



UL Halloween pics
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An FOCAL

STUDENTS UNION
University of Limerick

UL Bohs p19



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THE OFFICIAL PAPER OF THE STUDENTS' UNION

13TH NOVEMBER 2007

Wibbly, Wobbly, Wonderful!



BY SEAMUS RYAN
EDITOR

AFTER many false starts and rescheduled opening, the Living Bridge (An Droichead Beo) was opened to the campus community on Tuesday of Week 9. At an informal gathering in the Millstream Building, UL President, Professor Don Barry welcomed those attended to open what he predicted would 'reach iconic status in the future, drawing hundreds, if not thousands of visitors to the UL campus.' Professor Barry in his address outlined the design and development of the bridge; in particular he paid tribute to the work done by President Emeritus, John O'Connor.

Professor Barry declared that 'this [was] our day to take possession of our bridge' before declaring the bridge open for campus community use, and with Mr. O'Connor led the first official walk across the bridge, followed by staff and students present.

John O'Connor himself praised the efforts of many people involved in the planning and developed and referred specifically to the pulsation (or vertical wobble) of the bridge deck experienced by pedestrians crossing, comparing it to the energy of the river rushing below. He commented that 'when the decision was made by the university to expand into County Clare, it was regarded as essential that the campus remain united'.

The bridge, which forms a pedestrian link between the Millstream development on the Limerick side of the Shannon and the Health Sciences Building on the north campus in County Clare, has been under construction for the past year and has been extremely controversial with students due to the use of increased student car parking charges to part-fund it.

At 350 metres in length, made up of seven 50-metre spans, it is the longest pedestrian bridge in Ireland. Designed by Wilkinson Eyre Architects, the bridge includes four 'platforms', intended to accommodate social gatherings, informal teaching sessions, music and dance performances as well as a wide array of educational, social and cultural activities. Engineers for the project, Arup, have previously been responsible for the Pompidou Centre in Paris and London's

Millennium Bridge, nicknamed the 'Wobbly Bridge' by Londoners. Originally projected to be completed in August 2007, completion of the Living Bridge work was delayed by the delivery of specialised materials for construction.

Bernie Quillinan, Head of the department of Nursing & Midwifery, whose students will be among the chief beneficiaries of the new bridge said at the opening that 'as well as accentuating the view of the river Shannon, the key feature of the new bridge is that it further integrates both campuses'.

There was some criticism that students, unlike staff, were not informed of the opening by email in advance. Paddy Rockett, 2nd year Science Ed told An Focal that he walked across it and 'thought it was brilliant but that it was disappointing to be told that the bridge was open and available for use by some random passer-by rather than being officially informed'.

Students' Union President St. John Ó Donnabháin said: 'It's great to see the bridge open at last, especially for students in Cappavilla Village and the Health Sciences building, it's just a pity that all students had to pay for the huge runover in cost'.

President Barry stressed that the bridge would have an official opening at a later date some time in semester two.



Don Barry & John O'Connor make the first official walk across the new bridge

Significant crime increase concerns students

KATIE HARRINGTON

CRIMES in the Castletroy area, on and off the UL campus have seen a significant increase since the beginning of this semester. While new security cameras have been installed throughout the campus, this action appears to have had no deterrent effect on perpetrators. The rise in muggings and attacks on students are a growing concern, while alloy wheels have been stolen in broad daylight from a car parked by the CSIS building. The Halloween period saw eggs and lit fireworks being thrown at students from cars and An Focal recently reported the robbery of a number of bicycles from behind the Student's Union and PESS Building.

A series of muggings took place in the first half of this semester seems to have subsided following their wide publication on campus, however Gardaí have been informed that a sexual assault on a female student took place on Halloween night. Students are as always reminded by the

Students' Union to be vigilant with regards their personal safety. Students walking home after dark are encouraged to use the Nitelink which runs every half an hour between seven and eleven o'clock, or to travel in groups to minimise the risk of attacks. The dangers of those throwing lit fireworks or eggs from cars, which some students have described as a new 'sport' for hooligans are not to be underestimated. Victims of such attacks are encouraged to report them to Security or Gardaí, with the licence plate of the vehicle if possible.

