



Thought About Christmas Shopping Yet? An Focal's Got You Covered. Page 9.



Be Completely Prepared For Your Exams! See Our Special Advice. Page 12.

# VICIOUS AUSTERITY PLAN RAISES FEES

Written by **Darragh Roche**,  
Deputy Editor

BRIAN Cowen's Government announced that university fees will rise to €2,000 a year as part of a raft of swingeing cuts in an attempt to save Ireland from its financial crisis. The Fianna Fáil minority government unveiled its four year plan last Wednesday as the EU and International Monetary Fund (IMF) prepared to extend emergency support to Ireland.

The education cuts included a five per cent reduction in the non-pay grant to universities and a €200 charge for post-Leaving Cert students. The rise in the registration fee amounts to a 33% increase on the 2010 figure of €1,500 and is well in excess of the €900 students paid in 2008. The minimum wage will be cut from €8.65 an hour to €7.65 an hour almost immediately and the threshold for payment of income tax will fall to €15,000 a year. Fees for doctors, dentists and private hospitals will be increased and the HSE will seek to reduce the costs of the medical card scheme and the drugs payment scheme. The Government also plans to increase VAT to 23% and introduce domestic water charges by 2014, introduce a property tax by 2012 and will lay off thousands of public sector workers including teachers, nurses, doctors and Gardaí. There is also a number of as yet unspecified cuts in the areas of education, social welfare, income and capital gains tax and capital spending policy. Many of the measures will come into effect next year. Unemployment and emigration, particularly amongst young people, are higher than they

have been in years and many students have begun to consider leaving Ireland and its problems behind them. The measures in four year plan will almost certainly increase unemployment and emigration.

The four year plan was announced on the same day as Irish banks made huge losses in the international markets and the cost of borrowing increased, showing the markets have less confidence in Ireland's position. AIB shares fell 15% and Bank of Ireland shares fell 23% on Wednesday. The State is a large share holder in both banks. The Government admitted last week that it was seeking a bailout from the EU and the IMF, which would come to almost €90bn. This will entail a direct loan from the United Kingdom, Ireland's biggest trading partner, of around €7bn and the possibility of bilateral loans from Sweden and Denmark.

Ireland's economic instability has threatened to undermine the euro and last week's austerity measures aim to assure the markets and the world that the State is able to guarantee its banks and will not default on its sovereign debt. Opposition parties and disaffected backbench Fianna Fáil TDs have called on Brian Cowen to resign as Taoiseach and call an immediate general election. Fianna Fáil no longer commands a secure majority in the Dáil and may not be able to pass its proposed budget this December. Fine Gael has indicated it may not vote with the Government.



Taoiseach, Brian Cowen, who announced Ireland's four year plan last week.

# MINIMUM WAGE CUT WILL HIT STUDENTS

Written by **Darragh Roche**

THE Government's plan to reduce the minimum wage from €8.65 to €7.65 is expected to have negative effects on students in full and part-time work.

The reduced standard wage, which was announced as part of the Government's four year plan, will mean falling wages for students who may depend upon their jobs to fund or subsidise university. The reduction represents an attempt to increase Ireland's competitiveness

and to reduce the cost of wages for employers. The Government considers the current minimum wage a barrier to the employment of unskilled and semi-skilled workers and younger people who are beginning to seek jobs for the first time. By reducing the level by one euro, the Government believes more young people will be able to find work and more businesses will be willing to employ them. The increase in the registration fee

next year of €2,000 will make college more expensive and students may depend more on self-funding. The lateness of the third level grant has also affected students, most of whom have not yet received any money from their local authorities.

SU President, Ruán Dillon McLoughlin has said "the combined cost of the registration fee, the reduction in wages and the inefficient administration of the student grant will make university

less accessible. It's an extreme blow to students, making education a prohibitively expensive option."

Ireland's minimum wage is the second highest in the EU and has had serious inflationary effects in the past few years. It has also made Ireland a less attractive place to employ people and, the Government claims, it has made businesses less inclined to take on more employees.



Credit: Finn McDuffie



## News

## UL CELEBRATES NATIONAL SCIENCE WEEK

Written by **Josh Lee**

IN celebration of National Science Week, held during Week 10, UL hosted a wide range of activities throughout the campus aimed at primary and secondary school children.

The Faculty of Science and Engineering organised a weeklong programme of exhibitions, demonstrations and talks for students, along with the Festival of Science on 13 November which was open to families.

The aim of the event, which was funded under the Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation (SSTI), is to develop the understanding of science and engineering among young people, and to highlight the importance of these disciplines to the future of the Irish society and economy.

The theme of this year's event was "Our Place in Space". Areas explored included the latest developments in Astronomy and space travel, along with Ireland's little publicised role in space exploration. Talks were hosted nationwide mooted the potential of alien life.

It is anticipated the programme will stimulate interest in the 2011 BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition, which has already seen a 35% increase in submissions. Around 100,000 people attended the some 500 events held across the country.

## CREDITS



Editor – Finn McDuffie  
Deputy Editor – Darragh Roche  
News Editor – Colm Fitzgerald  
Features Editor – Kelly O'Brien  
Entertainments Editor – Caitriona NiChadhain  
Sports Editor – Mark Connolly  
Design and Layout – Cassandra Fanara  
Printed by Impression Design and Print Ltd.  
Paper sourced from sustainable forests.  
Brought to you by your Students' Union.  
Visit [www.ulsu.ie](http://www.ulsu.ie) to view An Focal online.

Thanks to everybody who contributed to this issue.

Contributors:  
Aoife Coughlan  
Aoife Finnerty  
Aubrey O'Connell  
Brige Newman  
Cian Healy  
Cian Prendiville  
Claire Quinn  
Colm Madigan  
Dan Comerford  
Danielle Eriksson  
Darragh Casey  
David O'Connell  
Derek Daly  
Dr Pat Phelan  
Elizabeth Neylon  
Emma Hayward  
Fiona Scally  
Hugh O'Brien  
Jaime Rojas  
Janika Walter  
Jean Charpin  
Jennifer Meaney  
Johannes Braun  
John Rainsford  
Josh Lee  
Kate Doyle  
Luke Hogg  
Mark O'Beirne  
Mary Ennis  
Pal Carty  
Patricia Murphy  
Philip Hearne  
Robert McNamara  
Róisín Peddle  
Ruán Dillon  
McLoughlin  
Sean Keane  
Sean Reidy  
Tricia Purcell  
Vivion Grisewood

Contributors:

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E: [sucommunications@ul.ie](mailto:sucommunications@ul.ie)  
to contact the Editor.

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Finn McDuffie, Editor

## EDITORIAL

WE have seen the beginning of the end of Irish society as we know it. It's no wonder a generation of Irish students is turning its back on the motherland when that motherland can neither suckle nor succour her children.

Our generation's not to blame for the financial catastrophe of the last two years. Rather, it's the culture of excess, overspending and largesse that has prevailed for so long amongst our nation's privileged, that we should hold accountable.

While so many ordinary men and women on the streets of Ireland can budget, scrimp and save for that

rainy day, it seems our Government in its stupor could not foresee any end to the unsustainable boom. It couldn't put aside any reserves for that rainy day that all nations and all economies must inevitably face. No, this Government, against all advice and all the basic tenets of financial prudence, cut taxes and increased spending. Didn't alarm bells go off anywhere?

And now, the Fianna Fáil leadership, embattled, embroiled in in-fighting and almost universally reviled, attempts to impose the most stringent austerity measures in recent Irish history. Its own TDs don't buy it,

none of the other political parties buys it and the people of this small, brave, beleaguered nation cannot be expected to swallow this bitterest of pills with little protest.

Far be it too, from a small, university newspaper to launch into a vitriolic attack upon the elected officials of this country. But it certainly feels we have been betrayed. It feels as though we're being asked to give up too much, to take on too much of the burden for crimes our generation had no part in.



First year students at St Andrews University, Scotland, take part in a foam fight in St. Salvator's Quad as part of the Raisin Day celebrations, 22 November. The tradition is seen as a "rite of passage" for new students. Each year, a fresher student has the opportunity to be adopted by a senior student who will be known as their academic mother or father. In the past, the new student would present their parent with a pound of raisins. Nowadays, a bottle of wine is the norm.

## SILICON VALLEY COMES TO UL

Written by **Josh Lee**

THE California based "Irish Technology Leadership Group" (ITLG) held their third annual 'Silicon Valley Comes to Ireland' event in UL in Week 11. Held in conjunction with ITLG's partners NUI Galway, Shannon Development and UL, the event brought together technologists and entrepreneurs from the US and Ireland in a discussion forum to share their opinions on what it takes to commercialize innovation.

The event is particularly relevant to UL, which is currently researching the use of mobile technology for health care issues including depression. The panel held a series of presentations and an open questions and answers session which drew from their vast experience in the technological fields

The Venture Capital and Investor panel also took place at UL. It brought together Venture Capitalists and Investors from the US who held

discussions on how to find success in the global technology marketplace. UL President, Professor Don Barry said "UL is continuing to strengthen its links with industry leaders as it hosts "Silicon Valley Comes To Ireland."

"We welcome this opportunity to uncover the emerging technological opportunities we have in Ireland and to nurture those that have true potential and support them in achieving success," he said.

He added "we are fortunate to have in UL today a gathering of people who epitomise the essence of the entrepreneurial spirit and who continue through collaboration and innovation to advance the prosperity of our region and our country."



From left to right: UL President, Professor Don Barry (centre) with former Intel Chief and Chairman of ITLG Craig Barrett, and John Hartnett, Founder and President ITLG.



## News

# LEWD FACEBOOK PAGE REMOVED

*UL "Wankbank" causes controversy.*

Written by **Colm Fitzgerald,**  
News Editor

A FACEBOOK page, set up to collect images of female UL students has been removed, An Focal has learned. The page was set up by an anonymous individual with the intention of collecting "the finest wet pieces" from the college community.

Over 700 Facebook users had joined the page before it was reported by UL Corporate Affairs for copyright infringement over its use of the UL Logo.

UL Press Officer, Sheena Doyle, told An Focal that reporting the infringement was a "first instance action."

"It was a copyright infringement to use our logo without our permission, and we obviously wouldn't have given permission for its use on a site like that," she said. "Making sure the logo came off straight away was our first action, as the University would in no

way endorse this kind of a website, and the presence of our logo on the site was of grave concern."

"Outside of that, we don't have any jurisdiction over private Facebook pages," she continued. "Facebook pages are much like conversations. We cannot control the content of pages that are not UL-lead."

She added "I don't know if it was Facebook or the page administrators who took down the page in the end."

The page was filled with hundreds of photos of female students from the college and was deemed "wholly inappropriate".

SU Welfare Officer, Derek Daly told An Focal "the UL Wankbank (it would seem from the description) is a poor taste attempt to provide entertainment for the easily amused and those with nothing better to be doing". "I would hope that such a page has caused no

offence to any individual, and if it has they can contact me if they wish, as an offended party, to find out how to go about making a disciplinary complaint," he added.

Several similar pages which were set up by students from LIT, Mary I, UCC and NUIG have also been closed down amid concerns about their appropriateness. The DCU page continues to operate.



# UL LECTURER HONoured BY THE NATIONAL ACADEMY

Written by **Josh Lee**

KEMMY Business School lecturer Dr Conor Carroll was honoured by the National Academy's Annual Awards for Excellence in Teaching at a ceremony held in Dublin Castle during Week 10. Dr Carroll was one of five individuals presented with awards by the Hon. Mrs Justice Catherine McGuinness.

Justice McGuinness noted the outstanding contribution made by the award recipients to both teaching and research in Higher Education. The award winners, who come from a variety of backgrounds and fields

within Third Level Education, were recognised for their passion for teaching while also being innovative researchers.

This is not Dr Carroll's first award. He has already received numerous accolades for both his case study writing and his teaching. His studies have been adopted by institutions nationally and worldwide. The five winners were nominated by their respective universities and then selected by a committee made up of international representatives along with representatives from the Irish

University Association, The Institutes of Technology Ireland and the Union of Students in Ireland.

The committee was chaired by Áine Hyland, Professor Emeritus of Education at UCC. The awards are tribute to how excellence in teaching goes hand in hand with creative and scholarly work. They also highlight the inspirational benefits of bringing cutting edge research into third level classrooms, an activity that is supported by the National Academy in all Higher Education Institutes in Ireland.



Conor Carroll, recipient of National Academy's Award for Excellence in Teaching 2010 with Hon. Mrs Justice Catherine McGuinness, Awards Presenter, pictured at ceremony in Dublin Castle.

# COUNCIL REFUSES WALKWAY PLANS

Written by **Colm Fitzgerald,**  
News Editor

PLANS to upgrade the riverside walk have ground to a halt. Clare County Council expressed concern over the environmental impact of the proposed upgrading works to much of the riverside walk and planned walkway to Cappavilla Village.

The plan came under fire from Waterways Ireland and local anglers who claim that the upgraded path would infringe on natural habitat and wildlife. Commenting on the development, Limerick and District Anglers Association (LDAA) stated "We do not believe the land is the property of UL and the proposed development land, we believe, being

the original bed of the River Shannon". They also claimed that it would interfere with otters and kingfishers, along with it being located "too close" to the salmon spawning area.

The County Council have alleged that it would contravene the Clare County Development Plan. They also stated that such a plan is premature pending the determination of the northern relief road which would connect to the Clare campus.

# GALWAY STUDENTS MARCH IN PROTEST

Written by **Colm Fitzgerald,**  
News Editor

IN EXCESS of 2000 students marched on Galway City on Wednesday Week 12 in protest over harsh budget cutbacks.

It takes place only three weeks after the largest student protest in decades engulfed Dublin city centre in a bid to convey a strong message of unity to the Government. President of NUIG SU Peter Mannion said it will be well worthwhile.

"Galway students turned out in their thousands at the national demonstration in Dublin, and again today in Galway. The government needs to understand that increasing fees and cutting supports will end costing the taxpayer far more in social welfare payments to students who end up dropping out."

Unlike the national protest, there were no ugly scenes in Galway. "We have been working closely with the Gardaí to ensure our democratic right to protest without adversely affecting the people of Galway", said Mr Mannion. "Unfortunately, some of the

coverage put too much emphasis on the unfortunate events at the Department of Finance, but it was a very small number involved when you consider that 40,000 students were there and demonstrated peacefully. The Gardaí actually commented that the majority of students were well behaved and co-operated", he added.

The protest progressed to the Spanish Arch, where the crowd was addressed by NUIG SU President Peter Mannion, GMIT SU President Colin Canny and USI President Gary Redmond. "We are not going to take this lying down – when the general election comes we will mobilise and we will vote" said Mr Redmond. Those TDs who were intent on "taking education away" would "pay at the ballot box" he insisted.



NUI Galway SU President, Peter Manion (Right).



## News

NEWS  
IN BRIEFENERGY EFFICIENT  
DOORS FOR MAIN  
BUILDING

THE Main Building donned some new doors last week. The external entrance doors in Blocks A and B were replaced as part of the SEAI funding, reported in An Focal Issue Five. Doors at the Robert Mallet Tower, Charles Bianconi Tower, John Tyndall Tower, Kate O'Brien Tower, Robert Mallet Tower and Charles Bianconi Tower.

LIMERICK UNIONS  
LAUNCH PRESSURE  
CAMPAIGN

LIMERICK Association of Students' Unions (LASU) launched a campaign last week called Tell Your TD. The campaign seeks to highlight the neglect of third level education proposed by the government in the upcoming budget. It also seeks to bring to light the increasing cuts in the core budgets of third level institutions. It is aimed, not only at students, but at mothers, fathers and grandparents of students of third level institutions.

UL INSTITUTIONAL  
REVIEW

THE University is currently undertaking a self-evaluation exercise in preparation for an institutional review in 2011. Vice President Academic and Registrar, Professor Paul McCutcheon, has asked all members of the campus community to respond to requests for help, information and opinions as work progresses. The purpose of the review is to evaluate compliance with relevant legislation and guidelines and to assess whether UL's quality processes are functioning efficiently. The review will also determine the extent to which UL has a developing quality culture. The last time the University was reviewed was in 2004 by the European Universities Association (EUA).

## C&amp;S LOTTO

THE C&S Lotto Jackpot is still intact at €6000 and awaits players in the first draw of the New Year, which will take place on 8 February 2011. Winners of the lucky dip for €25 were Lewis Green, Co. Clare; Robert McKeown, Limerick; Patrick Moran – Limerick; Serguei Beloshapkin.

IRELAND'S TOP  
UNDERGRADUATE  
AWARDS OPEN

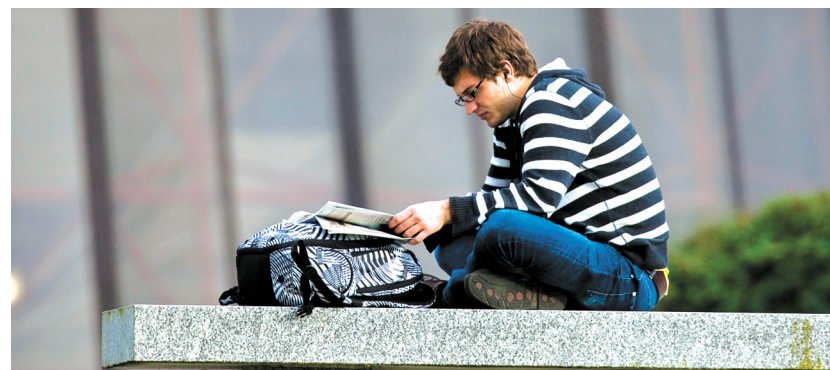
Written by **Josh Lee**

THE Undergraduate Awards of Ireland and Northern Ireland are on the search for the island's next top undergraduates. The competition is open to all final and penultimate year students.

