suc-



cess of the club, and the interest from other students from throughout Ireland. So much interest, in fact, those students from other colleges are in the process of talking with their respective Student Unions to

set up their own skydiving clubs.

SkydiveUL, Ireland's first ever third level skydiving club, has proven to have made a landmark in the Irish skydiving world. Who would have

thought that there were so many daredevils in UL to make such a club so prominent?

OPC Alps trip 07

GARION BRACKEN

If by chance sometime you happen to see a person with a strut to their walk and a glint in their eye, as you go about your business in one of the many halls, corridors, lawns or courtyards of UL, there's a chance that you have been in the company of one of the eleven fine members of the outdoor pursuits club who went on the club trip this year. You may feel a presence that is hard to pin, for these brave and daring people are not your normal everyday, moper, drinker and smoker breed. They share a metronomic motivation and love for getting high.

This year's trip was to the beautiful hillside town of Arolla in the Valais region of the Swiss Alps, 25Km south of Sion. Accommodation consisted of Swiss campsites and Aldi tents. Dinner, couscous, mayonnaise, chili flakes, tinned tomatoes, a dash of oregano and a hint of imagination, washed down with local wine at €2 a bottle.

When not scaling the many Pignes, Monts, Dents and Aiguilles that the Valais region has to offer, swings, volleyball courts, tight ropes, skipping ropes and zip lines were the products of a rope, two trees and a group of people with too much time on their hands, and no TV. If the weather crapped out, as it did almost every single day, inces-

santly at precisely four o'clock, playing cards or a few bottles of wine were the order of fun, the wine swilled down and rounded off with some banter, a sing along and seven or eight shots of absinthe.

But it wasn't all fun and games. Climbing mountains is a serious business if you don't want to find yourself in trouble. In the days leading up to the climb, the cards are replaced with maps and guide books. The wine is reduced to a maximum of one bottle per sixteen hour period and eating lots of high flatulence foods is very important, especially in larger parties. The training took place over two days, in which crevasse rescue and some rope techniques were learned. After that we were on our own, to plan routes and form groups and climb mountains. The climbing varied from nail biting rock climbing up narrow ridges with nasty unforgiving drops on all sides, on snowy icy rock in bitter cold winds that can make your lips turn blue, to never-ending snow plods, along avalanche prone slopes and across crevasse ridden glaciers, with the sun beating down on you and then bouncing off the snow and coming back yet again to make sure your well done on both sides. After five hours simmering you begin to curse your clothes until eventually the contempt grows 'till you get an insane urge to tear them off, stamp on them and dive

into the snow screaming like a loon in some sort of crazed act of self liberation. This may sound like a fate worse than an hour and a half listening to your uncle's fascinating new business idea that he'll never go through with. I won't lie to you; it is at times that monotonous and physically excruciating. But to stand on the summit of a difficult climb, the pinnacle of eight hours of gut wrenching effort, and to look around at three hundred and sixty degrees of panoramic alpine beauty and to breathe in the cool crisp mountain air, with a couple of chocolate biscuits gives a feeling that's hard to describe with pen and paper. It's like the accomplishment of beating your best friend in mariokart mixed with the satisfaction of spraying a girl with a hose.

For some this stuff is a hobby, for others it's a passion. If what you've read sounds appealing to you or you have any ambition to find yourself in the Alps or Himalayas someday, make your way to the OPC climbing wall and give it a go. Or go along on one of the weekend trips and see some of Ireland's most beautiful scenes and sites. Maybe even reach Ireland's highest point Carrantuo-hill in the MacGillycuddy reeks. If you want to see what the trip was like come along to the slideshow.