Staff, residents and students are growing increasingly frustrated with the continuing attacks on property and people, and have expressed these feelings on their respective forums. Student's Union President St. John O'Donnabhain commented 'Students are very angry at the moment and very unhappy with the service being provided by campus security. UL has a great campus atmosphere but definite steps need to be taken by the relevant university authority to ensure this continues', a feeling

shared by many of the staff on campus. The accusation has been made that UL has 'a first class clamping system and a second class security service', resulting in the University shirking its duty of care to provide students and staff with a safe environment with a positive atmosphere in which to learn.

Head of security Mr. John Mc Donnell disputed this, speaking of the security system in UL as constantly evolving and seeking the right balance between electronic and human resources. He claimed that the cameras have already yielded results in the apprehension of perpetrators and that in time, the use of cameras to monitor the University will allow security more time to focus on other issues. Asked if he believed there was adequate security on campus at night time, Mr. Mc Donnell stated that in the future he thought security staff may be stationed in the on-campus village throughout the night, as they currently are between 11pm and 2am.



Living Bridge

EDITORIAL



BY SEAMUS RYAN
EDITOR

AS the heart of winter fast approaches and the sunlit days get shorter and shorter, personal safety of students (and the general populace) becomes more important as an issue at this time every year. Coupled with the recent attacks and car thefts on campus (see the report on page one), this

is especially an issue this year.

Safety (personal and property) is essentially an ownership for the entire campus community. University authorities owe a duty of care to their students, while all campus members need to ensure they are taking all reasonable steps to protect themselves and their property.

Installation of the CCTV system is still continuing (slowly but still continuing), at the time of writing the system is about 60% complete. People should be aware and should remember however, that CCTV is not a panacea to safety or theft problems. Put bluntly, it's very easy for someone to come on campus wearing a hoodie over their heads - it's almost a student uniform at this point. The addition of CCTV does not make it safe to leave a laptop unattended in the main library or anywhere else - there are thieves out there and, yes, the library is a hot zone for laptop theft.

As the population of Castletroy grows to 30,000 it is more important than ever that the need for a full-time Garda presence in the form of a Garda station is considered and fulfilled. The system of community guards has worked relatively well over the past decade, largely due to the commitment of the individuals in question but it is unsatisfactory that a large suburban town like Castletroy can have four banks and no permanent Garda presence.

Students tend to be rich pickings for those determined to steal. It's not as though many of us have much in the line of property but what we as a group normally own tends to be light, portable and occasionally expensive. Without meaning to scaremonger, the pre-Christmas season is a popular time for break-ins and muggings and students should be on the alert. If you see someone hanging around and looking suspicious, report them to campus security or the Gardai. If we all take ownership of the issue as much as we can then where there are inadequacies in university security provision, it becomes easier to highlight them.

The CCTV needs to be finished by the university as a matter of extreme priority. Meanwhile the SU will continue to provide alerts of dangers where necessary and as much information as possible. Obviously if something happens you or your property, we recommend contacting the Gardai and campus security as a matter of priority. If you would rather not report it formally, please let the SU know so we can have an idea of the level of incidents - let any SU officer know or email me at editor@ulsu.ie. Your details will be kept completely private if you choose.

The Nitelink bus runs from 7pm each evening until half ten from the Stables and covers all of the student villages as well as the main Castletroy estates. It's a free service and I would strongly advise people to make use of it. Arrive home warm, dry and most importantly safe.

Be alert. Be safe.

Quotes of the fortnight

- **My mother taught me all those naughty words when I grew up in the hood**

Paddy Rockett talks about growing up in the ghetto of Carrick-on-Suir

- **Miss Carbon Foot Stamping is it?**

CSO Patrick McHugh to Derrick Howard on being told he'd have to walk to his home

- **Oh that's Air Moon Safari, when a young one hears that in my room she knows what's coming next**

OPC's Fergal Dempsey demonstrates his charm and in-depth musical taste

- **Put a nakie lady on it - it seems to work for The Sun**

Education Officer Alan Higgins offers his suggestion for content to fill the first page after this one

- **You know those journos, they're dirty parasitic fookers, aren't they**

El Presidente St. John Ó Donnabháin offers his opinion to the An Focal editor Seamus Ryan