Applicants are entered into one of 20 categories, encompassing a wide range of Higher Level courses including: Medical Science, Language & Linguistics, Law and Psychology, among others. The deadline for the first

round of applications is 17 December.

In 2009, President Mary McAlleese presented the 33 inaugural winners with their awards at a ceremony which was held in the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin. Last year, Emily Bourke, who was a third year New Media and English student, received an award under the languages category. Her paper dealt with the paralysis and stifling of women in Katherine Mansfield's *The*



Daughters of the Late Colonel. Ms Bourke praised Dr Patricia Moran for her encouragement. "She was really enthusiastic about the topic. She always encouraged us to push our boundaries when it came to writing; to express strong opinions and to write about topics that really interested us."

The Awards, which were founded in 2008, aim to "recognise and reward the island of Ireland's most innovative

young knowledge creators, to catalyse the development of the brightest undergraduates, and to inspire all undergraduates to achieve."

Students can enter by submitting an essay or project completed during the academic year which they believe conforms to a high standard. More information is available on [undergraduateawards.com](http://undergraduateawards.com)

UL JOURNOS  
EXPERIENCE  
FESTIVAL OF  
RADIO

Written by **Annie Dillon**

FIVE journalism students from UL recently visited the BBC Northern Ireland's Blackstaff studios in Belfast to experience "Making Connections: A Festival of Radio."

"Initially, the event was something of a sensory overload; there were throngs of people milling around and lots of noise. Excitement was strong as [the festival] started to get into full swing," said one of the UL delegation

The event saw Blackstaff studios become home to the biggest conglomeration of radio (from North and South of the border) for three days only. "Inside the studio was transformed into a haven of everything radio."

UL students were given the chance to record a mock BBC News and Weather Report. "We paced ourselves for our big debut as the BBC's news jingle started to play. We put on our

radio voices and for a moment we were transported to the news room of BBC radio."

The experience gave the students an insight into special effects creation and recording. "As we travelled through the studio [...] we came across an opportunity to take part in a recorded radio horror show," continues our source.

"We acted out the roles of a family who were stranded, after their car broke down, on a dark rainy night. They soon found themselves trapped, in a spooky house, with an unusual character."

Thanks to Sean Keane, Claire Quinn and Danielle Eriksson

CHEATING GMIT  
STUDENTS GRADUATE

Written by **Colm Fitzgerald,**  
News Editor

THREE students from Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT) were permitted to graduate despite committing plagiarism in part of their final year assessments. The trio expressed concern they had not been awarded marks for one particular segment of their assessment. The college elected to award zero marks for the plagiarised portion, but allowed the students to continue and graduate.

Most other higher education institutions insist that students who engage in plagiarism for such serious assessments repeat the module, or in many cases the entire year. Some academic staff at GMIT was caused particular consternation over the entire incident and as a result boycotted the

conferring ceremony. A spokesperson for GMIT said "We are aware that one staff member was unhappy with the decision of the disciplinary committee in respect of the allegation of plagiarism". The staff concerned was encouraged to make views known to the institution's Registrar.

Speaking to An Focal, GMIT SU President, Colin Canny said the matter "is internal and is being dealt with." He added, "the fact is, everything was above board and it was just a lecturer who was whistleblowing." He declined to comment further.

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UL's Journalism Students at Radio Festival in Belfast.



## Opinion

# TIME TO RE-INTRODUCE TUITION FEES?

Written by **Darragh Casey**

SINCE the introduction of “free” third-level education, Government financing to third level institutions has decreased. While the numbers of enrolling students have increased significantly, the expense for this education has not been in sync. Now, as Ireland has no money to spare, and the cuts are yet to worsen, universities such as UL will continue to suffer as a result. It is paramount that these circumstances are redressed.

Since 2008, when Batt O’Keefe first floated the idea of reintroducing tuition fees, students have been adamantly fighting this possibility. What has been most frustrating has been the insistence of the anti-fees stance. The topic is not even worthy of discussion because fees don’t align with students expectations of a free ride through higher education.

The bottom line is that Ireland’s higher education system needs investment and the current financing arrangement is unsustainable. The recently planned hike in registration fees is not a viable long-term solution either. More money is needed.

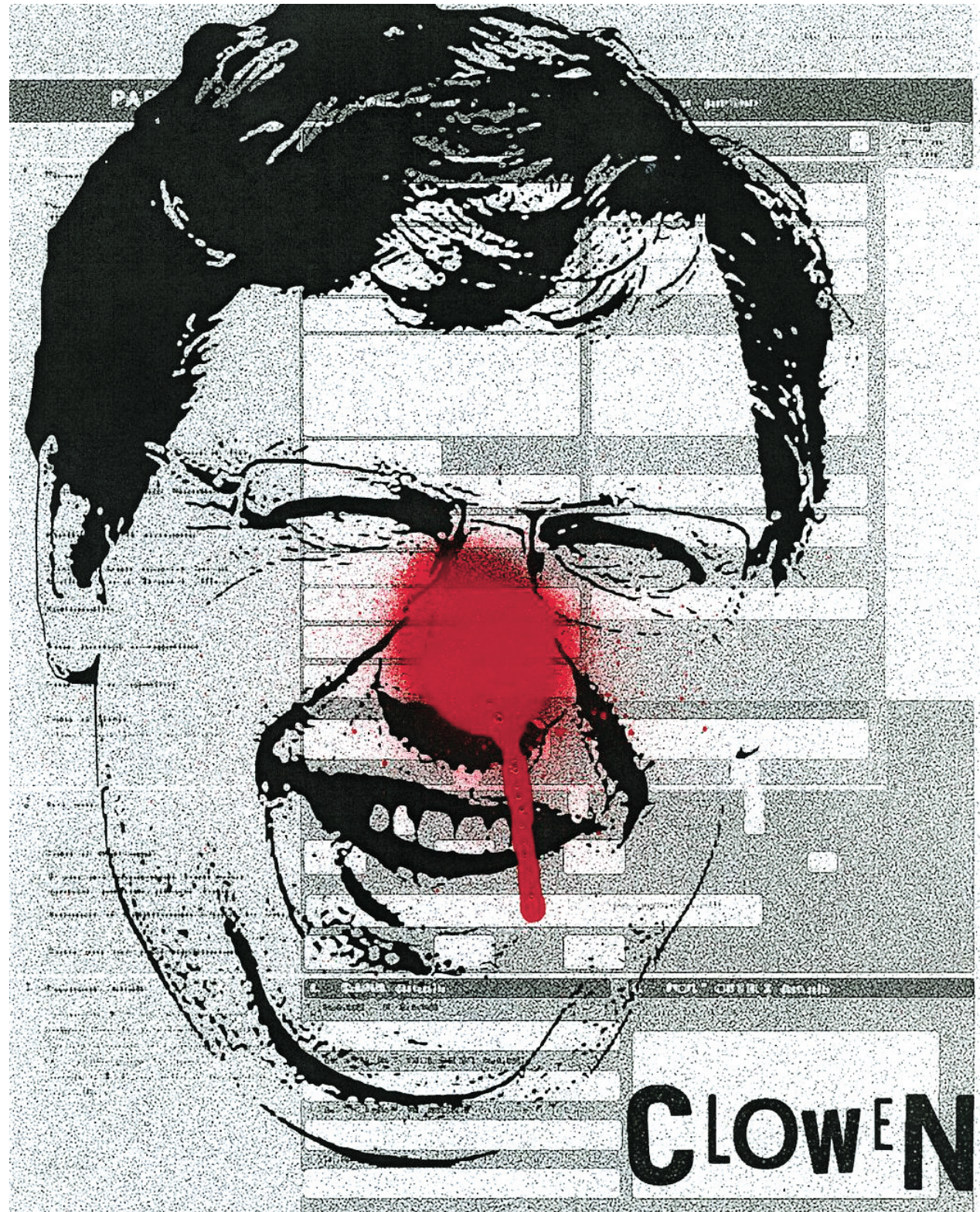
In my opinion, the education system in operation in the UK would be suitable for implementation here in Ireland. In the UK, tuition fees were introduced, following intense and heated debate (student unions were against the idea). Students are eligible for a student loan, a tuition fee loan and a maintenance loan, and the loan is then repaid in

instalments upon finding employment above a threshold of £15,000 until the borrowed amount is paid off. Conscious that tuition fees are currently £3,000 per academic year, a student may commonly amass in excess of £20,000 considering the sole inclusion of accommodation costs.

Measures of this kind have to be taken, and can be improved upon. Varying the tuition fee per the academic area, for example, may have greater benefits to the economy. And the annual option of paying the tuition fees up-front would also be a welcome scenario.

Within the 2010 Human Development Report, Ireland is rated fifth in the world in the Education index. Yet, while our literacy and enrolment rates may be highly placed, Trinity, UCD, and UCC are Ireland’s only universities in the top 200 globally ranked universities, none making the top 50 for 2010.

The re-introduction of tuition fee’s cannot be a short-term solution for if a similar system to that in the UK was carried out and the Business class of 2015 were to be notified imminently, then in 2015 we may begin to see the flow back to the third level institutions. This can be a step forward in the attainment of educational excellence. I just hope that many of today’s noisy students will have graduated by then.



# “OUT OF CHARACTER” ACTIONS AND THE UL DISCIPLINE PROCESS

Written by **Dr Pat Phelan,**  
Chair, UL Discipline Committee

ARE you at risk of being overtaken by “out of character” actions? Many students are not aware of the UL Discipline Process and the vast majority will never engage with the process. But for those who do, it is not a pleasant experience and may have long term consequences.

A number of students will “engage” with the discipline process in UL each year as a result of being reported under breaches of the Code of Conduct. Many will face a charge of breach of assessment regulations or academic cheating, with the remainder facing charges including abuse of alcohol, assault, theft, forgery and endangering others. Serious offences, as defined in the Code of Conduct, are listed in the Student Handbook. Penalties have ranged from monetary fines to suspension or expulsion for more serious offences including academic cheating. One of the most striking characteristics of the students that come before the discipline process is remorse and a statement to the effect that the action that has led to the discipline process is “out of character”. In the vast majority of cases this is certainly true. Many offences occur during examination sessions in the form of Academic Cheating. This is mainly associated with

possession of unauthorised material in the examination centre. Pressure, panic and fear are the most often cited factors when students are charged with academic cheating. The students involved will recount that any possible benefit from cheating is not worth the additional stress caused. This is clearly obvious when one sees the student’s sense of relief when the discipline process is completed, regardless of the outcome. Students also report a sense of outrage from their peers. Your peers will not want their achievement and qualification tainted by allegations of academic cheating. Students risk suspension for a semester or full academic year if found guilty of cheating. Another aspect is Antisocial Behaviour. It is with a sense of achievement and a source of pride to the university community when student academic, cultural, or voluntary efforts contribute to the wider community. UL recognises that the character of the university is influenced by its location in a residential area on the outskirts of Limerick City. UL seeks to maintain good relations with the neighbouring community and takes the view that antisocial activity damages those relations and impinges on our ability to

maintain the community environment that we all enjoy. Occasionally, despite students’ initial intentions, events may get out of hand and an “out of character” event occurs. In those circumstances the university may use the Code of Conduct and initiate the discipline process against those students where the University Advocate forms an opinion that the student has a case to answer. Sometimes, Gardaí can become involved. They may decide to initiate an investigation and make a decision on whether to progress the file to prosecution. This may also lead to fines and penalties. Further and significantly, you will have to declare any conviction or prosecution as part of the “Garda Vetting” process. All health board staff, teachers and the voluntary sector require their staff to be Garda Vetted. Evidence of good character is a pre-requisite for employment in many sectors at this stage. “Out of Character” actions/events can follow you for the rest of your life. While Facebook might prove embarrassing when friends and family view your profile, Garda Vetting has the potential to affect your professional career development, when your “out of Character” action becomes an issue being discussed.

# CANNABIS: A SOLUTION TO OUR FINANCIAL CRISIS

Written by **Philip Hearne**

READERS of An Focal don’t need me to tell them how bad the country’s finances are. It can be summed up pretty well by saying, we’re skint.

The Government insists on raising taxes and cutting expenditure to balance the books, with no thought about where growth is going to come from. Well how about legalizing cannabis? If the Government was to legalise cannabis, by appointing themselves sole producers, distributors and retailers, they could raise so much revenue there could be a Fianna Fáil hospitality tent at the Galway races next year. Instead of the Government’s current policy of trying to create new streams of revenue through indirect taxation, legalising cannabis would allow them to tap in to a stream of revenue that already exists but is not taxed. The cannabis market sees potentially millions of euro being pumped into the black market every year. This is money that the Exchequer could claim. The direct income would certainly run to tens millions. It is impossible to say with any amount of certainty how much demand already exists, but the fact that cannabis is readily available in every corner of this island means there is a profitable market out there. The creation of a café culture, similar to that which exists in Holland, would be a massive boost for towns and cities around Ireland.

The country would see a massive influx of tourists, bringing consumers back to failing business districts all over Ireland. It would also provide an alternative to going out and getting drunk which would reduce anti-social behaviour and make our streets safer. Approximately fifty percent of all criminal drug cases are for cannabis possession and supply. Removing cannabis from the list of banned substances would free up a considerable amount of time and money for the Gardaí and the court system.

Lawful or not, cannabis consumption is here to stay. So let’s turn a problem into a solution. Let’s legalise it.





## Opinion

# FIGHTBACK AGAINST FEES

Written by **Cian Prendiville,**  
Chariperson, UL Socialist Youth

ON 3 November, over 30,000 students demonstrated in what was the largest student protest in a generation. During the protest, approximately 30 students occupied the lobby of the Department of Finance and up to 1,000 students protested outside of the building.

The Garda riot squad brutally attacked these students, inflicting numerous injuries. Horses and dogs were used in a conscious attempt to intimidate students and to send out a message

that the state will come down heavy on opposition demonstrations.

The media attempted to portray these events as a riot instigated by “fringe” elements. The reality is, before the riot squad went in, students energies were focused on the Department. Yes, some eggs were thrown at the building, and I can only describe that as futile and a distraction, but that in no way justifies wading in with batons. Subsequently, a protest of 600 students was organised

for the following week to protest the Garda brutality as well as fees. Not only did the students unions not support this protest, but many actually condemned the students, rather than the police. One thousand Student Union members were attacked, and their unions said nothing. This is a disgrace.

This is just a small part of the bigger debate that must be addressed. What we really need to discuss is how to fight the blatant attacks on the grant and on

education services. A major increase in fees would effectively rule out the option of third level education for many whose families are already struggling because of the recession.

We need to be reaching out to staff and to the broader community; linking in with others fighting this budget. We shouldn't say “protect us, cut everyone else”. We should be uniting with everybody else fighting the cuts in order to build a strong movement

against this budget. This should not just be the annual student protest. This should be the start of a movement. We need to get students all over the country building a constant campaign, based in all colleges, that organises effective protests focused on defeating the Government.

## GOVERNMENTAL!

Written by **Róisín Peddle**

CHEESY does it, say Brian and Brian. You might be struggling to pay your ESB this Christmas, but it's all Gouda, because the Government is planning to give away 53 million blocks of cheddar to the needy for Christmas.

The Minister for Agriculture, Brendan Smith, has been accused of rubbing the current economic crisis into the noses of the poor who, it is argued, would much rather their Christmas social welfare bonus be reinstated.

The furore over the cheese seems somewhat surprising to those distributing it, as apparently the scheme has been in existence for years. I'm sure many of our parents remember the beef and Butter Mountains of the eighties and, in America, the poor have been receiving free cheese from the government for decades. “Government Cheese” is in fact a slang term for being in receipt of welfare.

I suppose this scheme makes sense to the EU and to the Government. They have too much cheese; the poor have

very little cheese. It does seem a little Victorian, granted, but it would be useful to those already struggling with the weekly supermarket shop (if they like cheese of course, if they don't, it's a whole other story). The hampers distributed by organisations like the Lions Club, for example, are invaluable to families for whom Christmas is a struggle. But these hampers contain a lot more than just cheese.

The Government probably thought that if they re-publicised the scheme, they'd get some positive exposure but it's backfired on them spectacularly. The more I think about it the more difficult it becomes to see how Fianna Fáil strategists thought that free cheese would win over voters. Yet again, they've proved they're out of touch with the masses. Maybe if they gave up the Mercs and took a substantial cut to their huge salaries they might be able to save their skin. But I can't see something that cheesy happening.

“The Government probably thought that if they re-publicised the scheme, they'd get some positive exposure but it's backfired on them spectacularly.”