UL Waterpolo

THIS summer one of UL's finest athletes, Darren McHugh had the honour of playing his country in the European B qualifying tournament in Manchester. Darren has been one of the best young players in Ireland over the last number of years, representing Ireland in every age group and captaining the u-19's in last year's European Championship in Limerick. Ireland are far from being a world power in the sport but over the past number of years have steadily improved to the point where

we are continually taking part in European competition. Darren is at the head of a very exciting group of young players who have been very competitive on the international stage at underage level and hopefully will carry on to adult level. Darren has been to the forefront in the club getting involved in training and helping the more inexperienced members learn the rules. This year is a big year for the UL intervarsity team as after getting so close to the final last year we hope to push on and bring the champi-

onship back to UL for the first time.

The club had a very successful sign up night when we had over 60 new members sign up, and we have had two very good nights training, we need everyone to keep training as this year we will be entering separate teams in the Munster and National Leagues. Training times are Monday 9:45 - 10:45 and Thursday 9:45 - 10:45, with swimming training on Wednesday 9 - 9:45. New members are very welcome.



UL Waterpolo's Rebecca Kolpak

Kingdom Come to the Fore Once More

LIAM TOGHER

KERRY'S presence at the top of Gaelic football is a bit like Christmas, Eurovision and a political scandal - an annual tradition that, try as some people might, is impossible to get away from. It is understandable that a few fans are fed up with their never-ending success, but I dare anyone to deny that they were worthy winners once again. Kieran Donaghy picked up where he left off last year, the O Se trio were as indispensable as ever, the



Donegal were a huge disappointment

Gooch rediscovered his top form and Declan O'Sullivan played himself into contention for individual awards later on in the year.

So what of those who came close? Cork's critics put

their All-Ireland final appearance down to having the 'easy' side of the draw, but they're duty-bound to beat what's put in front of them and they accomplished that in style, apart from a narrow Munster final defeat to Kerry and a rather more comprehensive loss to their neighbours in the All-Ireland decider. Like the Rebels, Meath made their best impression on the championship for several years and were worthy of a semi-final place, only to be well beaten by Cork. For Dublin, meanwhile, Sam Maguire remains elusive as ever, but they showed during the campaign why they're so highly rated.

Some pre-championship favourites had a summer to forget. Mayo, my tip for the title last May, never got going after their drubbing by Galway in the Connacht semi-final. The Tribesmen themselves hardly covered themselves in glory either, but an All-Ireland crown for their minor team raises hope for the future. Donegal looked like the real deal when they won the league in April but, not for the first time, they left their best form behind them in the opening months of 2007.



Colm Cooper was in flying form this summer

Armagh's bubble has burst, although luck deserted them in their defeats to Donegal and Derry. Tyrone were fortunate to win the Ulster title and defeat to Meath took them down a fair few notches.

In some ways, it was a drearily predictable championship but we were treated to a couple of 'romance' stories. Any Sligo person present at the Connacht final won't soon forget their first provincial title in 32 years. Sadly, they were heavily beaten by Cork in the last eight of the All-Ireland. Monaghan, who had shown signs of potential in recent campaigns, came within minutes of winning the

Ulster title and, on another day, would have stunned Kerry. The two Freemans, Thomas and Damien, lit up the summer as more celebrated names flattered to deceive.

It wasn't the most vintage year for football but there were still some memorable moments. The Dublin-Meath battles in June evoked memories of the four-game marathon of 1991. Sligo's provincial success delighted the neutrals and the Kerry-Dublin semi-final was as good as any of their classic bouts of the 1970s. And, let's admit it, Kerry remain the best.

UL Inspired Rebels Complete Hat Trick Of Titles

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

UL ladies contributed handsomely to Cork's three in a row triumph last Sunday in Croke Park. They defeated rivals Mayo by five points 2-11 to 2-6.

It was an awesome display by the Rebelettes overpowering Mayo in all areas of the field. Brid Stack, playing at centre half back, marshalled the defence superbly. She also coped admirably with the threat of Cora Staunton. Indeed the whole Cork defence proved incredibly hard to break down all afternoon. Norita Kelly had an eventful afternoon to say the least. Coming up to half time she earned a rather controversial penalty for the champions. In the act though she sustained an ankle injury and this forced her to retire at half time. Geraldine O'Flynn made her mark with a busy

display at wing forward. She capped a fine performance with two points from play one in each half. Former UL player Valerie Mulcahy playing at corner forward grabbed the two Cork goals, the second a contender for goal of the season. Valerie captained UL a few years back to O'Connor Cup glory. In an outstanding team effort these UL ladies really impressed and fully deserve their All Ireland medals. Well done to all involved.