- **Oh, somebody painted something on a road, did they?**

SU Secretary-General Tomás Costello is quick to make reference to zebra crossings when the new makeshift round about at Parkview is mentioned at SU exec

- **Paintball is a branch of gee-soc, oh wait, g-soc**

Clubs and Socs development officer Paul Lee is quick to correct himself

- **They've assured me that their walkie-talkies do work**

PSA President Emma Murphy comes back from a chat with campus security after the recent security incidents

Ulster Bank
let's do things differently

Dear Ulster Bank

I know it's a bit early to be thinking of this but I'm something of an advance planner. I'm hoping to graduate in a few months and while I've been good at living hand to mouth for the last few years and tipping away with a part-time job to keep me in bread and cheese (and occasional beer), as soon as I graduate I'm going to need to think about all those extra costs that people in the real world have to cope with. Getting a car, getting clothes suitable for working rather than just student-slouching. All the other costs that will pretty much automatically kick in as soon as I leave my precious UL and I'm more than a little concerned. Is there anything that you can do for a new graduate? Also, what's the deal with graduate accounts? Do I have to start paying bank charges straight away?

Puzzled student

Dear Student

It is never too early to think about the future and especially with regard to finance. This is an exciting time for all graduates as you will now be earning a permanent salary. Ulster Bank recognise this and have lots of options open to you. So whether you decide to enter full time employment, continue with your studies or go travelling we have a financial package just for you. With the graduate account there are many benefits available to you like Overdrafts, Loans and credit cards. The first one is your interest free overdraft which current Ulster Bank Student Account holders benefit from, this continues for the Graduate Account. This is available up to two years from when you graduate. The maximum overdraft you can avail of interest free is €1,500. In relation to Graduate loans we offer low rate loans for further studies, refinancing borrowings or, as in your case, car purchase and suits/clothes for employment. You can apply for any amount up to €6,500 and the repayment schedule will be suitable to your repayment capacity. Your Graduate account is fee free, so you will not incur any bank charges in relation to transactions, atm withdrawals, Direct Debit and Standing order set up fees. If you would like to explore your options further we would recommend that you make an appointment with our customer advisors at the branch and they will look after your requirements.

Best of Luck for the future

Ulster Bank

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UL Clubs & Societies

Standing ovation for international drug dealer in the Monnet

DIARMUID HEALY

MONDAY November 5 saw Mr. Howard Marks take the stage at the sold out Jean Monnet theatre. Mr. Marks got three separate University degrees, two from Oxford, and an M.A. in the Philosophy of Science from the University of Sussex. He is, however, better known as an international drugs smuggler and bestselling writer. The show began with extracts from a news program detailing his career as a drug dealer, which was broadcast in the US when Marks finally

got arrested. It went through his exploits as a student, and a drug dealer detailing how Marks evaded the law following his time in prison through taking advantage of Swiss law.

While in Oxford, Marks began dealing cannabis, and became a massively successful international drug dealer, bringing cannabis into Britain, Ireland, and the U.S.A by the ton. Marks did a two hour long stage show, starting off with stories from his life as a dealer, when he got out of prison and how he ended up writing. After a short break during which the smell of

cannabis outside the Main Building was overwhelming, he began doing readings from his new book and telling the often amusing stories which related to those readings. For much of his drug dealing career he was based in Catherine Street in Limerick, smuggling drugs through Shannon airport. He was tried in Britain several times for dealing massive quantities of cannabis, getting off each time by claiming to be working as an under-cover spy with the British government. He was eventually tried and convicted in America and served seven years of a twenty-five year

sentence.

When he eventually got out of prison, he was approached by a publisher to write a book about his experiences. This book, Mr. Nice, became an international best seller and the publisher commissioned him to write a second book. It is this book, Senor Nice that he is currently on tour promoting. Though the show was lengthy, finishing at two and a half hours after a questions and answers session, Marks left to a standing ovation from an impressed UL audience.



Poet Laureate Visits UL

KATIE RYAN

AGNES Walsh, poet laureate for the city of St. John's Newfoundland, visited UL on Tuesday the 6th of November. In the Millstream Common Room, surrounded by the excited and the curious, she read from both her most recent work, 'Going around with Bachelors' (2007), and from an earlier collection of poems called 'In the Old Country of My Heart' (1993).