## SAFETY CAMERAS: A BLESSING IN DISGUISE?

Written by **Colm Fitzgerald**

REMEMBER when it was alright to have a few pints and drive home? Wearing a seatbelt was considered avant-garde and there was no such thing as the traffic corp. I have fond memories as a child sitting on the floor in the back of my grandfather's Nissan Micra with not a care in the world on anybody's part. Whether it's for better or for worse, if any of this happened today, you'd probably be hung, drawn and quartered. 16 November marked the introduction of “safety cameras” in a bid to reduce deaths on Irish roads. This caused motorists across the city on to proceed with a hap hazardous sense of trepidation. Similar to when penalty points were introduced, the motoring population drove with care and fear for the law. With things the way they are, it's fair to assume that very few people have the money to be wasting on speeding fines and on increased insurance premiums because of penalty points. If you were watching the RTE News on the eve of this milestone,

you would have seen Dermot Ahearn grinning wildly in response to Noel Dempsey's comment of “I hope we catch nobody”. So do us all a favour. If you drive, don't appease the politicians by getting caught. Just slow down, even if you only slow down marginally. It might not be your life, it might not be your friend's life, but given the size of the UL community, it might well be someone you are somehow linked to. If nothing else, save yourself the €80 fine.

“Very few people have the money for speeding fines and increased insurance premiums.”





## Features

# UL IS THE HOME OF GREAT PORTRAITURE

Written by **John Rainsford**

"I have used everything from cloth to paper, bronze, glass, nettles and even frost."

THE National Self Portrait Collection of Ireland, located in UL, has acquired a further work by the internationally acclaimed Irish artist Alice Maher.

Ms Maher, who was born in Cahir, County Tipperary, is a former graduate of European Studies at the university. She already has a piece in the collection: a painting entitled 'Self-Portrait: Four Views'. After graduating from UL she studied for four years at the Crawford College of Art in Cork. The University of Ulster followed and a masters' degree in Fine Art. She then won a Fulbright

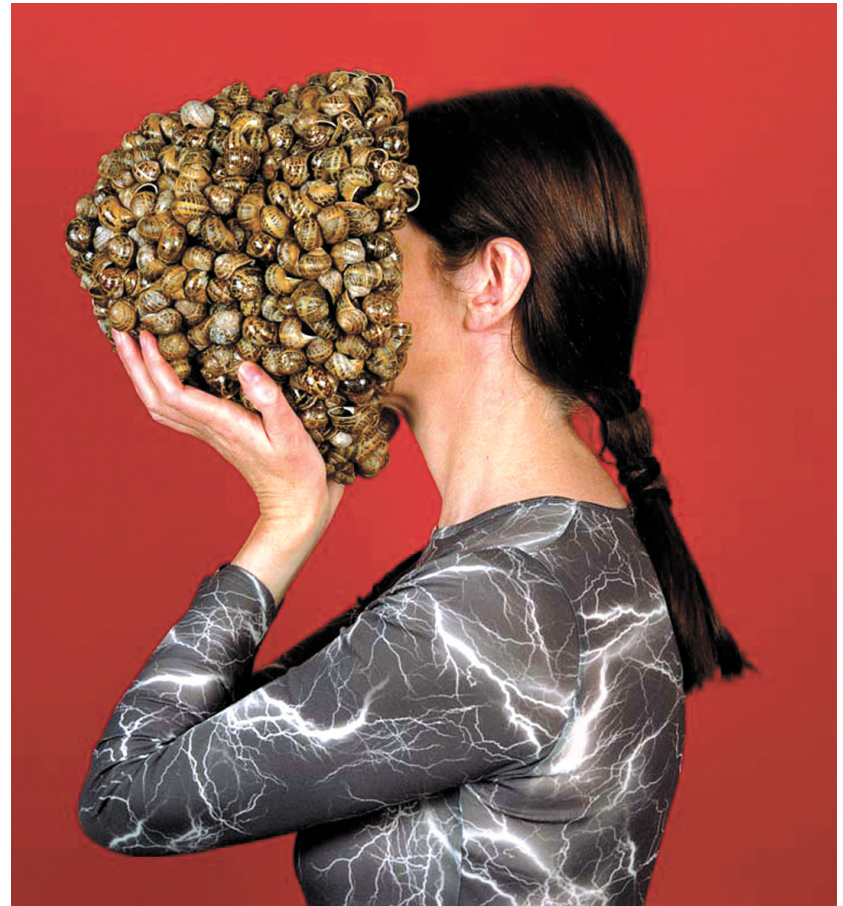
Scholarship to the San Francisco Art Institute which was an enormous step in her career.

In 2010 there will be ten new works added to the collection. For some artists like Alice Maher, Neil Shawcross and Rosie McTurran, this will be their second self portrait to be included. Yvonne Davis, Visual Arts Administrator at UL explains "The addition of second works by artists offers an opportunity to examine how an artist's practice changes over their life or indeed how they see themselves. We are honoured to have this second self portrait by Alice as she is one of Ireland's foremost contemporary artists. Alice has now chosen to include a second work as she felt it was more representative of her current work than the original work in 1993."

Alice Maher recently gave a speech to art lovers at 'The Woods' exhibition at Istabraq Hall, in Limerick where she stated "Perhaps the human story, in all its complexity, is its central theme. I have used everything from cloth to paper, bronze, glass, nettles and even frost, as well as more accepted media like drawing. Oscar Wilde said that

'all art is useless', and I agree, but is it the most essential useless thing in all of society? Certainly, it speaks to the unknown and the unknowable parts of us but it cannot be a simple choice between bread and roses. We must have both!" The National Self-Portrait Collection of Ireland was founded following the acquisition of 15 self portraits from the estate of John Kneafsey by the National Institute for Higher Education. The University currently has more than 1,800 artworks, sculptures and decorative objects on campus.

This collection is a unique national resource as it reflects the changes, both social and artistic, in painting, photography and other media from the 1800s to present. Its purpose is to form a collection illustrative of self portraiture in Ireland and of self portraiture by Irish artists. It is a key educational and cultural resource available to the campus community and the public at large.



# GOT SYPHILIS? THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT!

Written by **Josh Lee**

SINCE the birth of the smart phone, the mobile world has been inundated with virtual tools, games and various other activities called apps.

Whether we are exterminating zombies on the morning bus trip, letting hours trickle away flicking virtual paper into virtual bins or checking flight times, many of us increasingly rely on our iPhones for entertainment and information.

And now, as the phrase "there's an app for everything" begins to hold an increasing amount of truth, British doctors and technological experts have, surprisingly, found another use for the hand-held programs: STI detectors. Yes, it seems as if the smart phone that can already do everything will now be able to act as a portable genito-urinary clinic too.

No more will young men and women have to face the embarrassment of approaching a GP over a suspected STI. The £4m project, spearheaded by a forum called the UK Clinical Research Collaboration, is developing a method of getting a diagnosis from your mobile.

The device in development, which will be about the size of a USB stick, will allow potential STI sufferers to place urine or saliva on a microchip and plug it into their mobile which will return a result within minutes. It's certainly quicker than a trip to the GP.

The invention is aimed at reducing the proliferation of STIs among the younger, more tech-savvy, generations. Manufacturers plan to sell the product for as little as 50p in nightclubs,

"No more will young men and women have to face the embarrassment of approaching a GP over a suspected STI."

pharmacies and supermarkets to make them as easily accessible as condoms.

While the idea may seem dubious, upon closer inspection it's really not too farfetched. In the UK, over 50% of reported complaints of STIs came from people aged under 25, a figure which is likely to be the same across the Irish Sea. For a lot of young people, condoms can become quite the essential piece of kit. But, when the safety precautions go pear shaped, and STIs are contracted by young people, they are the least likely to seek help, something which heavily increases the spread of sexual infections in the younger generations.

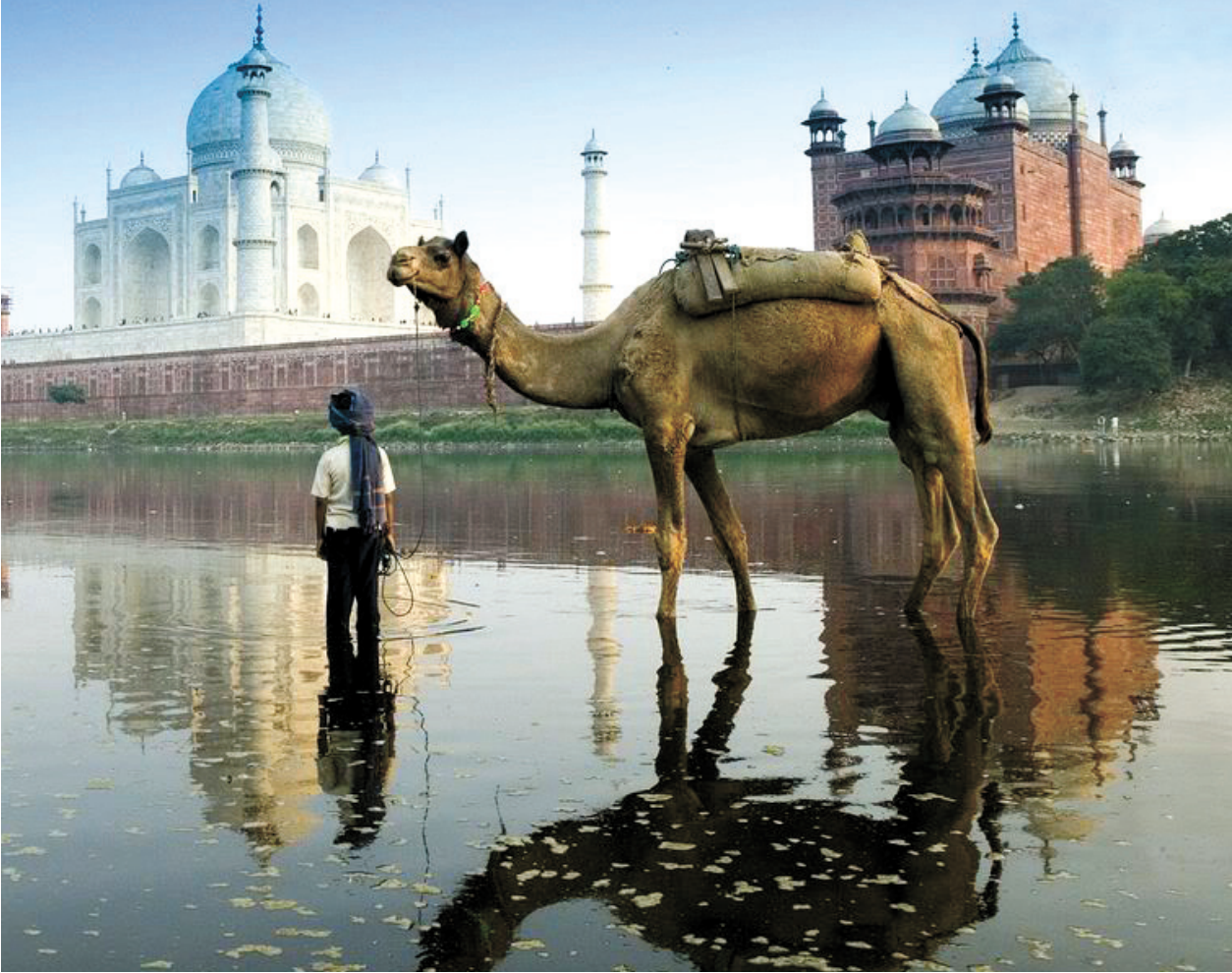
But, with a quick, cheap and, most importantly, private diagnostic tool on hand, sense will hopefully prevail and the culture of silence among young STI sufferers can be put to bed, so to speak.





## Travel

IF you say India to most people, what pops into their head is a mixture of Apu Nahasapeemapetilon, and Ji Ho. Ever heard of Jaipur? I hadn't. Turns out it's kind of a big deal.



One of India's famous wonders: The Taj Mahal, which stands on the bank of the River Yamuna.

## THE JAIPUR EXPERIENCE

Written by **Mary Ennis**

INDIA, like the US, is divided into states. Jaipur is the capital of the state of Rajasthan. From a tourist point of view, Jaipur is home to the Pink City, a whole host of temples and the Lake Palace. Basically, there are a lot of pretty buildings and a lot of cool animals. When I went to India though, I didn't see most of the tourist attractions because I was too concerned with lesson plans.

Let me preface this by saying, I'm not an English teacher. Also, I'm not completely sure what was going through my head when I entered the USIT office late last semester and picked up some brochures. If I had to guess, I would say that the Week 12 rush had gone to my head and that I had gone slightly insane. All I knew was, at that moment I wanted to get far, far away. And you can get much further away than India.

When I first arrived in India, I hated it. It was hot and sticky, people stared at me a lot and I was incredibly homesick. Everything was new and scary and I spent a long three days feeling mightily sorry for myself.

On my fourth day in India, after a day of training and no idea of what I was getting myself into, I started work. I have never felt so overwhelmed in my

entire life. The kids there have nothing. I couldn't have ever imagined how little they have. During our training, we had been warned that the children at our school were 'naughty', and so when I started to teach I didn't expect to get very far. Because of my low expectation, their eagerness to learn blew me away. I had worried about how I would teach without any experience but I was fine. As long as you speak English, and do it with a smile then it really doesn't matter how little teaching experience you have.

I was only in the school for four weeks but in that short time I was openly welcomed into the community. They had very little, but what they had, they had to give. I danced with locals at a going away party, had the best chi in India at a student's home and I loved every second of my time there.

On my last day in India, I went to the school where I worked to say goodbye, and it broke my heart. When I was leaving the communal house where I had stayed, and said goodbye to Gaytri the housekeeper, I actually cried. And even though I only spent a month there, to this very day I still feel like I left a little bit of myself in Jaipur.

## GLAGOW: A LITTLE BIT OF RUSSIA ON YOUR DOORSTEP

Written by **Kelly O'Brien**,  
Features Editor

SEEING as it's only across the water, Glasgow seems the perfect place to spend a weekend away this holiday season. Well it isn't.

Glasgow is great in the summer and even better in the autumn but during the winter months, it becomes a dangerous place indeed, as every frozen sidewalk turns into a hip replacement waiting to happen. Having braved the harsh winter months of Glasgow with nothing but a portable heater, a hot water bottle and a few litres of Russian vodka, I can safely say that I won't be returning any time soon.

Winter months aside, living in Glasgow was an extremely unique experience for me, both personally and culturally. I wore a kilt, shouted at Gerard Butler and ate some delicious Haggis.

I climbed a mountain, had a gawk at William Wallace's sword and discovered the madness of Hogmanay. When I put these things down on paper, it sounds like I had the time of my life but it really didn't feel like it.

I began to realise how dirty and violent the city was. I had to throw junkies out of my bookshop for constantly attempting to steal Ben10 tents and my heart would break every time I passed a homeless teenager sleeping in a doorway. One particularly bad week saw a murder suicide in my local shop, a junkie sleeping in my alleyway and my friend pulled off a moving bicycle and beaten up. Then there were the "neds" (Glaswegian term for scumbag) seeking "spayre change hen?" on the street corners.

Glasgow's underbelly really only becomes apparent when you set foot in the East End of Glasgow as opposed to the more upper class West End which is home to the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and other prestigious institutions. But, if you do decide to brave the Scottish weather this December, play it safe! Go to Edinburgh!



A striking exhibit in the Kelvingrove Art Gallery, Glasgow.

## ONE MONTH LEFT IN CYPRUS

Written by **Emma Hayward**

ONE month left in Cyprus, before my return to reality. It feels like I've been living inside a bubble for the past few months and soon it's going to burst. I have mixed feelings.

I love it here but I can't help looking forward to a cosy Christmas at home. Usually Christmas for me means being cold, staying indoors and lighting the

fire at midday because it's freezing. It also means being at home with family and having amazing dinners. It's also a chance to dust off the old tablecloth in a half-hearted effort to be fancy.

This year means more though. It marks the end of an epic year in which I have lived, worked and studied in Spain and Cyprus. I've discovered life

outside Ireland and I've met so many wonderful people from all over the world. In December I will go to Egypt for a few days, which used to seem like an impossible dream, but now it's seems so easy. I think Egypt will have to be a true highlight of an amazing Erasmus. But home beckons.

Christmas represents my return home

to friends and family and normal life. But, it will be different. I will be a different person; ready for anything, never saying "never" and with a newfound motivation. I think I'll call it, for want of a better term, my enlightenment. And I owe it to my experiences of work placement abroad and, of course, Erasmus.



## Lifestyle

## CHRISTMAS AND OUR NEWEST TRADITION

Written by **Aoife Coughlan**

DESPITE cries of recession, we still reach for our wallets in expectation of the Christmas pilgrimage to the shops. But can it be this traditional communal flocking and frolicking among the bargains of bath sets, lotions and ubiquitous slippers will die? Shall we replace our new Christmas religion with yet another temple to worship? Well, yes, for some, that is the way the festive cookie crumbles. The internet can now be the site under the star, the one stop shop for festive frivolities.

The advantages of internet shopping are numerous. EBay allows us to bid for bargains that the high street may

not have. Favourite clothing brands can be accessed through an online store which means no queuing for dressing rooms. But what about the traditional Christmas shop?