Unfortunately there has to be a loer. Mayo let themselves down on the big day as they were blown away by a far superior Cork outfit. Aoife Herbert, despite her best efforts didn't fire on all cylinders at corner forward. Like a lot of the Mayo forwards Herbert found it hard to cope with the robust tackling of the Cork defence. A lot of the challenges going

in seemed cynical and dirty on occasions for the Ladies game. Aoife was substituted perhaps a bit harshly just before half time. Make no

doubt about it though after an impressive first season this won't be last we hear of Aoife Herbert.



Brid Stack keeps tabs on Cora Staunton

Highlights of the Season

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

Graham Geraghty calmly flicking the ball to the Tyrone net.

Waterford winning a championship game for the first time in 19 years.

Eamonn O'Hara inspiring Sligo to a long awaited Connacht title.

Mark Vaughan converting frees from all angles.

Gooch doing what Gooch does best.

Square balls causing controversy throughout the country.

Declan Browne calling it a day.

O'Se, Murphy and Whelan plucking balls out of the sky.

Monaghan frightening the life out of Kerry.

Almost everyone predicting Donegal for the All-Ireland.

Mayo piling more misery on their supporters.

Paul Galvin living up to his 'bad boy' image.

Billy Morgan swiping a reporter's dictaphone.

Dublin providing colour, entertainment and drama and great contests against Meath and Kerry.

Stephen Bray shooting scores for fun.

Micko continuing to march the sidelines with Wicklow.

McGrath's Allstars

1. Stephen Cluxton (Dublin)
2. Marc O'Shea (Kerry)
3. Darren Fay (Meath)
4. Graham Canty (Cork)
5. Tomas O'Se (Kerry)
6. Michael McNamara (Sligo)
7. Barry Cahill (Dublin)
8. Darragh O'Se (Kerry)
9. Ciaran Whelan (Dublin)
10. Paul Galvin (Kerry)
11. Declan O'Sullivan (Kerry)
12. Alan Brogan (Dublin)
13. Colm Cooper (Kerry)
14. Tommy Freeman (Monaghan)
15. Graham Geraghty (Meath)

ULSC Beginners Weekend

Fri 5th to Sun 7th October

Star Sailing Centre, Kenmare, Co. Kerry.

Experience the exciting world of sailing, Ideal for beginners!

ULSC

Cost: €70 per person

Contact ulsc.email@gmail.com for more details

Arsenal Remain As English Football's Saving Grace

MARK CONNOLLY

WHILE watching the four English teams competing on matchday one of the Champions League, it became increasingly obvious that all, except perhaps Arsenal, have had their chances of European glory damaged by playing in the Premiership. It also became all too patently clear why no English side (save for Liverpool's freak passage to victory in 2005) has lifted the trophy in this decade.

Playing against teams like Derby, Sunderland and Middlesbrough week in week out is poor preparation for Europe's elite competition and simply teaches bad habits that have undermined the English challenge in Europe. Let me explain why. Smart men like Jose Mourinho, Alex Ferguson and Rafa Benitez copped on quickly that good and stylish one-touch football was not

required to beat the rubbish Premiership sides who offer up possession and goals as cheaply as chips and so they developed a lower risk brand of football for such occasions. Unfortunately, this strategy won't cut it at European level and the performances on matchday 1 were simply a manifestation of this.