Originally from the area of Placentia, Newfoundland, Agnes Walsh was the first to become the poet laureate for St. John's, the capital of the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. This newly created position offers a salary of \$5,000 a year and she will hold this position for four years.

During this time she hopes to develop the arts, particularly poetry, in the city and its environs. She enjoys visiting the rural school children and encouraging them to write and to see the world from a completely unique perspective.

As founder of the Tramore Theatre Troupe, Ms. Walsh aims to keep the culture of Placentia and, indeed, Newfoundland, alive through plays, storytelling, dance and ballads. Ms. Walsh is a playwright herself and has produced many of her own plays with the Troupe. She

has also founded the Bere Island Theatre Troupe and in doing so aims to maintain the strong cultural links between Newfoundland and Ireland.

Ms. Walsh deals with the issue of immigration, amongst other topics, in her poetry. Newfoundland attracted many immigrants from the 1700s onwards, in particular the Portuguese, British, Spanish and the Irish. In particular there were many immigrants from Wexford, Waterford and Kilkenny. Her ancestors immigrated in the 1700s and settled in Placentia.

Ms. Walsh began the reading by choosing a poem from her recently published collection Going Around With Bachelors. The poem entitled 'I, Solemn' dealt with the issue of death, community and

memory. These issues are often seen throughout her work. In the poem a young Agnes recalls her first wake in Placentia. There is a tangible atmosphere of death and suppressed pain.

The idea of community and the importance of family also features strongly in her work. The poem 'Storm' deals with the death of Ms. Walsh's father, a topic on which she could not write for fifteen years after he passed away.

It is clear that his death was deeply troubling for her and caused her great agony. The violent hurricane present in the poem represents this.

The poetry reading was organised by the Department of Culture and Language Studies while Campus Life Services provided the venue.

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Editor**

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Law and European Studies To Be Phased Out By 2009

FINN MCDUFFIE

FROM academic year 2008/2009 the Department of Law will introduce a new degree programme called Law Plus. This degree will run alongside the current Law and European Studies degree programme for one year before the latter is phased out completely.

Where Law and European Studies currently involves three core law modules each year with two electives, those electives are restricted to one language and one discipline (of which there are only three available). Law Plus seeks to change this, allowing students to study the three core law modules each year with no restrictions on the electives and a broader range of electives to choose from. These include an array of languages, Irish music and dance, Japanese with English teaching, Economics, Politics, History, Sociology, Psychology, Criminal Justice and more.

Potentially, students of Law Plus will be able to study a pure law degree, or a law degree with two languages or even a law degree with Japanese with English teaching and Irish music and dance. The current Law and European Studies students will of course finish their degrees with the final ever

batch graduating in 2012.

Brainchild of Raymond Friel, Head of the Department of Law, the Law Plus programme seeks to broaden the scope of learning and facilitate those prospective students who aren't sure what career path they wish to pursue, but who want a solid degree that will stand to them

in a range of fields. Effectively, Law Plus repackages the old Law and European Studies programme. Law and European Studies Course Coordinator pointed out during the open days that CAO points for the course are as yet unknown because supply and demand is yet to be determined.

ALICE IN WONDERLAND
ULDRAMA SOC!!

**WHEN: WEEK 10 TUESDAY 13TH & WEDNESDAY 14TH
NOVEMBER**
WHERE: JONATHAN SWIFT/B1023
TIME: 7.30P.M.

Clare-side Carpark Bulldozed

ST. JOHN Ó DONNABHÁIN

OVER the weekend of November 3-4 workers on behalf of the University deposited a large quantity of earth and large boulders at the Car Park at the rear entrance from County Clare. In a move which is often used by local authorities to prevent Travellers from staying in a particular area, 17 car-parking spaces were covered and rendered unusable. These spaces, just outside of the road barrier into the campus, were used daily by students and staff travelling from Co. Clare to the University, who would then gain access on foot or by bicycle.

And all of this was done without consultation with any

of those affected. There was no prior notice provided to users of the car-parking facilities that these alterations would be made, according to Phyllis Sheehan from Clonlara, Co. Clare, who has studied and now works in UL. Already the suggestion of a petition on the staff internal mailing list, against this decision has attracted a large amount of support from across the campus community.