In a season based on tradition, from mass-going to Brussels sprout eating, does the internet not rob us of the fun of Christmas shopping? Does it not separate us from the lights on the streets, the wrapping up warm, and the perusal of a million different nightgowns until we find one soft enough for granny? We go with friends and soon enough we are sipping hot chocolate after a long days shopping, but that warm fuzzy

glow is not just the cocoa but a clichéd satisfaction of a day well spent, of putting effort into shopping for presents for loved ones. Sentimental rubbish it may be, but many of us believe it none the less.

So whether you're a traditional brave-the-elements type of shopper or a savvy stay-at-home customer, Christmas present shopping always ends the same way; with the encasement of everything in brightly coloured wrapping paper. Enjoy!



## JUMPER IT UP THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

Written by **Kate Doyle**

IN 2001, when Bridget Jones' Diary graced our screens, we were subjected to Christmas jumpers which were so bad that even the notorious DILF, Colin Firth himself, could not pull them off.

But this year, Fair Isle, or embroidered jumpers, are a must have for Christmas lunch this year. Be it with a reindeer, a snowman or a Christmas tree, both Dunnes and Penny's are doing fantastic Fair Isle jumper dresses, cardigans, jumpers and trapper hats all for around €20.

Next is doing some really quirky Fair Isle stuff with a black and white shopper bag for €46. It's expensive but just think, it's the perfect size for college books, and you need it! If those One 4 All vouchers start pouring in, (is it just me or do all students get those nowadays?) I think you deserve to treat yourself with one of those.

There is always the cheap option though. Penny's, coming up to Christmas, do great polos and tanks in fantastically clashing reds and greens. Christmas it up with some felt and

beads and you have an elf outfit for less than €15. And just so you don't feel like an absolute idiot, Vogue has totally been working the red polo this season.

In terms of shoes, you're going to need to get yourself a pair of high boots with fur calves. Lanvin started the trend with Victoria Secrets and Baby Phat followed. But its not like we're in Trinity or anything so I suggest you get a pair of Penny's boots and some faux fur and DIY.

Velvet is another must have this Christmas and just think of how warm and comfy it is! Dunnes have velvet skirts in wine, black and navy on sale for €3 and €5.

It will most likely be cringe-worthy in years to come, but take advantage of this year's Christmas fashion while you can. Its not often we're actually warm and fake-tan-less!



You can buy Fair Isle numbers like these at [www.asos.com](http://www.asos.com)

## CRANBERRY AND ORANGE SAUCE

Written by **Elizabeth Neylon**

## Ingredients:

Juice of two oranges (fresh)  
225g of light muscovado sugar  
450g of fresh cranberries  
Half a stick of cinnamon

## Method:

Put the orange juice into a saucepan with the muscovado sugar and heat slowly on a low heat until the sugar is dissolved, once the sugar has dissolved increase the heat so that the liquid bubbles for two minutes

and becomes a little syrupy. Add all the fresh cranberries and bring to the boil, once it starts to boil reduce to a lower heat for about six minutes, the cranberries should have softened. Add the cinnamon stick and stir through to spread the flavour, leave for one minute on the heat and then leave the mixture to one side to allow it to cool and set. Remove the cinnamon stick when cooled and set.

Store the cranberry sauce in clean jam jars and it will keep for at least a week in the fridge so you can make it early. Then of course put a big dollop with your turkey on Christmas day.

Happy Christmas!

"This stuff's rich aroma is sure to get your taste-buds sizzling in anticipation."





Letters

**AN FOCAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

The Editor, UL Students' Union, Castletroy, Limerick. T: 0860435304 E: sucommunications@ul.ie W: www.ulsu.ie  
An Focal endeavours to accommodate all letters as far as legally possible. All parties have the right of reply to letters printed herein.

**THAT'S LIMERICK CITY!**

Sir, - Wednesday, slow night, remote control, RTÉ2, Republic of Telly, Rubberbandits.

The name should be familiar, as it reverberates around the country and the duo begins to build a following. But the pair didn't always have such notoriety. First picking up a phone for some pranks in 2000, Blindboy Boatclub and Mr Chrome only began their current style of comedy in 2007, hitting the stage with some Moyross-inspired tunes before securing a weekly spot on RTÉ, showcasing their home city to the country.

For a city tucked remotely away without the cultural allure of Galway or Cork, the head of tourism in Limerick has a tough time. Couple its depleting businesses with the bad reputation it has received thanks to overzealous media and many will just see a city with dying city. Having gone to school in Limerick I was shocked by the number of people afraid to be here when I reached UL. Generally first years, there were those who would never venture into the city, those who wouldn't leave the door open for half a second before barricading it shut and so on. The strange thing is, these are people who have never encountered any sort of crime or negativity in the city but who have a predilection that Limerick is some sort of Baghdad.

Eventually, of course, they realised it's not that bad and go home with a knowledge of the place. The fact is, the majority of the Irish won't have the opportunity to spend a few months in Limerick to find out the truth. So they'll continue to badmouth and blacklist our city. The problem of Limerick's misinformed reputation extends to the UK too. The problem is so bad that Limerick even has a position appointed to promote the city through culture and business and dispel the myths rife in the country, in the form of the City Coordination Officer. It's a pity we have to convince our own that we really aren't that bad a bunch.

Thankfully, redevelopment is occurring, such as the partial pedestrianizing of the city centre and transformation of the milk market which should help shine a better light on the city's streets. It does appear that opinion is changing, especially with the capital being cracked by Limerick's "favourite sons" the Rubberbandits. Even just last year their performance on Podge and Rodge was met with cringes and scared looks from the audience as the plastic bag-clad duo sang one of their favourites. Perhaps in a few years we'll be nationally accepted and we can stick to just slagging Cork. Chalk it down.

Yours, etc,

AUBREY O'CONNELL

**BLUEFIN TUNA CRISIS**

Sir, - Bluefin tuna face annihilation. A global summit [has begun] in Paris to agree how to save tuna, but the industry

has become dominated by elite and even criminal cartels with powerful political allies, and Mediterranean governments are lobbying hard to block a vital recovery plan, putting short-term profits before the future of our oceans and fishing economies. I have just signed a petition to save tuna that will be delivered to the summit (more details below). If you would like to learn more and join the petition, visit [http://www.avaaz.org/en/tuna\\_at\\_risk\\_2/?cl=834921527&v=7584](http://www.avaaz.org/en/tuna_at_risk_2/?cl=834921527&v=7584)

Yours, etc,

JAIME ROJAS

**LETTER OF CORRECTION AND CLARIFICATION**

Sir, - [The article which appeared in issue six "Customs Queues: A Necessary Evil?"] contains a glaring error. Customs isn't the procedure of putting your hand luggage on a belt and walking through a metal detector. That's called Airport Security, the purpose of which, ostensibly, is making flights safer. It happens, as you correctly noted, after check-in and before the flight. Customs is something most people don't notice on short-haul flights; it usually only involves walking through a (frequently unmanned) area signed as the "Blue" or "Green" channel, following checked-in luggage pick-up after the flight, not before.

On long-haul flights this involves handing a customs declaration form to an officer, sometimes accompanied by questions about the nature of your trip and contents of your bags.

The purpose of customs is to prevent the smuggling of prohibited items such as counterfeit goods, certain plant or animal matter and large sums of undeclared cash. It also aims to stop people from importing quantities of goods such as alcohol or cigarettes over a certain limit.

In more than 150 flights I've never waited at customs but I can think of many waits longer than one or even two hours at security. Considering the different purposes of these two checks and the vastly different waiting times, wouldn't you agree that they shouldn't be mixed up, especially in print and especially since information about them is readily available online?

Ignoring the fact that you got the name of what you were writing about wrong, I also find the premise of the article largely redundant and even misleading. The recent foiled terror plot you are referring to in order to back your claim that security queues are "a necessary evil", involved, as you correctly pointed out, explosives found on cargo planes. Cargo doesn't go through airport security in the conventional sense and hence doesn't add to the queues the ordinary traveller experiences at airports.

If you're trying to use this case as a general example for the heightened terror threat then that's fine, but remember that there's not one case of a terrorist actually being caught by new (or old) security measures but

everyone suffers longer waits because of them.

The "underwear bomber" was stopped on the plane after he'd successfully gotten through security. Same with the "shoe bomber". Now there is research to suggest the "nude scanner" may cause cancer and that in certain cases our privacy is being invaded by images being stored in spite of assurances that wouldn't happen. Do you honestly believe these two risks are also "necessary evils"?

Next time please research the topics you write about.

Yours in travel, etc,

JOHANNES BRAUN

**TORCH WITH NO FLAME**

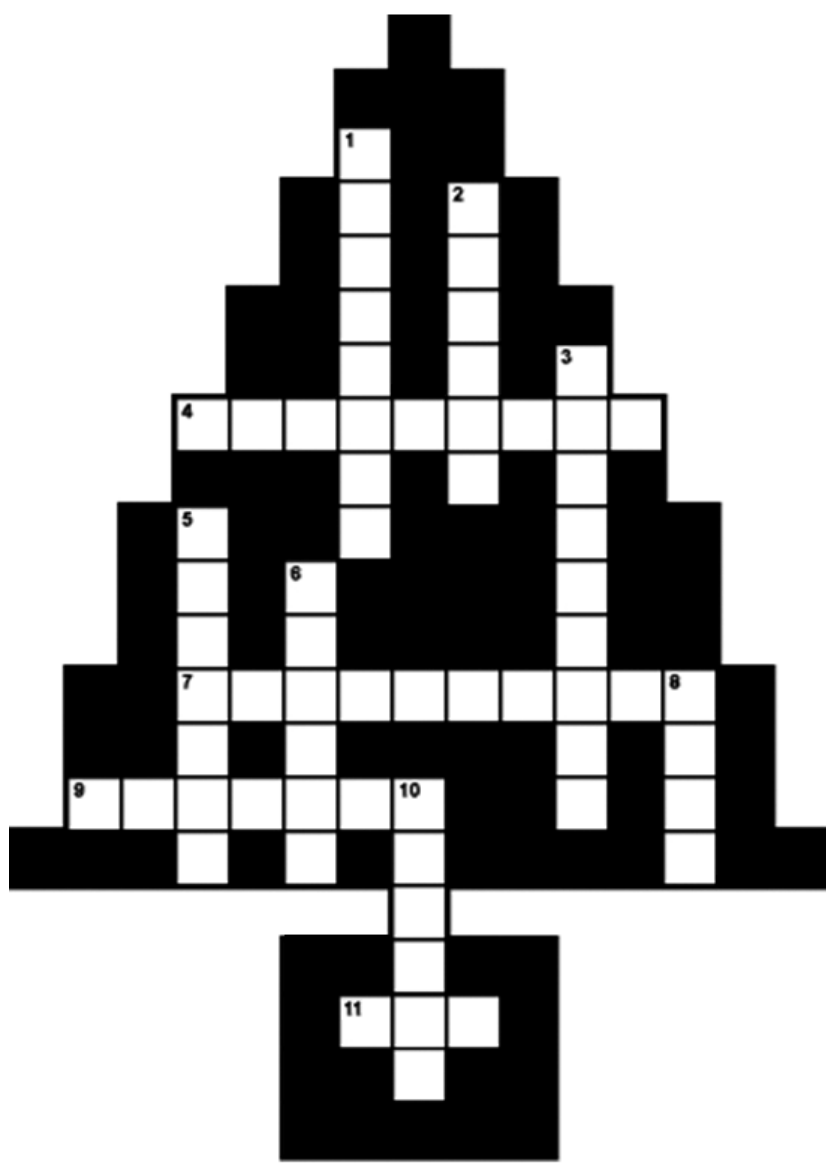
Sir, - Since UL was graced/burdened with the presence of our Taoiseach Brian Cowen last month I began wondering about the state of awareness and action among our generation. Slithering in a back entrance to the new Academy of Music and Dance, he managed to avoid a handful of protestors at the main doors. But that's all, a handful. If we went back a few decades and were in a similar situation as a country I wouldn't be surprised if a large majority of the university turned up. But as cubs of the Celtic Tiger we never had to exercise our voice before now and so explains the lack of disgruntled mobs on the streets.

The options we have as students to stand and be counted are few and of questionable value. Organisations such as the youth parties in UL are a good idea in theory but with many of their agendas being set by the senior parties and their primary task being to canvass for TDs it seems they offer little more than platforms for parties to instil their ideals and plans among youth, the same plans that got us into our current situation.

Our inability to make waves likely comes from the mind-set of our generation as a whole. Leave it to the next guy. That, coupled with a lack of real interest in politics, including myself, means that when some sort of protest is organised it comes in the form of smart-arse banners declaring "The fat lady has sung" without offering any real suggestions or alternatives. We simply aren't cut out for all these problems. This, at least, is the attitude towards us as a generation that I've become used to hearing from the current one. But really, after all their protesting and idealism worldwide, they could have made a better job of running the place when they inherited it. So does protesting really achieve anything? Is it time we banded together and flexed our muscles as in the past to achieve a country where it's run by everyone, for everyone, where no one has pay cuts? Surely we would be able to make some improvements, with enough effort and enough planning. Pub. See you there.

Yours, etc,

AUBREY O'CONNELL



**CLUES**

**ACROSS**

- 4. Merry \_\_\_\_\_! (9)
- 7. Big, Red. (5,5)
- 9. They light Christ's way, sometimes scented. (7)
- 11. \_\_\_nog. (3)

**DOWN**

- 1. Hung on a fireplace. (8)
- 2. A Christmas ring, often on a door. (6)
- 3. Red, white and sugary. (5,4)
- 5. A gift. (7)
- 6. Bells. (6)
- 8. Ice crystals (4)
- 10. Vehicle mounted on runners. (6)

**CROSSWORD ANSWERS (ISSUE 6)**

**ACROSS**

- 1. Apple
- 2. Grocer
- 6. Risotto
- 8. Eat

- 10. Crayfish
- 11. Salt
- 13. Tasted
- 15. Mortar
- 18. Sage
- 19. Molasses
- 22. Rye
- 23. Avocado
- 24. Sponge

- 25. Crepe
- DOWN**
- 1. Apricot
- 2. Pasta
- 3. Grouse
- 5. Oven
- 7. Toffee

- 9. Toast
- 12. Potato
- 14. Sugar
- 16. Rissolle
- 17. Potage
- 18. Stew
- 20. Skate
- 21. Bean



Fianna Fáil's Christmas to remember. Credit: Brige Newman

What do you see...



when you look at the world?



Union

THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



Written by **Ruán Dillon-McLoughlin, ULSU President**

CONTEMPLATING fleeing this basket case of a country? You can run but you can't hide! And wherever you run, there's a good chance you'll be in a country that's bailed out the Irish!

They're a great bunch of lads really, as the editorial in the Guardian puts it; "Ireland's unique misfortune is to have, in Brian Cowen's Fianna Fáil Government, leaders who shipwrecked the economy and then capsized the lifeboats." Happy days!

But will this shower do the admirable thing and show through leadership and put their hands up and admit failures on their part? And who would want to hang around long enough to hear them say it anyway?

We need hope, we need belief and we need change. Maybe after Christmas we will be on the way to recovery. Maybe there will be a glimpse of hope; a glimmer of a new Government. I will leave you with more from the Guardian's editorial "The moral bankruptcy of Irish politics is the biggest obstacle to recovery. The EU can bail out the budget; only a public vote can clear out the Government."

Best of luck in your exams and rest assured our country can't get much worse. Merry Christmas!

WELFARE WATCH



Written by **Derek Daly, Welfare Officer**

I'M unusually punctual for this issue of An Focal; unfortunately not so for my officer report which is 24 hours overdue as I write. So what have I been up to?

I spent Saturday of week 10 giving the Science and Engineering faculty a hand with Science Fun Day on campus. Great credit is due for this. Sarah Hayes in particular put on a really engaging Science Magic Show which filled twice with many people turned away due to limited capacity. There was a 3D Cosmic Explorers event and Professor John Breen put on a seminar entitled Mini Beasts in the Backyard which was very interesting for budding biologists.

There was also a seminar for prospective students and parents on the day which gave some information on UL. This covered smart CAO decision-making, student supports, co-op/placement, career trends and a campus tour was scheduled, although the weather probably put a stop to that. This was not as well attended. It would be interesting to get your views on what should be included in this sort of event.

As always I'm here to guide you where I can. Please feel free to email me at [suwelfare@ul.ie](mailto:suwelfare@ul.ie).

ENLIVENING EDUCATION



Written by **Aoife Finnerty, Education Officer**

WELCOME to Week 13! Has the proximity of the exams hit you yet? If you're reading, let me just say, "stop using my column to procrastinate. Back to work!" (Don't worry, I'm joking.)

This An Focal has some exam advice and stress relief tips (Page 12). Have a look, see what you think and get plenty information on I-Grades, study tips, relaxation tips, and exam regulations. You might even learn something. Because of that, I thought I'd dedicate this column to wishing you all the very best of luck with your exams. To all first years; don't worry they're not as scary as they seem and to fourth years; smile because this is the (second) last set of exams you'll ever have to do!

If anything does go wrong, don't be afraid to call in and have a chat. I'm here to help, advise and listen to rants. Contact me at the details below. Best of luck again and look out for the free tea and water.