This current Liverpool team will not win a Champions league. Last year's final against Milan showed why. Despite dominating possession, they failed to create any genuine chances until Dirk Kuyt's consolation effort and never really looked like troubling their oppositions defence. However it was their opening night performance against Porto that provides the greatest source of pessimism. To put it in rugby terms, they turned over a lot of ball. Their passing was dreadful and attacking play generally lacked cohesion. This problem

is deep rooted as their players clearly don't know how to unlock the tighter European defences and perhaps fail to comprehend the idea that they won't be handed goal-scoring chances on a plate as they are in England. Fernando Torres can't solve this problem on his own and I predict the Mersey club will struggle against the big teams.

However Liverpool were not the only side to struggle in Portugal. Man United can count themselves lucky to return with all three points. The entire 90 minutes was a manifestation of why they too will fail in their European quest. Their difficulty in retaining possession against an average Sporting Lisbon side was pathetic to watch. United's lack of a genuine hard hitting defensive midfielder (Carrick and Hargreaves are the two most over-rated players I have ever seen) exposed them to real danger,

resulting in Edwin Van Der Sar being their saviour. If you are a serious Champions league contender, you should not have to rely on your 'keeper to keep you in a match against a Portuguese side. Man United do at least have match winners up front in the shape of Ronaldo, Rooney, Nani and Tevez who often pull them out of trouble with individual flashes of magic. But one would fear that this may not prove sufficient against the superior sides from Spain and Italy.

But Chelsea, the truest representation of the problems English teams suffer in Europe, don't even have that salvation. Sooner or later Avram Grant must realise that while playing three JCB's in midfield and banging the ball up to Didier Drogba may be successful against Derby, Sunderland and Co., it is a recipe for failure against Europe's elite. Of course Drogba, Mal-

ouda, Joe Cole and Shaun Wright-Phillips are top class players but one feels the game plan employed by Jose Mourinho to utilise them simply played into the hands of Europe's best defences. This was evident in last years semi-final against Liverpool. If Chelsea are to win the Champions League,

Lampard or Ballack should be sold to make way for a genuinely creative passer who would truly release their potent front three.

Arsenal continue to set the correct example, however, of how to succeed in Europe as their demolition of a quality Seville side testifies. They



came close to winning in 2006 and their continued ignorance of the descent of English football into a battle zone equips them to go one better in 2008. If English football is to regain its position as the strongman of Europe, Arsene Wenger's example MUST be followed.



Training Times:

Tues 6.15 - 8.00 pm

Thurs 8.15 - 10.00 pm

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SPORTS QUIZ 3

Liam Togher poses more sporting teasers

1. Name the three teams in Celtic will face in this season's Champions League group stage.
2. What was the score when Liverpool beat Derby in the Premiership recently?
3. Nowlan Park is in which Irish county?
4. Boudewijn Zenden played for Chelsea, Liverpool and which other Premiership club?
5. Who contested the men's singles final at Wimbledon this year?
6. Who was the last county other than Kilkenny or Cork to win the hurling All-Ireland?
7. Which city will host the Euro 2008 final next year?
8. Didier Drogba hails from which African country?
9. True or False: This year's Ulster football final was played at Croke Park.
10. Which French club did Munster beat in the 2006 Heineken Cup final?
11. What connects the managers of Birmingham, Sunderland, Blackburn and Reading?
12. How many times has Eddie Irvine won the Formula 1 championship?
13. Do Besiktas play in the Greek or Turkish league?
14. Who was Clare manager before Tony Considine?
15. Who did Ireland beat to win the Triple Crown in 2004?