Some have supposed that the reason for the move was to ensure access for the emergency services to the dwelling popularly known to students as 'The Yellow House', in the event of an emergency. But this aim has not been achieved, according to Mick Moore (2nd Year Wood Sci-

ence), who also lives in Co. Clare and travels to University daily: "Their decision was ridiculous; people are now having to park unsafely and illegally outside the Burlington [plant] or the Lame Duck a further mile away."

Mick's problems with this decision are typical of the people who come into UL through that entrance on a daily basis, and who have been doing so for the last two years. He explained how coming to University through the city centre (the alternative route) would add almost an hour to his commute in the morning, and up to an hour and a half in the evening: "Contributing to the already ridiculous city traffic, wasting fuel and having to confine my

child to the car for this time, five days every week, on the way to the campus crèche - it's not fair on her or on me. This would have a massive impact on my daily life." He even goes as far as to suggest that he would have to consider his future education if there isn't something done to facilitate students and staff like him.

There are a number of options open to UL, says Mick, from facilitating Clare users in the upcoming car park on the North Campus, or using the space in the abandoned Burlington plant. He further added: "To put a student, or anyone else, in a situation like this is simply unacceptable, and should not be allowed to stand."

What is clear is that a



major problem has been created by the University by this action, and worse, it was taken in an underhanded fashion - therefore it is their responsibility to right this situation,

and soon.

The University authorities had not made a statement regarding the matter at time of going to print.

Ógra National Event Approaches

LUKE O'CALLAGHAN

AS you read this article, UL's Fianna Fail Con Colbert Cumann has nine exciting weeks under its belt. The same can also be said for Ógra cumanns all over the country

The party so far this academic year has succeeded in increasing its membership in practically all 3rd level institutions. Ógra has therefore sustained its position by far as the largest youth political organisation in the country. This is a major feat considering to be a part of Ógra you must be under twenty six years of age in comparison to Young Fine Gael who allow members up to the age of thirty and who are only the second largest youth political movement on the island. With Ógra recruitment being a huge success and also the triumph

of the general election in mind, Fianna Fáil can now only look with confidence towards events such as the 2009 local elections and also the organising of Fianna Fáil in Northern Ireland.

In the University of Limerick Ógra has some exciting weeks ahead with our national event now only around the corner. Originally the cumann had planned to hold a Munster event on the 23rd and 24th of November but because of increased interest from other areas outside Munster the Cumann together decided it was to their benefit to change the event to a national weekend. No doubt this increased interest evolved from Ógra's successful recruitment. Numerous TD's and other significant figures have already expressed their interest in the weekend. The cumann has workshops and sporting

events planned for the weekend which should aid us with improving our relationships with other cumanns around the country.

On Monday the 29th of October the cumann had its first guest speaker with Brian Crowley MEP. Mr Crowley addressed the cumann about some of the everyday things he is involved with in Europe and Ireland. He also gave the cumann a lot of information about the upcoming referendum which takes place early next year.

With the national Ógra event only around the corner it's a perfect time to join and get to know Ógra members all around the country. New members are always welcome to the cumann. We usually meet in the clubs and societies room 3 on Monday nights.



UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

Postgraduate Research Opportunities in Women's Studies at the University of Limerick

Women's Studies at UL is located across disciplines and departments, which makes for a lively interdisciplinary research environment. We currently offer courses at certificate, diploma, bachelor and masters degree levels and have a strong PhD programme and postgraduate forum. Existing research specialisations at the University of Limerick include: feminism, diaspora and multiculturalism; feminist literary studies; gender and popular culture, women and migration; women's history; gender and memory; mobile lives, globalisation and women. Preference will be given to PhD applications in these areas. PhD scholarships include fee remission (at EU level) and a stipend of €15,000 per annum for a period of three years.

An application form and further particulars can be obtained from:

Niamh Lenahan
College of Humanities
University of Limerick
Ireland
Tel: +353-61- 202945
Email: niamh.lenahan@ul.ie

The deadline for applications and all supporting materials is Friday January 18, 2008

For more information on graduate studies at UL see www.graduatestudies.ul.ie

For more information on Women's Studies at UL see: www.ul.ie/womensstudies/

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A.G.M. in the next few weeks

Fail to Prepare? Prepare to Fail!