E: [aoife.finnerty@ul.ie](mailto:aoife.finnerty@ul.ie), [sueducation@ul.ie](mailto:sueducation@ul.ie), Facebook search "ULSU Education Officer", W: [www.ulsu.ie](http://www.ulsu.ie), T: 061213491, M: 0860435302, Office: SU Building, turn right at reception, last on the left.

CAMPAIGNS BRIEF



Written by **Vivion Grisewood, Campaigns and Services Officer**

I HOPE the stress of exams isn't taking its toll! Your Union will be having free tea and coffee throughout the exams in the CG corridor, across from the library. Remember to try and blow off some steam every now and then and lay off the caffeine!

It's good in small doses, but when I was in third year I pulled an all-nighter and on the walk into college I had a freak attack. I thought someone was attacking me and started swinging at thin air.

I ended up passing the exam though, so happy days. On the campaign front, I'm putting a lot of work into Road Safety Week which will take place next semester. I hope to have a live demo of someone being cut out of a car and other events.

This side of Christmas there will be some food vouchers hidden around campus for your SU Courtyard Shop; something to help you get through the exams as part of our ARK campaign. Anyway, best of luck in the exams and I hope you all pass and have a brilliant Christmas! Contact me on [susco@ul.ie](mailto:susco@ul.ie)

WORDS FROM THE PSA



Written by **Dan Comerford, PSA President**

IT'S Week 13. It's shocking how fast the semester has passed.

Once again, your PSA held an extremely successful event. This time it was the PSA Alternative Xmas Party / Movember Wrap-up in association with Med Soc. I hope those who attended enjoyed it as much as I did.

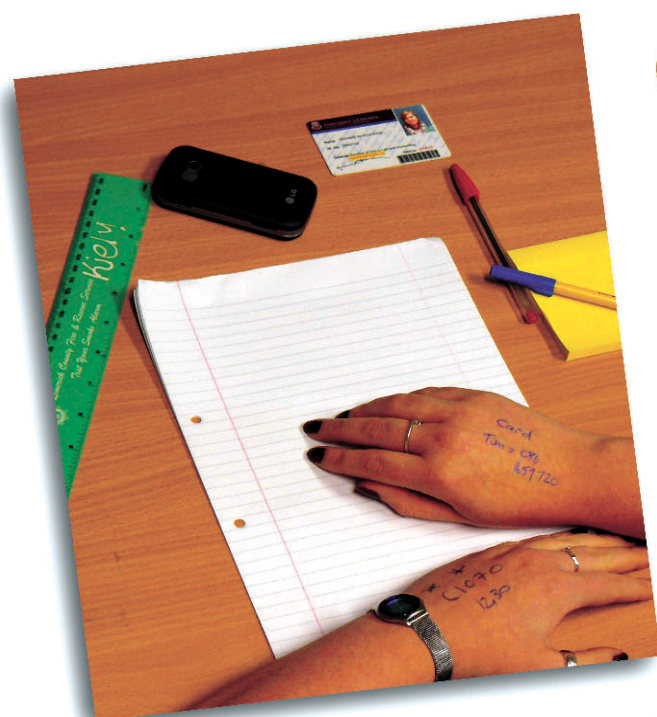
Exams are approaching, your SU will be handing out exam packs. Don't forget about the exam-time clean desk policy. Any writing on your hands or anywhere else, no matter how benign, could get you done for breach of academic regulations. Keep this in mind and best of luck!

I'd also like to wish all those who are waiting to hear their masters grades the very best of luck and hope you are all happy with what you have achieved and I hope you enjoyed your time in UL.

The PSA and SU will be hosting their Annual Children's Christmas Party in early December. Don't forget to sign up at the SU.

I'd like to thank all those who have made this semester a success; Ger, Sarah-Jane, Padraig, Viv, Dearbhla, Ebbas to name a few. You know who you are. Many thanks and congratulations.

Check out our Facebook page and our website! Have a very happy Christmas.



HOW MANY RULES DOES THIS DESK BREAK?

ONE OF THESE DESKS COULD MAKE YOU FAIL AN EXAM.



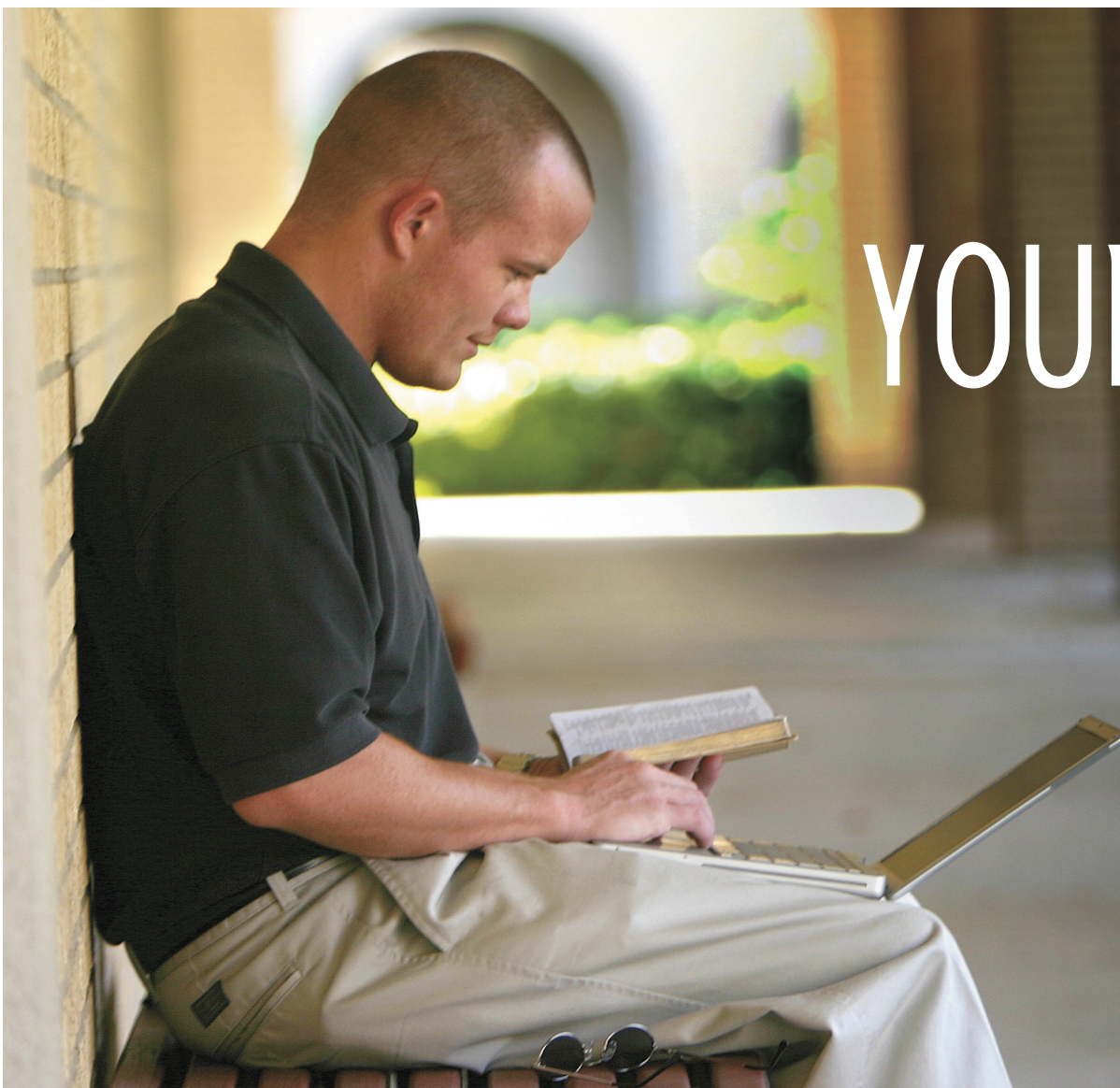
EMAIL [sueducation@ul.ie](mailto:sueducation@ul.ie) FOR INFORMATION ON EXAM REGULATIONS



CLEAN HANDS, CLEAN DESK, NO FAIL.







# GOOD LUCK IN YOUR EXAMS FROM YOUR UNION!

Check out the handy hints and tips on this page.

E: [sueducation@ul.ie](mailto:sueducation@ul.ie) for advice or find us on Facebook. Search "ULSU Education Officer"

## EXAM ESSAYS

I WAS always one of these people who launched full forced into an essay without planning anything. I saw planning as a waste of 10 minutes that I could be spending writing frantically. Then I realised that if I planned I wouldn't have been writing so frantically and if I was at least what I was writing frantically would make sense!

### Time

Planning your time in answering essay questions is extremely important. Not to state the obvious but the idea is to divide up your time according to your marks. In other words, maximise your marks!

### Read

Run through the whole paper before you put pen to paper. Become familiar with the questions and remember that two questions on the same topic can differ vastly.

### Plan

It's a good idea to prepare a plan of how you will answer any question. Preparing an outline of your answers helps you to focus and remember important details. It can be counted towards your marks if you don't complete your question.

## THE BASIC BULLETS

### Exam regulations explained

- The University is very strict when it comes to what's called authorised and unauthorised material.
- Essentially, authorised material is anything that students are permitted to have during an exam.
- For example authorised materials would be the exam script and rough work paper, which are given by the invigilators, It could include non-programmable calculators, dictionaries, reference texts, books and anything else the lecturer may have deemed necessary.
- There cannot be any writing on authorised materials, unless expressly permitted by the lecturer.
- Students are not permitted to write anywhere other than on the exam scripts, rough work paper or the question paper.
- Unauthorised material could include notes of any kind, writing material that has not provided by the invigilators (even if there is no writing on it!), writing or markings on any part of the body or clothing, electronic devices including mobile phones and any extra material that has not been expressly permitted by the lecturer.

### To avoid being accused of a breach in regulations, which could amount to cheating - WELD:

- Wash your hands of any marks or writing.
- Ensure that your calculator and other materials are compliant with regulations.
- Leave your phone off in your bag or by your desk.
- Don't have anything on your desk that hasn't been expressly permitted by your lecturer or the invigilators.

## STUDY TIPS

### Start small

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

### Eat regularly and healthily

It can be really tempting to eat takeaways and microwavable meals when you're studying because you don't have time to cook good food. But often the quickest food is the worst for you and your concentration. So start planning early! If you've a bit of time this week cook a couple of meals and freeze them. Most things freeze and it's just as easy to microwave a home-cooked meal as it is to microwave an unhealthy one. If you flat-share, dinner-share! Things like omelettes and pasta bakes with loads of vegetables are great during exams and they're quick and easy.

### Study in groups

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

### Take regular breaks

It's really important to take regular breaks during study. The human brain can only take in so much. So if you've ever felt that "nothing is going in", that's why. Breaks that include exercise are the best as they increase blood flow and alertness. So if nothing is going in, get out!

### Identify your learning style

Identifying whether you study better by listening, reading or kinesthetics (moving, touching, writing and doing) can really aid your study. There's no point trying to force yourself to learn in a way that doesn't suit you. The Centre for Teaching and Learning offers a quiz that will help you figure out your learning style on their website. So if you learn better by listening, why not record yourself speaking your notes? It might seem silly, but it could help you!

## GET THE MOST OUT OF EVERY MINUTE

Have you ever had the best intentions when it came studying but didn't quite manage it? Maximising every minute is about looking at the when, the how and the what.

### When is the best time to study?

Well, I don't believe that 8.32am is more conducive to effective study than 2.54pm. However, I do believe that there is a "best time to study". That time is whatever time when you feel alert, awake, healthy and rested. It's the time when you're physically and mental ready so that could be anytime!

### How should you study?

The best way to study is the way that compliments your learning style the best. Have you ever wondered why it can take you two hours to learn something but only 20 minutes when someone explains something for you? It could be because you learn better by learning than you do by reading. There are a couple of quizzes you can do online to figure out your learning style. You wouldn't believe the time you could save! So get googling!

### What should you study?

Unfortunately only you and your lecturer can answer that.

## The Famous 5 to avoid Failure:

### 5. Eat a small meal before your exam

It's very difficult to concentrate with no food in your system. According to all those Kellogg's ads a couple of years back, the children who had eaten breakfast had much better concentration than those who hadn't. So listen to the corporate propaganda (and some scientific studies) and have a snack. For those of you who find it tough to eat because of nerves, try having very small amounts regularly.

### 4. Check how long your exam is

Mistaking the length of an exam happens to so many people each year. So be smart because there's a big difference between two hours and two and a half!

### 3. Make sure you have your student ID card

Each year, countless students are seen sprinting through the corridors of the Main Building in an attempt to make it to SAA and back before their exam starts. If you don't want an added layer of stress going into your exams, don't be one of them.

### 2. Wash your hands

Not only can it help you to avoid Swine Flu, but it can also help you to avoid an appearance in front of the University Discipline Committee for breach of Academic Regulations (formerly Academic Cheating).

### 1. Attempt everything

Teachers said it in the Leaving Cert and it hasn't really changed much. You're a hell of a lot more likely to get marks for writing something than leaving a blank page! Even if you think you know nothing, you might know something. So if you're not as prepared as you thought you were, take a breath, think back and do your best to write something relevant. Even if you think you're waffling, you might be doing ok.



In Focus



# Your Christmas Courtyard, In Focus

Mulled wine and mince pies in hand, hundreds of you enjoyed a little taste of Christmas last week. Pictured is the lighting of the Christmas tree in the SU Courtyard and Christmas Days in the Stables Club.





## Sport

# POOR FIRST HALF YET AGAIN UNDERMINES SOLID INTERMEDIATE EFFORT

Written by **Robert McNamara**

UL'S INTERMEDIATE soccer side was taught a footballing lesson by a technically superior LIT side in a 4-1 CUFL defeat, despite an admirable second half showing.

The derby clash in division one, group A, saw LIT romp to a three goal lead at half time as UL's defence was repeatedly caught out with simple through balls. University keeper Thomas Quinn had to be on top form as he was the busiest man on the park in the first half. Wave after wave of attack saw the cross town rivals attacking midfielders and front two burst through and test the net-minder.

When Quinn wasn't called into action it was only because of a last ditch tackle and that was how LIT eventually got their opener. The ball dropped in the middle from a UL kick out, LIT, dominating possession, moved the ball wide. The cross in was taken down by the attacking side but a great defensive tackle resulted in a corner.

All the hard work was undone though, as the in-swinging corner met a UL head and the ball nestled in the net for an own-goal. An individual error also led to the Technology Institutes second. An innocuous pot shot from outside the box bounced in front of Quinn who fumbled and the rebound

was tucked away. UL were now all at sea and LIT could sense a rout. Again they pumped the ball into the box and a misplaced defensive header let them in for their third.

A calm team talk from UL manager Peter O'Reilly saw his team more composed in the opening exchanges of the second half. Simon Malone came on and he injected some much needed creativity to sharpen UL's attacking endeavours. He tested the LIT keeper for the first time in the game with a wonderfully executed free kick that deserved a goal.

Dallyviera Ntambwe also began to impress as UL sought a way back into the game. Not before LIT grabbed a fourth from a corner though. Ntambwe and Malone forged a decent partnership up front and got their rewards when a Malone pass found Ntambwe who lost his marker and hit a scorching volley into the top corner.

Star man Ntwembe was philosophical at the final whistle. "We should have scored more goals but we did well," he said. If their second half display was anything to go by, they 'll learn these footballing lessons quickly.



A rare moment of UL possession during comprehensive defeat.

## CONVINCING DERBY WIN FOR INTERMEDIATE HURLERS

Written by **Mark Connolly**,  
Sports Editor

UL'S INTERMEDIATE hurling side beat local rivals Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) with an emphatic nine point margin of victory to underscore their city dominance. The comprehensive 1-16 and 0-10 score line will have done justice to a number of fine individual performances on the UL side. The university side played against the elements in the first half which saw heroic defensive performances from Man of the Match Donal Cooney who was ably assisted by Eanna Mulvihill, Ciaran Forde, Darragh Kennedy and Colm Looby. But the visitors did take advantage of the strong weather conditions in their favour to establish an early lead. UL did manage to pair the deficit with

well taken points from Joe O'Connor, Anthony Watson, Kevin Barry and Liam Dwan. That was followed by the decisive score of the match. After a storming run through the centre, Eoin Hayes passed to Michael McInerney who rifled a bullet into the roof of the LIT net to give his side a crucial half time lead. The second half saw the UL forward line run riot as they picked off scores at will from their outclassed opponents. Liam Dwan, Eoin Hayes, Joe O'Connor, Anthony Watson and mark Cunningham were particularly accurate with shots from all angles as UL raced to a really convincing victory over their bitter city rivals that will give them plenty of confidence ahead of the rest of the season.

## UL SOCCER ROUND-UP

Written by **Cian Healy**

WEEK 10 saw no fixtures for the Men's soccer teams, as Cup games took over. On the Ladies side, the B team once again found themselves without a fixture as the Challenge Cup draw was still to be made.