ANSWERS TO SPORTS QUIZ
1. AC Milan, Benfica, Shakhtar Donetsk; 2. 6-0; 3. Kilkenny; 4. Middlesbrough; 5. Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal; 6. Tipperary; 7. Vienna; 8. Ivory Coast; 9. False (Clones); 10. Biarritz; 11. They all played for Man Utd; 12. He never won it; 13. Turkish; 14. Anthony Daly; 15. Scotland

Magic Numbers

Tomás McCarthy crunches the figures

63	Goals conceded by Kilkenny City in 29 games in the First Division of the Eircom League. Stick to the hurling lads!
5	Games St Johnstone have drawn so far this season. They've only played seven.
11	Minutes of injury time during the Cardiff v Preston Championship game.
45	Minutes delay during a recent Waterford hurling championship game between Abbeyside and Clonea due to a serious injury. In typical Irish fashion they played on afterwards.
14.5	million Euros Lee Westwood has earned during his European tour career. He is only the seventh player to do so. Well for some.
0	Goals scored by Derby County away from home. A shocking statistic that won't get much better.
87	Points defeat for the Kangaroos in their Aussie Rules clash with Port Adelaide. Hammered.
1,244,826	My current position in the official Premier League fantasy football. Things can only get better.
75	Seconds it took for Sunderland's Grant Leadbitter to open the scoring against Middlesbrough.

Spikes In The Trend

An Focal Interviews Aaron, Drummer of Rock Band, The Spikes

FINN MCDUFFIE

THE Spikes were first conceived about four years ago in New Zealand. Though they've not really had their big break as such, the Spikes have had a lot of airplay lately on Phantom FM. They've also toured extensively, taking part in the Ceol '07 album, college gigs around the country, the Spraoi music festival and Castle Palooza. Ceol '07 involved the Spikes contributing to an album with an Irish language version of one of their songs. 'It's all for charity,' explains Aaron, the Spikes drummer and UL student. Artists such as Paddy Casey and Sharon Shannon also contributed. 'Any gigs we're doing now, the shows pack up,' says Aaron. Moreover, they've worked on

an American Tisch music video project. 'Our video had some explicit lyrics and didn't get much airplay. Channel 6 played it once. It was a learning experience. It was also nice to do the interviews surrounding the video,' comments Aaron. The band has also taken part in the 2FM 2moro 2our. 'We played with the Flaws... Everyone, who came, came to listen. It was a good experience and good craic,' he says, 'I really like playing with well established acts. We're just getting out of doing smaller gigs. It's a sign we're heading in the right direction.' Awareness of the market they're involved in doesn't put the Spikes off. 'The music industry isn't so much competitive as saturated. It's nice to get on lists with the likes of the Blizzards. But

there's young fellas sitting at home with plenty of talent that can't get in. It's hard to break in.'

But what are the gigs like? 'We enjoy college gigs, but it all depends on the college and the night. When there's a good crowd, we get energetic. But when there's nobody there you feel like a pleb,' explains Aaron. 'Once we went to NUIG and there was a ball after our gig. A lot of the audience went home to change into their tuxes... the atmosphere wasn't great.' The band are somewhat divided on their favourite gig so far. They were mixed between the Castle Palooza gig and Spraoi in Waterford. 'We were all in flying form at Spraoi. I knew everyone and there was just a great atmosphere,' says Aaron.

The Spikes have gone

back to basics with their music 'in all aspects'. 'The lads were fed up with some of the stuff in Dublin. We're trying to achieve a more open style. I do music technology here in UL so that's useful,' remarks Aaron. The band's music is essentially guitar-driven, high-energy rock and roll. This combined with the lead singer's tendency 'to put on a show' hypes the audience. Obviously, the Spikes are very in-tune with audience expectations. 'We like to get the crowd as energetic as possible.'

Composed of Trinity and NUIG graduates and a UL undergrad, the band is in touch with college life. 'I joined the Kayakers and the Kick boxing last year,' says Aaron, 'I like kayaking but with the band, I don't really