A Gentle Guide to getting ready for Exams

LAST year I wouldn't have to write this article, as exams were after the Christmas and New Year Festivities, but alas there is a new academic calendar. Unfortunately, before you get tucked into all those mince pies and relax for the better part of a month there is a small matter of getting those exams out of the way. There are a few tips which you can do to get yourself prepare mentally and practically for this pre-uletide task!

1. Know when your Exams are on:

It may seem like a simple thing, but SO important. Always double check when and where you exam is. DO NOT rely on the provisional timetable that came out in Week 9, check the final timetable which comes out in Week 11.

2. Find out what the Exam Structure is:

This may have been in your

Course Outline, however clarify if it is multiple choice, short or long questions or a combination of two or more. Confirm how long you'll have and how each question is weighted. This will guide you on how long you should spend on each question.

Also find out if there are compulsory question, to make sure that you cover that topic or topics and that you also tie down that question.

3. Identify the topics which you need to and want to study:

Having found out how the paper is structured, this will help guide you in what you need to study. Given the range of subjects within all modules, unless it is stated it is no point trying to study, be sensible and strategic.

Exam papers become key at this point. They give you a guide to the style, types and phrasing of questions that can come up. You may even notice common topics which come up. Regardless, of what you have to cover they are a brilliant practice tools before

the exam and better prepare you to approach the exam when it comes.

4. Organise your notes:

Another simple one, but really worthwhile. The last thing you want is the night before the exam trying find the notes that you REALLY NEED and remember that was the class that you slept in on and you spend five hours ringing classmates, hoping someone has them. Get them in order and if there is some missing call in a favour from someone who was at that class.

5. MOST IMPORTANT: Look after yourself

As well as having the materials (notes, pens, pencils-2B for multiple choice), it important that you prepare yourself physically and mentally. Eat well-make your first trip to Alidi and discover your kitchen. As well as eating healthy, it can be really relaxing. Another benefit would be to make a call to your mother, as you wonder why the potato is cold and some of the mince is still red



in your Shepard's pie.

Just as important as making time for the books is, making time to get away from them every-so-often (this does not mean the lodge), start a book, discover the riverside walk (with a friend-think safety!) or the Arena (the big red brick building, on the way

to the lodge!). Draw up a schedule to act as a GUIDE to give you time to study, eating, time-out and the partialities of the life to help fight the monster of procrastination.

Best of Luck and try your best! If you have any questions leading up to or during the exam period call

into me or drop me an e-mail (education@ulsu.ie), I'll do my best to help or put you onto the person who can.

There will be a full exam supplement out in Week 12.

Welfare in UL

Judith Lynch, Welfare Officer

THE Equal Status Act gives you protection from discrimination (less favourable treatment). It applies to things like finding accommodation, looking for a job, or trying to get into a club or bar.

You cannot be discriminated against for any of the following reasons:

- Gender
- Marital status
- Family status
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion
- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Membership of the Travelling community

If you feel you have experienced discrimination you can contact the Equality Authority on 01-4173333. You have the right to take a case to the Equality Authority against, for example, a pub that refuses you admission for a discriminatory reason.

There are plenty of exceptions in the Equal Status Act. You can look up the act on www.oireactas.ie. If you feel that you have been discriminated against - bear in mind that the Students Union offers free legal advice so just call in if you feel you need to avail of it.

Discrimination on Age Grounds

Treating someone differently because they are under the age of 18 is not necessarily discrimination. Also, there can be an age limit to licensed premises (pubs and clubs) for people over 18,

but it must apply uniformly, be put on a conspicuous notice inside or outside the premises and must be applied in good faith.

Bouncers

Action taken by bouncers to ensure compliance with the Intoxicating Liquor Acts is not discrimination, so long as it is done in good faith. Bouncers must be licensed and carry identification.

Accommodation

You cannot be refused accommodation on discriminatory grounds. However, there are exceptions. For example: accommodation can be refused on the grounds of gender if the particular accommodation is for men or women only.