The A Team made the journey down to Tralee on the Tuesday of Week 10, and did not disappoint. The 13 person squad earned a comfortable 7-0 victory despite being weakened by absences due to college commitments and injury. Two goals from Julie-Ann Russell combined with strikes from Ruth Fahy, Jenny Downey, Jenny

Critchley, Lynsey McKey and Laura Dooley saw the UL girls wrap up an emphatic victory which did no harm to their goal difference account in the group. In Week 11, UCD made the trip down to Limerick, only to receive a 3-0 trouncing as UL continued their good form with goals from Ruth Fahy, Lynsey McKey and Julie-Ann Russell, but in truth the score line flattered the side from the capital who were comprehensively outplayed.

With no games in Week 10, the Men's sides were hoping to be fresh for the fixtures in Week 11. There

were away games for both teams, with the Seniors travelling to UCC, and the Freshers away to IT Carlow-Wexford. The Seniors were unlucky against UCC, as they led for the for the majority of the game only to be beaten by two late goals.

The Freshers were unable to travel to IT Carlow-Wexford and forfeited the game. Keep an eye on the Website for games and training times in January, as we start back in Week 1 Semester Two. Merry Christmas!

"The Seniors were unlucky against UCC."



Stephen King contests a rebound with Phil Taylor. Eagles American player Cameron Mitchell is fouled late in the game. UL Eagles scored a resounding victory at the UL Arena a fortnight ago. They won by 76-58 in a hotly contested contest.



Point guard Scott Kinevane brings the ball up the court. Images: Sean Reidy



## Sport

# FORGOTTEN FOOTBALLER, LUIS GARCIA

Written by **Robert McNamara**

“HE drinks Sangria/ He came from Barca to bring us joy!/ He’s five foot seven, he’s football heaven/ So please don’t take our Luis away!”

That was the song delirious Liverpool fans sang in honour of the man who scored the infamous ‘Ghost Goal’ that decided the 2005 Champions League semi-final. Yes, Luis Garcia was the midfield play-maker in probably the worst team ever to win a European Cup. Garcia began his career at Barcelona rising through the ranks of the famous La Masia school. He never quite made the first team though and various loan spells that spanned three years took in Valladolid, Toledo and Tenerife.

His form at all three loan clubs paid off when Atletico Madrid stepped in and took him to the Vicente Calderon for £3.6m. An excellent season in the capital triggered a clause in his contract and Barca used their age old trick of buying back much more experienced former youth players for a paltry fee.

Back at the Camp Nou, Garcia settled in well and 25 appearances followed in the 2003/2004 season. But Garcia was soon shown the door and newly installed Liverpool manager Rafa Benitez took him to Anfield for £6m, netting the Catalans a tidy profit.

Garcia was instrumental in Liverpool’s 2005 Champions League triumph, netting the winner against Juventus in the quarter final. He then scored the only goal of the semi-final against Chelsea. Garcia started the final against AC Milan and played the full 120 minutes which resulted in a fifth European Cup for the Kop, causing much disgust among football connoisseurs

The following season saw Liverpool win the FA Cup with victory over West Ham. Garcia again tormented Chelsea in the semi-final with a stunning winning goal but he was suspended for the final in Cardiff before a serious injury ruled him out for six months of the 2007 season. When he returned, he was promptly sold to his former side Atletico Madrid for £4m as Liverpool

sought to establish relations before a deal for Fernando Torres was concluded but Garcia found himself warming the bench in Madrid and again he moved on, this time to Racing Santander for one season where he also failed to live up to expectations. He now plies his trade in Greece with Panathinaikos.



Luis Garcia

# SPORTS QUIZ

Written by **Mark Connolly,**  
**Sports Editor**

- 1: The Irish Rugby team has never beaten New Zealand. Until the 2003 Rugby World Cup, what other national team had we never beaten?
- 2: From which club did Liverpool sign star midfielder Lucas Leiva?
- 3: Who was recently appointed Meath senior Football manager?
- 4: What is the nationality of the US Open golf champion and Ryder Cup star Martin Kaymar?
- 5: For which club does Spanish striker Fernando Llorente play?
- 6: Munster competed in their first Heineken Cup final in 2000. Against which club did they play?
- 7: What is the name of the Spaniard who successfully defended this year’s Tour de France but who has recently been suspended pending an investigation into a doping scandal?
- 8: Who did Cork beat in the 2010 Allianz national Football League final?
- 9: Who did Real Madrid beat in the 1998 Champions League final?
- 10: Who won the Hurler of the Year award in 2009?

ANSWERS  
1: Namibia  
2: Gremio  
3: Enda McEneaney  
4: German  
5: Athletic Bilbao  
6: Northampton  
7: Alberto Contador  
8: Mayo  
9: Juventus  
10: Tommy Walsh

# THE PREMIERSHIP: MID-TERM PERCEPTIONS

Written by **Robert McNamara**

BY the time this article is published, we will be halfway through the Premier League season. The only thing we know for certain is that the top four has been well and truly infiltrated by Spurs and Manchester City.

Thank the Lord. The league needs variety. Remember when Norwich City, Blackburn, Newcastle and Aston Villa were bonafide title challengers? These were good times whose return we should welcome.

Liverpool FC is in a dire situation and it’s not beyond the realms of possibility that they could be dragged into a relegation dogfight. Confidence is clearly lacking at the club and Roy Hodgson’s appointment has only served to reinforce the clubs acceptance of average players. Not since Graeme Souness’ tenure as Anfield boss has Liverpool had such a poor roster of talent.

The ‘Roman Revolution’ has delivered three league titles and three FA Cups to Stamford Bridge yet the feeling of underachievement casts a dark cloud over Stamford Bridge. Not until the most glittering of prizes, the European Cup, is lifted by John ‘tiny tears’ Terry will Roman Abramovich be happy with his expensive hobby. By right, Arsenal should be top of the league, but two

ridiculous home defeats have cost them dearly. Arsene Wenger’s refusal to purchase a top class goalkeeper and his reliance on Cesc Fabregas will continue to be detrimental to the Gunners title aspirations. They must produce silverware this season or Wenger may find his position called into question.

Not far away in White Hart Lane you can see Harry Redknapp is starting to believe he can live with the big boys after years of managerial mediocrity. While Spurs have some wonderful players they also have some serious weaknesses and a lack of consistency. These vices coupled with their inability to handle domestic games after European ties will cost them.

Up North in Manchester, City is causing a stir but if you spend a couple of hundred million on defensive midfielders you’re not going win the league. Without Carlos Tevez, the sky blues are a blunt instrument held back by Roberto Mancini’s negativity.

It’s incredible and bewildering in equal measure that United were unbeaten for so long but too many draws is as bad as a couple of defeats. No matter how poor United may seem though, they will still be in the hunt come May.





## Sport

# “THIS GREAT SPORTING INSTITUTION’S RAPID DESCENT INTO MEDIOCRITY HAS BEEN THE STORY OF 2010”

WE all know the guy. The guy whose mediocrity is masked by his lack of obvious failings. The guy who seems busy without ever contributing. He’s the guy who is known by everyone without really being anyone. He’s Roy Hodgson.

He was Liverpool Football Club’s choice of manager last summer and I consider the appointment to be symptomatic of the central problem at the club. That problem is the lack of genuine ambition and it is one that will stifle any recovery in the team’s fortunes. It also reflects the issue many fans will have with the new owners who I do not see as particularly different in character from the previous ones.

If Liverpool maintains its standards, then the players have brilliantly demonstrated in recent weeks why an almost complete clear-out is necessary. But even as Lucas, Poulsen,

Konchesky, Jovanovich etc. continue to draw groans from the Kop, that doesn’t look like it’s going to happen.

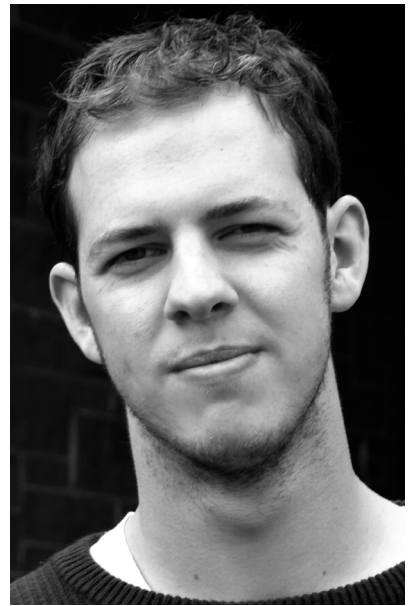
Roy Hodgson will have to accept responsibility for being in charge of a side that seems utterly devoid of any confidence but it is the attitude of new owner John Henry and his NESV group that will have most distressed the club’s diehard fans.

They have shown a complete lack of urgency to really follow through on their plans to ‘transform’ the club. An owner who has a serious desire to revive a club’s fortunes would not have spoken about ‘caution’ in the

January transfer window. If Henry’s ambitions for the club genuinely correspond with those of the fans, he should immediately turn his attention to financing the transfer of a top class striker to complement Fernando Torres. I believe that La Liga sensation Fernando Llorente, who has scored more goals in Spain this season than anyone bar Messi and Ronaldo, has all the attributes to fulfil that role perfectly.

Yet at the time of writing, the American has given no such signal and it seems as though the reds’ raft of mid-table players are safe in their jobs

as well as their mid-table manager who inexplicably loaned out Alberto Aquilani, the man who provided most assists in the Premiership from January to April last year. This great sporting institution’s rapid descent into mediocrity has been the story of 2010 but I do not believe that the club’s legion of loyal fans can expect any similarly rapid improvement next year with these players, this manager and most importantly, with this owner.



Mark Connolly, Sports Editor.

## HEINEKEN CUP ROUND THREE PREVIEW

Written by Paul Carty

A RIP roaring start to the pool stages has left Leinster in pole position but after taking the sizeable scalps of Saracens and Racing Metro, the Donnybrook side will still need to take at least a losing bonus point from the Marcel Michelin Stadium.

Beaten away to Racing Metro last time out; a Clermont win here will blow the pool wide open whilst an away victory will see Leinster almost qualified for the knockout stages. But boasting the mercurial Morgan Parra as well as the French back three of Rougerie, Baby and Malzieu and a 100% record at home this season in the Top 14, they will undoubtedly provide Leinster’s stiffest test to date.

Injuries to Luke Fitzgerald and Rob Kearney after the Autumn Internationals do not make this any easier. But with the option of switching Nacewa to Full Back and bringing in Shane Horgan on the wing, strength and depth is not an issue. Bet on them snatching a losing bonus point.

Meanwhile, a claustrophobic Pool Three is headed by Munster after their destruction of the visiting Toulon in the last set of fixtures. Coming to Thomond Park is an Ospreys side who recorded a big win against London Irish which kept them in the competition. The Pool is wide open and it will be vital for Munster to secure a win and deny the Ospreys a bonus point ahead of what is likely to be the pool defining match at the

Liberty Stadium in the return fixture. While the Ospreys have resolved the Gavin Henson saga, the form of some of their Welsh Internationals will be cause for concern following Wales’ disappointing matches against Fiji and Australia.

By contrast, Tony McGahan’s side come into the match in sparkling form having put a strong Australian team to the sword in a windswept Thomond Park while the Autumn Internationals have been kind to Munster on the injury front. The half back line of O’Gara and Stringer will be crucial in what is likely to be a territorial battle. Munster will likely keep it in the forwards to negate the threat of the talented Ospreys’ back line while the stuttering form of the Swansea based side should assure the southern province a comfortable home win. I predict a winning bonus point for Munster.

Ulster faces a pivotal game in their Heineken Cup season against Bath. Put simply if they lose, they are out. The disappointing collapse away to Biarritz has tarred an otherwise excellent campaign and they will need to recover against the struggling English club. Little South Africa at Ulster will give them every chance of doing so and if Ruan Pienaar can tighten up his kicking, they could be quietly confident of sneaking a win. I predict an Ulster win with a Bath losing bonus point.

## IRELAND’S SPORTING HEROES OF 2010

Written by Mark Connolly, Sports Editor

IT’S starting to look quite obvious that 2010 will not be remembered fondly in Irish history but as the year draws to a close, I consider it apt to acknowledge those who illuminated it for us somewhat with their extraordinary sporting efforts and achievements.

In the midst of ‘national humiliation’, the performance of remarkable courage and quality by the Irish rugby team ought to have been a source of immense pride to us all. I humbly admit that the team’s display absolutely confounded my expectations and a number of individual players impressed me when I really didn’t think they would. In the face of the adverse circumstances that the rugby team found themselves in prior to two weeks ago, serious guts and courage were required to produce that performance which was off the Richter scale when compared with

anything else we’ve seen from them in 2010. Guts and courage were also to be seen at Pebble Beach Golf Club in June when Graeme McDowell, competing for his first major, the US Open, proved that pressure really is just for tyres on producing an exhibition of golf in the final round. Given that McDowell had never previously experienced being in contention to win a major, his performance was truly amazing.

And what about UL’s own Grainne Murphy who, aided only by her determination and whatever facilities she would have had to endure before coming to the University, has emerged as a world class swimmer. To have achieved that status at such a young age is absolutely extraordinary.

Derval O’Rourke’s silver medal at the European Athletics Championships in Barcelona this summer was another highlight of the Irish sporting year.

The efforts of O’Rourke and Murphy may be overlooked by many who will argue that both only managed silver medals but it’s important to note the handicap imposed on Irish athletes. These two phenomenal women both had to overcome the obstacle of the far more limited nature of Irish Sports’ Council funding compared to that available for British sports people, for example.

For a small country, where so many different sports compete for the hearts of young athletes, producing even two of the quality of Murphy and O’Rourke really is something we can take pride in. While we continue to be represented by men and women with the courage and commitment of those I have mentioned, we can always trust in the boundless potential of our people.



Thomond Park will host Munster’s defining match this December



UL’s Grainne Murphy, who excelled in the European Swimming Championship



# AN FOCAL



Issue 7 FREE  
Volume XIX

A Banter Bomb With Lightning Speed Wit, This Guy Will Make You Explode With Laughter. And He's Coming To Limerick. Neil Delamere Speaks To An Focal. Page 24.

30<sup>th</sup> November 2010

# DRAMA SOC RAISES THE ROOF

## TOMMY EMMANUEL CHARMS CONCERT HALL

Written by **Kelly O'Brien**

"Ms Langford stunned the crowd into a reverent silence with her heartbreakingly unique voice and, in my opinion, made everyone fall in love with her just a wee bit."

SITTING in the Swift, a naggin in my bag and a mixer in my hand, I was definitely prepared for the worst. Having seen a multitude of dubiously amateur productions in my time, I was convinced that this would be another to add to the list. It wasn't.

From the very first song, the performers exploded onto the stage and gave it their all. They put their hearts and souls into every rendition and it paid off big time. Titled 'Raise the Roof', the production brought together songs from hit musicals such as Chicago, Rent and Miss Saigon. While the songs themselves could have been shorter, and the set changes could have been quicker, the overall vocals of the night were of an amazing standard. It was clear that everyone put a lot of effort into the production.

The highlight of the first act was Emma Langford's rendition of Maybe I like it This Way from The Wild Party. Ms Langford stunned the crowd into a reverent silence with her heartbreakingly unique voice and, in my opinion, made everyone fall in love with her just a wee bit.

The second act was even more enjoyable than the first. The crowd had been won over, the performers were having more fun, and that mixer

was going down nicely. My favourite performance of the second act came from Ellie Goulding look-a-like Jennifer Armstrong. Singing Without You from the ever-popular musical Rent, Jennifer provided the audience with a quirky, Bjork-esque rendition of this well known song and made it her own. In and around this point, I would usually give out about the myriad of technical faults that seem to plague all Drama Soc productions. Amazingly, I couldn't find any at all! The lights went up, the lights went down and nobody missed their cues. The lighting was so seamless that I didn't even notice it until the very end when I realized there had been no awkward "I'm waiting for the lights to go down" moments from the performers. The only problem I had with the show, apart from the fact that there wasn't enough Emma Langford, was that the song Murder, Murder from Jekyll and Hyde was the third last performance. This song is pretty much unforgettable and I was singing it for days after the show. I think it would have been better if the show had ended on that note. All in all, it was an excellent show and one that the Drama Society of next semester will find it tough to follow.

Written by **Mark O'Beirne**

TOMMY Emmanuel brought his signature finger picking guitar style to the University Concert Hall on 14 November with support from Johnny Dickinson.

Like Emmanuel, Johnny Dickinson plays finger style with his thumb acting as the bass and his fingers providing the melody. Dickinson took the crowd on a blues tour around the world and included one song that meshed Japanese, Irish, English and American styles together seamlessly.

After a short interval, Tommy Emmanuel took to the stage. Despite a career that spans nearly five decades, his hair and guitar surfaces are all that hint at age and wear-and-tear.

Emmanuel played with the passion and energy of a man half his age, and a flair and technical skill that puts a significant proportion of guitarists to shame. He is a one man band but not in the traditional image with various drums and horns attached to limbs. All he needs is a guitar, an amp and his reverb box. His guitar is the band, filling in as a bass, drums and deputises as vocals in performances like the Carpenters' Close to you and Billy Joel's And so it goes.

His guitars look in less than pristine condition but that is to be expected. They are slapped, played, hit, scraped and bent in each performance but it all adds up to a unique sound and live experience.

Throughout the night, he let his fingers fly over the fret board, attacked chords with venom and picked at harmonics.