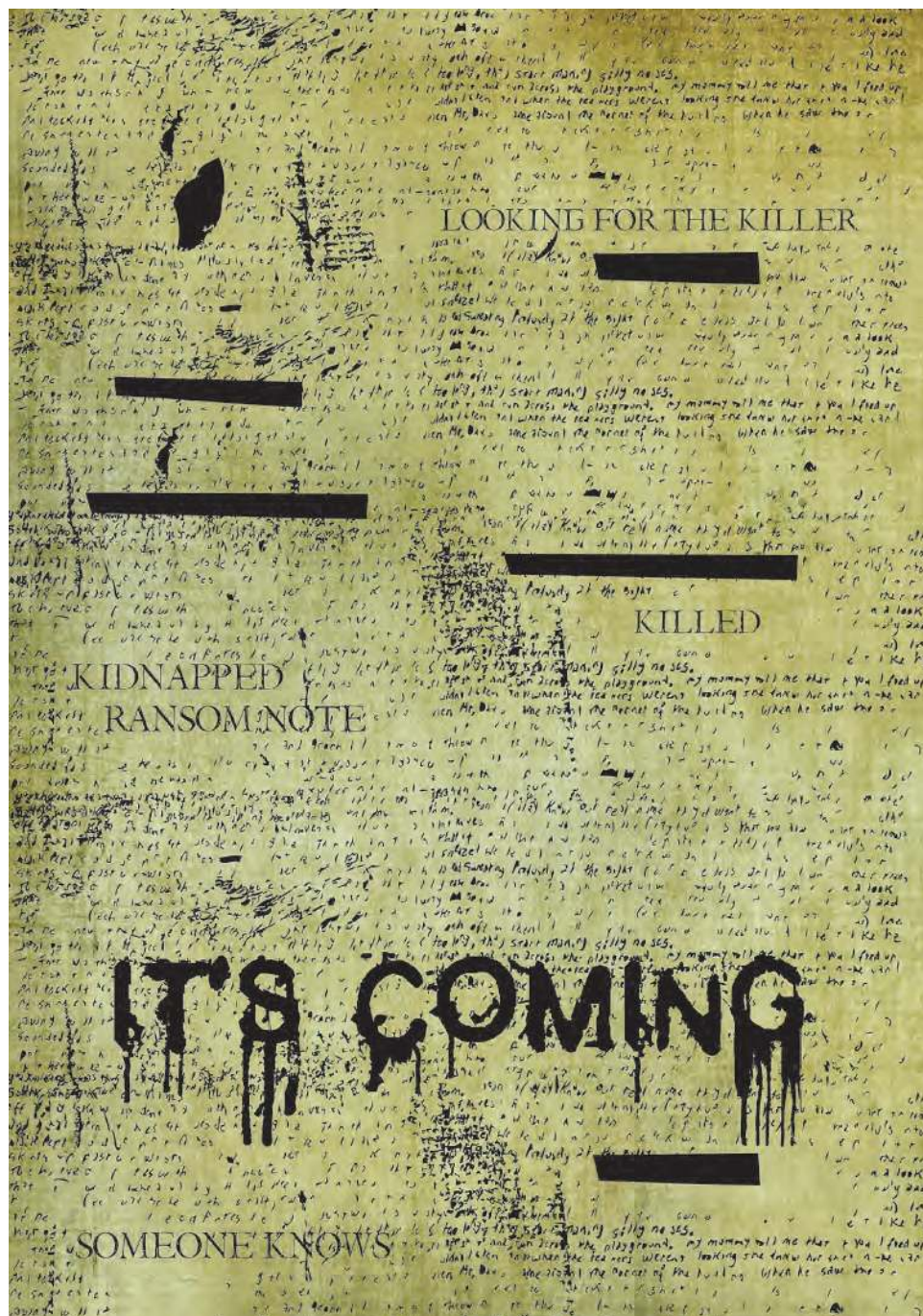


get much time. It's nice to go out on the heated pool. The lads showed me how to roll the kayak in just one night.'

So what have we to expect from the Spikes in the near future? 'We've nearly got our debut album finished. Ciaran Bradshaw is recording our album. He's just done Muse's album in London,' says Aaron. The band hopes

the album will be finished by December and released by March. There will be 12 'catchy, not over-drawn' tracks on the album. 'Hopefully the album will give us more national success,' he says, 'it'd be nice to chart as well'.

The Spikes headline the Stables on October 9 as part of the Green Sessions



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