Making a claim

Anybody who wants to make a claim of discrimination must notify the person against whom the claim is being made in writing within two months of the incident identifying the nature of the claim and saying they intend to seek redress under the Act. If this is not sent a claim cannot be pursued although sometimes the time limit may be extended.

If there is no reply or an unsatisfactory reply the complaint should be referred within 6 months to:

The Equality Tribunal
3 Clonmel St.
Dublin 2

If you require any further information or have any other queries, don't hesitate to email Judith at welfare@ulsu.ie or just drop into the office. I'm happy to help.

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

JUDITH LYNCH

Pleasure Seeking and STI's - Hardly the ideal combination!

A common complaint from fella's is that condoms reduce sensation and pleasure during sex. So you're looking for sex with only the pill for protection or possibly no protection at all. Need I tell you at this stage that you're leaving yourself open to the risks of STI transmission? Meet today's STI of the fortnight: Syphilis

What is it?

A bacterial infection that can be passed on through unprotected sex (including oral sex). It can be present with hardly any symptoms but is still infectious.

What are the symptoms?

Syphilis has three stages:

Primary stages symptoms - Usually a few weeks after infection, painless sores might appear on the body (commonly on the genitals or mouth) and can take from 2-6 weeks to heal. These sores are highly infectious.
Secondary stages - Usually occurs some weeks after the sores, can include a painless rash on the body, warty growths on genitals and a flu-like illness. If left untreated, the infection may progress to the third or latent stage, which is still infectious although a person may not have any symptoms.

How do I protect myself?

Using a condom when having sex helps to prevent transmission. For Oral sex - make sure to use a condom or dental dam!

What if I don't get it treated?

Untreated syphilis can cause insanity, blindness, paralysis, and eventually death. The only way to find out if you have syphilis is to get a check up at an STI clinic and the sooner the better as it is easily treated if detected early.
If you have syphilis when you are pregnant the disease can cause miscarriage or stillbirth. It can also be passed from mother to unborn child in the womb.

Where is my local STI clinic?

You can apply for an STI test at Limerick Regional Hospital - 061-482382
The phone lines are open between 14.30 and 16.00 between Monday and Friday
BE WARNED - it is extremely difficult to get through to the clinic and make an appointment. If you eventually succeed, the waiting lists is 5-6 weeks although there are slots available for emergency cases.

Postgraduate News



BY DERRICK HOWARD
VICE-PRESIDENT, PSA

WELCOME to the update on Postgraduate news for this fortnight's An Focal. Emma is away at quality review for Student Affairs this week so you're stuck with me.

There's been a few things of note going on with the PSA.

New Treasurer for the PSA

As there was no treasurer elected at our AGM, the nominations were opened for the position. The only candidate to put his name forward was Micheal Bourke, as such he was welcomed onto the executive as of last Friday. Michael, a thought masters student in European Integration from Clonmel, said he was delighted to be

given the opportunity to get involved.

Halloween

The PSA held a "Fashion Disasters" Halloween Party in Java's on Halloween night. The event was a fundraiser for the PSA Postgraduate Ball and went off without a hitch. It was great to see the effort that some of you went to, notably Pat Butcher, Amy Winehouse, our own president, Emma, dressed as a "neon mess", and our new treasurer, Micheal, dressed as General Disarray from South Park. Keep your eyes peeled for more postgrad events soon.

Grants

Just a quick note for anyone who has still to collect their childcare bursaries for the PSA, the final day you can collect you're grants is this Friday. Please get in contact with Emma as soon as possible on: Emma.Murphy@ul.ie

Reintegration - Update

As you may or may not know, the PSA is planning to reintegrate with the Student's Union from next year on. This was discussed at length at our AGM and will bring a number of benefits to our association - not least of which is the administrative relieve it will provide.

Reintegration was passed successfully at the PSA AGM, but unfortunately as there was not quorum at the ULSU AGM it remains an outstanding issue at their end. The PSA and ULSU are planning a number of things to address this issue. Firstly the SU will inform Class Reps Council and Clubs and Societies Council to inform the undergraduate population of the importance of this issue. There is also a joint committee being set up to promote reintegration in both associations.