The crowd were in awe throughout the night, but it took a performance from thirteen year old Andreas Varaday alongside Emmanuel to bring the crowd to their feet. Varaday showcased a natural ability to play the blues with a performance that stunned the crowd. After the show, Tommy Emmanuel said Andreas Varaday was, "fearless, rhythmic, melodic and just plain amazing as a 13 year old boy playing music at an extreme level".

CDs are good, DVDs and YouTube are better but a live show is the only way to experience Tommy Emmanuel.



Image: Hugh O'Brien

 <b>dolans warehouse</b>		
Tues 30th	HOWARD MARKS (MR. NICE)	8pm €15
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Fri 10th	JOHN SPILLANE	8pm €16
Sat 11th	LOLA MONTEZ CABARET VAUDEVILLE BURLESQUE	7.30 €15
Sat 11th	GEMMA HAYES	8pm €15
Fri 17th	JACK L	8pm €20
Fri 17th	HEATHERS WITH AMINAL BEATS	8pm €10
Sat 18th	STRUTT CHRISTMAS PARTY FEAT. LUKE SLATER, ANTON ZAP, IAN O DONOVAN AND WTF RESIDENTS	8pm €12
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# AN EVENING WITH BELL X1

Written by **Tricia Purcell**

BELL X1 is currently doing an all acoustic tour of the country and I was lucky enough to get to see them play Glor, in Ennis. The band, which has been spending more time Stateside recently, was in magnificent form amidst its tour of live acoustic sets on the tenth anniversary of its first album "Neither Am I". Playing in some random venues like Clonakilty, Sligo, Newbridge and Ballybofey, the lads have come back to their roots, despite reaching massive success in America. Stripping some of their most popular songs like, "The Great Defector", "Flame" and "Rocky Took

a Lover" of all the electric airs and graces, the band has gone back to basics. It was quite refreshing to be in such an intimate venue with these three amazing musicians, away from any facade or commotion. After the interval, Bell X1 sang some songs from their "Music in Mouth" album, including "Alphabet Soup", "Eve, the Apple of my Eye" and "Next to You". Front man, Paul Noonan performed superbly, and conveyed his true appreciation to the audience for attending in light of the harsh economic times we are living in.

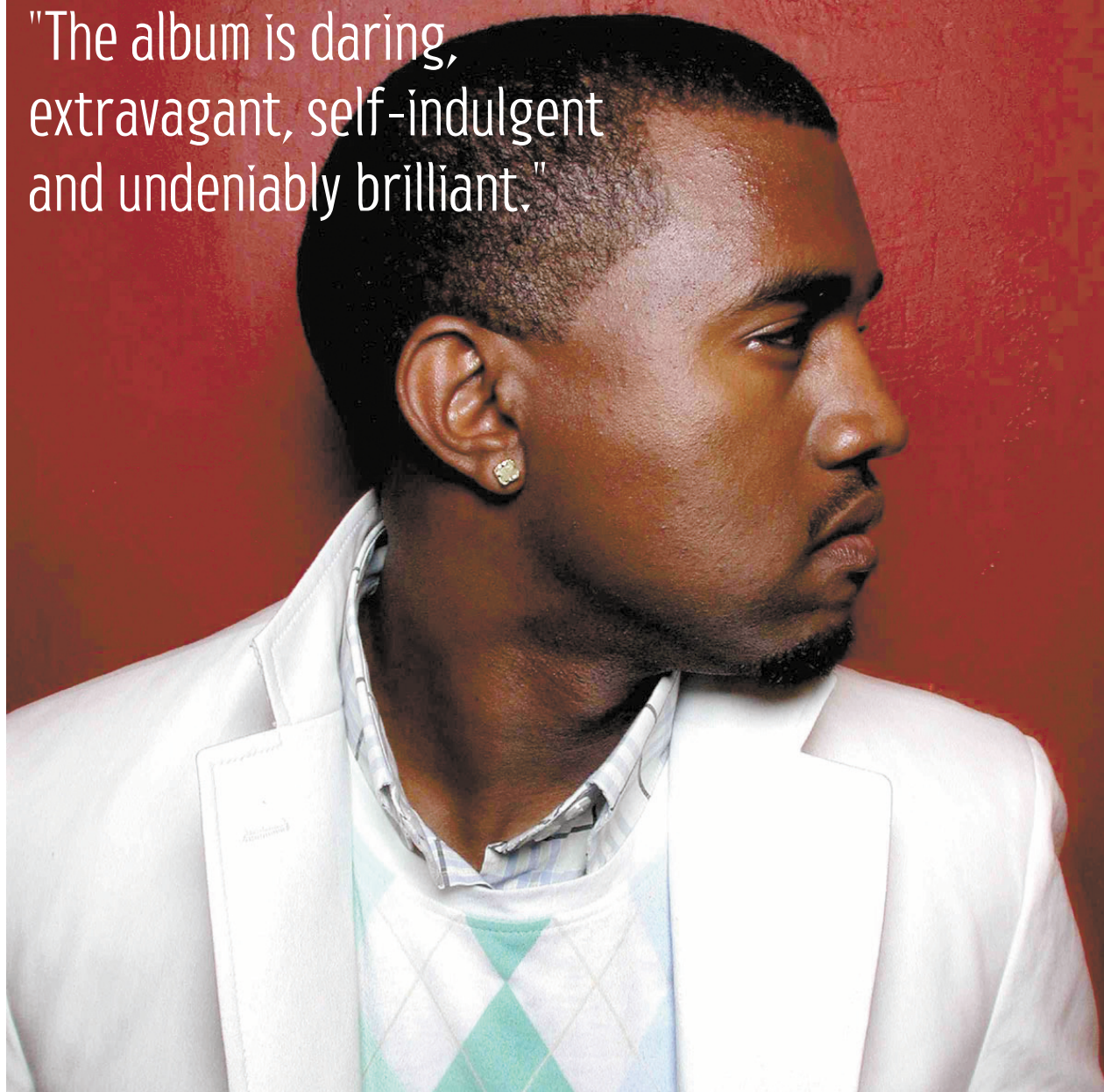
What was also special about this

gig was Dave Geraghty's two solo songs. It's unusual for Dave, the main guitarist of the band who has two solo albums, to sing on his own. But it was a welcome contribution. The band also played some new music called "74 Swans" and "Velcro", which will be released in the near future. And if these are anything to go by, their new album will be something to look forward to. Their upcoming tour dates are sold out. But keep an eye out for the new album, which should be released in early 2011.

"Stripping some of their most popular songs of all the electric airs and graces, the band has gone back to basics."



"The album is daring, extravagant, self-indulgent and undeniably brilliant."



## AMBITIOUS, OBNOXIOUS, BOLD AND BRILLIANT: KANYE IS BACK

Written by **Josh Lee**

ON his journey from college dropout to one of pop's loudest superstars, Kanye West has attracted more than his fair share of controversy and animosity. West has always made himself an easy target for the media.

After the lashings he received following the 2009 VMAs, one could be forgiven for thinking the man would never return from his post-Taylor doldrums.

Yet, the rapper's fifth studio album, *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy* (released on 19 November in Ireland) sees the controversial icon hoist himself, not only back into the limelight, but back amongst pop music's finest.

The album is daring, extravagant, self-indulgent and undeniably brilliant. He proves himself to be extremely self-aware and offers no apologies. His admittance that "you've been putting up with my shit just way too long", on the album's epic centrepiece 'Runaway' is followed by a tongue-in-cheek "toast to the douchebags," in an obvious reference to himself.

Since his first album, Kanye has evolved his sound to an almost unrecognisable state. And now, from the sped-up soul samples on the Dropout, rich orchestral decoration on *Late Registration*, the synth-driven Graduation and the auto-tuned forlorn depths of *Heartbreak*, emerges *Fantasy*. In some ways it's the ultimate

maturity of the first decade of West's career, but like the man it's a flawed offering of eccentric genius.

West hasn't spared any expenses on the album's guest line-up. Help with production comes courtesy of hip-hop mainstays like RZA. 'All of the Lights' comes with no less than 11 guests. From Elton John (on piano) and Rihanna to La Roux's Elly Jackson, many of whom blend anonymously into choral arrangements rather than collapsing into a train wreck of pop stars. Jay-Z also makes two appearances in an album that still feels completely Kanye.

*Fantasy* is a more traditional hip-hop album than the experimental pop sound of 808s, but the theme of heartbreak makes the cross-over. The John Legend assisted 'Blame Game' may just be one of the most forlorn tracks of West's career. Even a cameo from Chris Rock doesn't lighten the mood.

West leaves the last word on the album to the legendary Gil Scott-Heron, whose 1970 spoken word piece 'Comment #1' is used as a closer, bellowing the question "Who will survive in America?" Kanye West may have come under fire from both Obama and Bush, but he just may have made an album that will stand the test of time.

Good luck in your exams and merry Christmas!

From your Students' Union.





# KINGS OF LEON DO IT AGAIN

“Ninety per cent of this album was recorded live. This is the staple of Kings of Leon and what makes them such a fantastic live touring act.”

Written by **Jennifer Meaney**

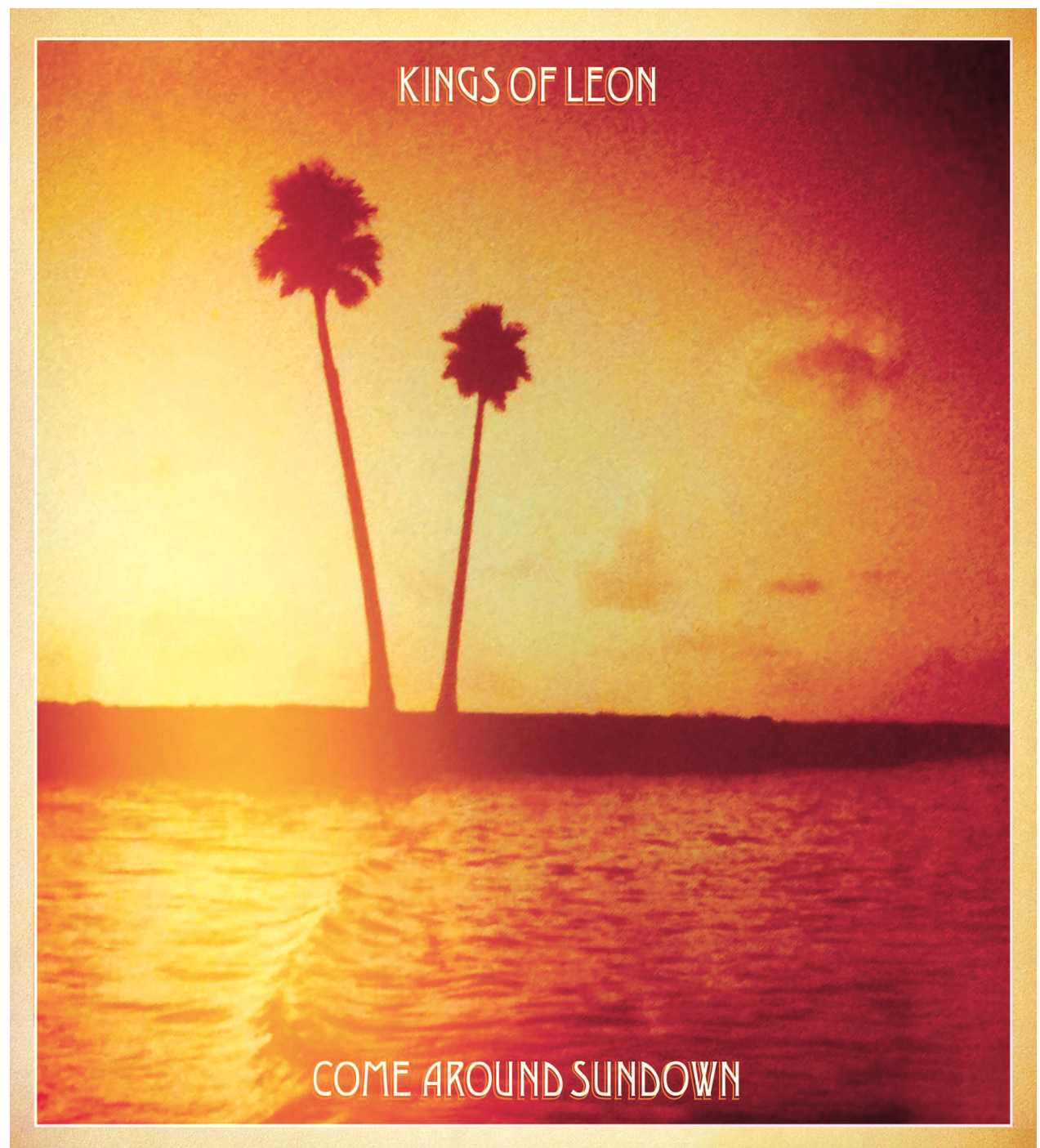
THE wait is over The Kings of Leon are back with a new album, *Come Around Sundown*. Fans all over the world have been waiting to get their hands on what may become the biggest album of the year. *Come Around Sundown* is an example of what's going to keep albums from going out of fashion and the single taking over.

The first track on the album ironically titled 'The End' is the perfect track to introduce the band's fifth album. One criticism is the choice of *Radioactive* as lead single. When it was released in October, I was unsure of what kind of album would follow. I need not have worried as *Come Around Sundown* is one of the best albums I've ever listened to.

There are no “filler songs” on the album. Each song, even *Radioactive*, has feeling, emotion and a story. It's refreshing to listen to an album that is made by a real band that write and play their own music. Ninety per cent of this album was recorded live. This is the staple of Kings of Leon and what makes them such a fantastic live touring act. The lyric writing on this album is pure

class, but it's the way in which Caleb sings that makes this album so special. The final song on the album *Pickup Truck* has many examples of this “Pour yourself on me and you know I'm the one that you won't forget” and “In your denim eyes I see something's awry”. Listening to these lyrics is enveloping.

In a recent interview about the new album the band discussed *The Immortals*, which they consider to be their best writing to date. *Pyro*, the second single from the album, is a strong beautifully written song combining the best of what KOL have to offer. Returning after the mammoth success of *Only by the Night*, their fourth album that sold eight million copies worldwide and earned them a Grammy for best single must have been a daunting task. KOL have met that task head on and it has paid off, as it has become the fastest selling downloadable album of all time. The album also went to number one in nine countries. Kings of Leon fans and newcomers alike will be more than satisfied with *Come Around Sundown*.



## HALLOW, IS IT HARRY YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

Written by **Brige Newman**

YOU know how you are so excited about seeing a movie and then it falls flat on its face? Well, this is not one of those films.

For the first time in seven movies the Harry Potter series is living up to the books we enjoyed as kids. Sticking to the plot may have caused them to split the final movie into two parts, but it works. Now don't get me wrong, there are one or two parts of the film, and when you see it you'll know which ones I'm talking about, that make you

want to scratch your eyes out. But the graphics and very real looking CGI more than made up for those mishaps.

At one point there was not a dry eye in the house and absolute silence echoed through the cinema. I'm not going to ruin which plot twist caused such an impact, but diehard Harry Potter fans will already know.

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows has jumps and comic relief perfectly timed to keep the audience firmly in their seats for two and half hours

without wanting to leave, or even look at the time. We grew up with Harry Potter, and while we may be a tad on the old side, the series creators have kept us in mind. Nothing screams “11 year old wizard”, but lets us hold onto that little bit of “kid” we all desperately cling to so we don't turn into our parents.

I can't wait for part two to come out, and I dare anyone to go and disagree.



Image: Courtesy Warner Brothers

## UNIVERSITY CONCERT HALL



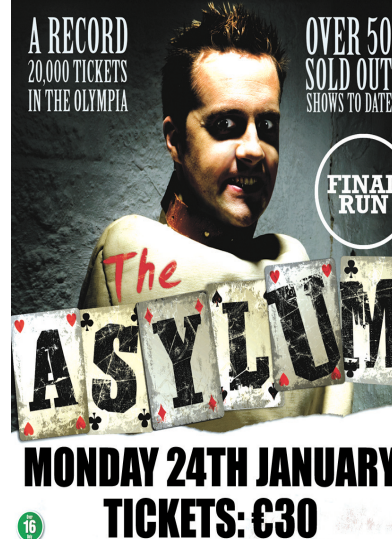
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Student Speak

# HO HO HO! Are you in this issue of Student Speak?

An Focal Reporter and Photographer Róisín Peddle was out and about in the cold last week, looking for the perfect gift ideas.

## So what do you want for Christmas?



Left to Right: Liam Grace, Conor Ryan and Peter Power  
*"A copper piiiiipe."*



Sarah Bredon  
*"Inner peace."*



Nicky Nesbitt and Niall Curry  
*"All I want for Christmas is you."*



Nina Schleinig und Anne Scheib  
*"We want snow!"*



Wilma Dragonetti and Jason Phelan  
*"Haven't decided yet!"*



Katy Quinn  
*"I want to get a degree without having to do an FYF."*



Ed Gleeson and Kevin Murphy  
*"Two crates of Red Bull and a 4.0 QCA."*



Declan McCarthy and Danielle McNamara  
*"Free Fees."*

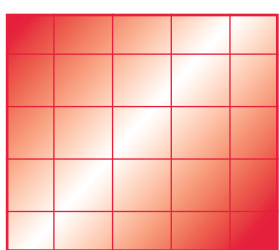


Allison Downes  
*"A surprise."*



Brian O'Malley and Conor Myers  
*"A good day at The Stables today."*





# The Grid

## Exclusive communication for Clubs and Societies.

Attention C&S PROs! Send content for The Grid to [sucommunications@ul.ie](mailto:sucommunications@ul.ie) only before Friday, 14 January 2011 to benefit from your space in the next and first issue of An Focal, Semester Two.

Clubs	<b>Handball</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Rowing</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	Societies	<b>History</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .
<b>American Football</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Judo</b> Training: Mondays from 19:30 to 21:30 at Claughaun Club, Childers Road. Thursdays from 20:15 to 21:45 at Large Sports Hall, PESS, UL.	<b>Sailing</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Anime and Manga</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>International</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .
<b>Archery</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Karate Shotokan</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Skydive</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Architecture</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Law</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .
<b>Athletics</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Kayak</b> Pool sessions will be back after Christmas! Check out the message board for our upcoming trip to Wales after Christmas. See <a href="http://ulkayak.com">ulkayak.com</a> or email <a href="mailto:ulkayak@gmail.com">ulkayak@gmail.com</a>	<b>Soccer</b> Futsal Indoor Regional Qualifiers taking place in Week 12. Matches begin in Week 1 Second Semester. Merry Christmas! Gear is still available to order, again check the website. <a href="http://ulsoccerclub.webs.com/apps/blog/">http://ulsoccerclub.webs.com/apps/blog/</a>	<b>Christian Union</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Medical</b> It's not too late to register for Movember. <a href="http://www.movember.com">www.movember.com</a>
<b>Badminton</b> The Limerick Badminton League has started. During league season team training on Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:15pm to 9:15pm. Limited space for casual players until 9:15pm. Courts open to members until 11pm.	<b>Krav Maga</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Softball</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Computer</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Music</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .
<b>Basketball</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Ladies Hockey</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Sub Aqua</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Cumann Gaeilge</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Ógra Fianna Fáil</b> Con Colbert meeting every Monday at 6pm in C&S Room Two for lively debate, followed by Scholars Club. Regular calendar of events. Join the Party! Add us on <a href="http://facebook.com/ulogra">facebook.com/ulogra</a> , email <a href="mailto:ulogra@gmail.com">ulogra@gmail.com</a> or join us on <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> !
<b>Boarders</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Ladies Rugby</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Tae Kwon Do</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Debating Union</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Nature Society</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .
<b>Capoeira</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Men's Rugby</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Tennis</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Development</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Photographic</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .
<b>Chess</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Mountain Bike</b> Spins on Wednesdays at 7pm and Sundays at 11am. Women's only spins Thursdays at 7pm. All spins from UL Boathouse. Bring change of clothes.	<b>Trampoline</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>DJ</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Poker</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .
<b>Dance UL</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Outdoor Pursuits (OPC)</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Ultimate Frisbee</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Drama</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Socialist Youth</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .
<b>Fencing</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Parkour</b> Happy Christmas from Parkour UL! Goodbye to Events Officer Eamonn Walsh, he's done a great job and will be missed.	<b>UL Ninjas</b> Training on Tuesday and Thursdays at McGuire's at 18:15. Training on Wednesdays at the Sports Hall (PESS building) at 18:15. For more information see <a href="http://www.ulninjas.com/">http://www.ulninjas.com/</a>	<b>Enterprise &amp; Finance</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>ULTV</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .
<b>GAA</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Pool &amp; Darts</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Windsurfing</b> We're hosting our Christmas Beach Party at the Lodge, Tuesday, 30 November. Prizes for best Santa Surfer. Tickets cost €3. Contact <a href="mailto:ulwc.committee@gmail.com">ulwc.committee@gmail.com</a> or 086 2468283	<b>Games</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registers.ul.ie">registers.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Young Fine Gael</b> We have many up-coming events. Congratulations to Colm Taylor and Cillian Griffey for their success at the National Conference. Please Join UL YFG online on the C&S website.



# SPECIAL EVENT WILL HONOUR THE REMARKABLE GER MCDONNELL

Written by **David O'Connell**

ON Friday, 3 December (Week 13), the OPC will host a special talk on the life and achievements of a true Limerick hero and mountaineer, Ger McDonnell. The special talk takes place in the Scholars and OPC extends an invitation to all.

Ger McDonnell was an ordinary man and a mountaineer who was involved in many expeditions over his short life. These include a successful summit of Mt Everest where he famously pucked a sliotar with a hurley from the south col achieving the first highest Fada in the world. He was also involved in the Beyond Endurance, an event to mark the honor of our Irish heroic Antarctic

Polar explorers: Ernest Shackleton, Tom Crean, Patrick Keohane, Robert Forde, Mortimer and Tim McCarthy. They traversed South Georgia via Shackleton's route.

He was the first Irish person to reach the summit of K2, the second-highest mountain on Earth, in August 2008. He lost his life along with ten other mountaineers following an avalanche on the descent, in the worst single accident in history of K2 mountaineering.

Ger's family will give the presentation and it will last for about two to two and a half hours. It will feature a power point and audio. It is unique in the

sense that Ger will be telling his own story from a recorded interview taken some years previous complimented with Ger's own pictures. Ger tells how he became a mountaineer and the expeditions that he has done. Also they will describe that fateful day on K2. Afterwards, there will be a questions and answers session.

This is a great opportunity to hear a firsthand account of the incredible life story of mountaineer Ger McDonnell and give inspiration to fellow mountaineers.



The late Ger McDonnell

# ULTV CREATES IN DUBLIN PRODUCTION STUDIOS

Written by **Patricia Murphy, ULTV President**

FIFTEEN members of ULTV visited Dublin on Friday, 12 November and stayed until Sunday, 14 November to produce a four-part magazine programme in a studio.

The programme was aimed at students and was called "Hitchhikers' Guide to Student Life".

Each show covered a different issue: College Life, Student Finance, Student Travel and Careers.

They last a half an hour each and comprise studio Interviews and video Inserts. The topics in the College Life show range from Clubs and Societies to Sensible Drinking to the Irish language at third level. Student Finance included money tips and advice from

a financial expert. Student Travel covered backpacking cheaply, J1 and Inter-railing and festivals in Ireland. There were CV tips, Exam tips and Interview tips in the Careers show.

"Our presenter for the programme was Lisa Blake who did a great job," said a society member involved in organising the trip.

Members got to experience various different roles each such as Floor manager, sound person, vision mixer, director, editing assistant and behind the scenes camera man.

The society used the studio of Dublin Community Television which is located in the Digital Hub in the Liberties in Dublin. "We were in the studio from

10am until 5pm in the evening. Later on that night we went to the recording of The Saturday Night Show hosted by Brendan O'Connor in the RTE studios in Donnybrook. It was very exciting," said society member, Niall Curry.

The first part of the programme College Life will be up on our YouTube Channel in the next few weeks.

You can get in touch with the society by emailing [ultvsoc@gmail.com](mailto:ultvsoc@gmail.com). See the society's work at YouTube channel <http://www.youtube.com/user/ULTVSOC>



ULTV at RTE, waiting to participate in the audience of The Saturday Night Show. Left to Right: Lakshika Serasinhe, Barbara Ross, Patricia Murphy, Niall Curry, Philippa Brennan, Andrew Dwyer, Mary Chuhinko, Caitriona Ni Chadhain, Paul Saunders, Aisling Walsh, Laura Kerin, Ciaran Phillips, Lisa Blake, Monika Gariarz and Oisín Linnane.

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**Windruffing Club**

# UL GAIN COUNCILLORS AT YFG NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Written by **Luke Hogg, YFG Vice Secretary**

UL YFG has secured two positions on the YFG Executive Council. Colm Taylor and Cillian Griffey were successfully elected at a National Conference in Charleville recently.

Colm and Cillian are former chairpersons of the UL branch. Cillian was elected North West Organiser and was the first person to be elected to the Executive Council. Colm was elected to the National Panel and was the last person to be elected.

Unfortunately not everybody from UL was as successful. Timmy Eoin O'Sullivan, who is a current UL student and a member of UL YFG, ran for South Organiser but lost to Conor Crean from Cork. But as Meatloaf once sang "Two out of Three Ain't Bad".

Also elected to the Executive Council were some UL Alumni. Carol Madigan, who is a UL Graduate and a former UL YFG member was elected to the National Panel. Another former UL YFG member, Eric Keane, was elected unopposed as President of YFG.

The conference took place over

three days running from Friday, 12 November to Sunday, 14 November. There were many events on over the course of the conference and many esteemed guests were in attendance. Enda Kenny attended, along with some of his front bench, including Richard Bruton TD and Simon Coveney TD.

The highlight of the conference was Mr Kenny's speech. He discussed the next generation and said that his job in parliament "is to ensure there is an Ireland there for you and the rest of the young people of this country." He added "this is our time to reclaim our country."



Left to Right: Anthony Woods(UL), Luke Hogg(UL), Cillian Griffey(UL), Enda Kenny TD, Gareth Gregan(TCD), Rebecca Gregan(TCD)



C&amp;S

# OPC DOES DONEGAL AND DERRY IN "BEST WEEKEND EVER"

Written by **Janika Walter**

LET'S start at the beginning. Saturday, 5:00am. Anticipation got us out of bed and to the Stables Archway; welcomed by fantastic bus driver Pat. Following the long journey, we reached Donegal and our first stop was the highest sea cliff in Europe, Slieve League. It was time for our hiking boots and cameras for some spectacular, panoramic views around the Cliffs. Back to the bus as we headed to Dunlewey hostel at the base of the highest mountain in Donegal: Mount Errigal. As a lovely voice announced, this would be our goal for Sunday. The more immediate goal for the night was the delicious Spaghetti Carbonara cooked by Italian chef Luca and crew. It suffices to say "The OPC craic was

on". For those who weren't there; you definitely missed out. Hangover or not, we enjoyed breakfast on Sunday. The weather was good for this 752m challenge as we hiked through muddy swamps and rocky, steep paths. Backed by a new temporary member, Caesar (Our shepherd dog), our leaders got everybody up the muscle-challenging way. But standing at the summit, the amazing landscape made the whole day worth it. The day didn't finish there. For those who think people only go for a swim in summer, think again! 10 or 15 went into the sea with -30C water but the sunshine welcomed them out. The romance of a beautiful sunset then saw us off for another glorious OPC night.

Monday's destination was Derry. I reckon we all learned more about Bloody Sunday than any history book could teach. Seeing the real setting, crossing the street where 14 year old children got shot and getting a tour by a man who lost friends in the events can't compare to a book. Derry itself would be incredible even without being so well-known for such a terrible event.

There is only one thing left for me to say. OPC doesn't only stand for Outdoor Pursuit Club but Obviously Perfect Club!



Pictured is Fiachra Horan, Elite competitor from UL Trampolining, partaking in the UL Intervarsities on 12, 13, 14 November. Seven colleges enjoyed the competition, which featured a tribute to the late Paddy McHugh, former club member. Image: Colm Madigan.

## TWO UL TEAMS ENJOY LEAGUE PROGRESSION WITH DOUBLE VICTORY

Written by **Fiona Scally, Club PRO**

Both UL's varsities teams progressed in the league, enjoying two impressive wins.

THE Women, fresh from a 50 point win over WIT, stayed in form in their second league game winning by an impressive margin of 44 points. Without the services of Aoife McDermott, who sat the game out due to a foot injury, UL had to look to their outside shooters to build a strong lead early in the game.

Cathy Grant led the scoring with 22 points and Fiona Scally not far behind chipping in 20. Their fast break was key in this game with Carol McCarthy orchestrating the play and delivering

some brilliant passes leaving NUIG in the dust. Sinead Deegan and Brenda Riordan's relentless defence ensured that the UL side were in control for the entirety of the game. Their next challenge is against rivals, UCC with the fixture still undecided.

The men faced a bigger challenge with their first league game against last year's intervarsity winners. Although NUIG have lost some players from last year's winning team they are still a force to be reckoned with in the league. UL Men rose to the challenge however and led the Galway side 40-22 in the first half. Super league players Scott

Kinevane and Andrew Dawson were top scorers for the side contributing 44 points collectively. Strong inside play by Donal McCarthy and French import Jérémy Poizeau let the men enter the fourth quarter with a confident attitude and they ended the game with a comfortable nine point margin.

The Men face Carlow IT away next.

UL Basketball club would like to wish everyone best of luck in their exams and a Happy Christmas.

## UL BADMINTON HOSTS INTERNATIONAL STUDENT TOURNAMENT

Written by **Jean Charpin, PRO Badminton Club**

THE UL Badminton Club co-organised the Irish International Student Badminton Tournament (ISBT), which took place in the Arena during the October bank holiday weekend.

Teams comprised of 182 competitors from various European countries, took part. UL Badminton Club was represented by a team of 26 led by Chairperson Rachel Harrison, third year maths and sciences.

Each Player competed in two of three categories, singles, doubles and mixed doubles. Double teams were formed randomly by the organising committee to encourage socialising. Each category first played in a round robin format and the top two players/teams of each category met in a final on Monday afternoon.

Ms Harrison was very satisfied with

the team results. "We are delighted with the club performances [...] 26 people were on the team including nine [new members]. Events like the ISBT allow new members to fully integrate in the club and give them a taste of international competitions."

### TEAM RESULTS

Virge Pesti (not from UL) was a runner up in ladies' doubles B. Harry Van Haaren (UL) was a runner up in mixed doubles C. Colm Cunniffe (UL Staff) was a runner up in men's doubles D. Socials took place in the Sports Bar. Most UL participants attended dressed as the Blues Brothers, Greek Gods, Goddesses, Snow White and Alice in Wonderland. Chris Quill fully grasped the spirit of the ISBT. "Best weekend of my life. I enjoyed every minute of

it. It was great to meet new people and I am looking forward to the next ISBT."

Equally enthusiastic was Eoin Walsh. "I was very impressed with the ISBT experience, especially talent both on and off the court."

The next competition for the UL badminton club is the Limerick league, which started last week. UL has entered three teams for the league. Matches are played on a home and away basis and will take place between November and March. You can follow the performances of the UL teams on the club website and in the grid.



## Interview



# A MAN OF MISCHIEF, OF DELAMERISH DIVILMENT

“His hilarious anecdotes will include tales of dance classes to be avoided, lessons in corpse-making (“It starts with a turnip”) and advice on how to behave if you’re ever unfortunate enough to have a man jump on your car.”

Written by **Finn McDuffie**,  
Editor

WITH a sharp wit, a mischievous streak and a palatable sense of humour, it’s no wonder Neil Delamere is one of Ireland’s top comedians. And who better to make us laugh at the state of the country?

After all, the Edenderry man talks topical. Fans of RTE’s “The Panel” will tell you his comedy powerhouse eats up current affairs. And quite right they are because in an instant, he can turn daily life into a side-splitting tale. TV’s one thing, but stand up’s a different game. It requires more preparation. Planning’s important. And originality too, we must assume. Just where does he get his material? “For stand up, you go for stuff with a longer shelf-life,” he explains. “Inspiration comes at that point between

going to bed and not being able to get to sleep.” With years of stand-up experience and his big break onto The Panel in 2004, it’s clear the twice platinum selling artist works hard. Since 2004 he’s been on BBC’s the Blame Game, Michael McIntyre’s Comedy Roadshow and Republic of Telly, which he decided not to present this time round. “This year The Panel was coming back. So I chose The Panel and the tour,” he reveals. So it seems the quick-fire banter’s set to continue as he tours Ireland, making a stop in January at our wonderful UCH, with his latest show “Implement of Divilment.”

He’s been gearing up for the big tour. “You need smaller venues to go to where you can test-drive and work stuff up to

refine,” he says. “It’s vital and really fundamental because stand-up requires developed ideas.” One of his favourite spots to do this is The International Bar in Dublin. “You can see the white of their eyes,” he says, delicately painting the intimate venue. “There’s always a great atmosphere.” And he loves to engage with his audience. “It’s mischief and it makes gigs individual.”

Divilment is high on his list of priorities, as the name of his tour heralds obviously. “I like the idea of mischief and messing around with people,” he admits. “We can still have a laugh in IMF territory. People will always retain some element of wickedness.”

He is understandably coy when it comes to revealing exact

details of the sketches we should encounter this January, when his tour comes to Limerick. His hilarious anecdotes will include tales of dance classes to be avoided, lessons in corpse-making (“It starts with a turnip”) and advice on how to behave if you’re ever unfortunate enough to have a man jump on your car. But that’s the only taster I got. It was enough and I’ve taken the bait. See you there!

Neil Delamere’s show The Implement of Divilment comes to the UCH on 25 January 2011. Tickets cost €25 and are now on sale. Buy them online at [www.uch.ie](http://www.uch.ie) or by phoning 061331549. Booking fees apply. You can become a fan of the UCH on Facebook for gig updates.



Chicken baguette	€3.70
with 3 salads	
Regular roll	€3.50
with 3 salads	
Breakfast roll	€3.60
Extra salads	€0.30
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