Keep in touch

We're eager to hear from you. The Postgraduate Student Association is here to represent postgrads but also provide facilities for you. If there is anything you think we should be doing or running, email myself or Emma, or drop into the office in the PSA common room.

Also keep an eye on the PSA website to find out about news and events, you can also subscribe to the mailing list. www.ul.ie/~psa

That's all from me, Emma will be back with you next time.

Take care,

Derrick Howard
Vice-President, PSA.

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Student Poker tournament is back!

Presenting the 2008 **VC** Student Poker Championships

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Is Jesus really alive? An Ghaelgeóir

SAMUEL WATTERSON

ON Thursday week 7, one of the largest events ever to be run by the UL Christian Union was held. "The Undead", with the theme of "born dead, die living", was attended by about seventy people. The Irish part of the famous international organisation, Teen Challenge founded by Rev. David Wilkerson (see The Cross and the Switchblade movie) has by far the most successful drug rehabilitation program compared to any other secular organisation. How does it work? Prayer. Some of their girls including a local from Limerick shared their stories of how Jesus Christ has changed their lives forever.

In the middle of their stories, their pastor explained the Gospel, how that at one stage we were all lost from God because of our sin and subject to His wrath and punishment in the coming judgement, but how Jesus died to take this punishment for anyone who trusts in Him. From their stories it was clearly seen how God can transform the most broken

people, through that simple faith. A famous Christian professional theatre company, the Covenant Players began and concluded this evening with some powerful dramas to illustrate the message and to challenge the audience to respond.

This weekend was another high point for ULCU as twenty-two of us (in previous years this number had been under ten), headed off to Ovoca Manor in beautiful Wicklow to meet with our brothers and sisters from other Christian Unions all over Ireland at an annual conference called Joint Colleges. This was a great time of encouragement and of listening to God and learning from His word, the holy Bible as it was taught by Seán Mullan of Evangelical Alliance Ireland. A great time was had and we all grew much closer together while at the same time being challenged to learn more what it means to live every day with God.

You may have seen our lurid green hoodies emblazoned with the words, "Jesus is here on campus, sure wasn't here born in the Stables?" Is it a bad joke, or a



very bold statement?! What do you think? Is Jesus really alive today and actively at work in the University of Limerick? This year we know at least about forty of your fellow critically-minded students along with some staff and lecturers shout a defiant YES!

Short and infinitely sweet, the UL Christian Union is all about Jesus. We meet because of Him, because of what He's done, taking the punishment for our sin, and because we want to know Him more, this unimaginably wondrous Creator of the universe. We believe that life in all its fullness is this perfect beautiful relationship with God made possible through Jesus' sacrifice for anyone

who believes.

If you want to find out more about us, you can check out our website at www.skynet.ie/~cu/ or email cu@skynet.ie or better yet everyone is welcome to come to our weekly meetings no matter where you're from or where you're going or what your struggles are or how holy/unholy you feel. Every Monday night at 8pm in the Contemplative Centre and week 10 we'll be having our testimonies night where you'll hear us telling our stories of the difference God has made in our lives since believing in Jesus, and why we say He is alive and active here and now in UL. God's grace be with you!

Oireachtas na Samhna 2007

CAITLÍONA NÍ
GHALLACHÓBHAIR

BHÍ oireachtas na samhna ar siúl i Cathair na Mart i mbliana agus bhí an t-ádh orm bheith i láthair. De réir nach raibh laethanta saoire againn san Ollscoil do Oíche Shamhna ní raibh mé in ann dul go dtí an deireadh seachtaine, ach in ainneoin sin bhí an craic thar barr! Tháinig thart ar fiche míle duine, sean agus óg, go Cathair na Mart don Oireachtas, agus gach éinne acu ag labhairt as gaeilge!

Oíche de hAoine chuaigh mé go dtí óstán Cathair na Mart agus bhíos ag éisteacht leis an Mamín Cajun Band, an ghrúp a chum an amhrán cáilúil 'an Dreolín'. Tar éis sin bhíos thuas i gClub na Féile sa Castlecourt, lárphointe na h-imeachtaí. Bhí comórtaisí sean-nós, damhsa agus ceol ar siúl i gcónaí i gCathair na Mart agus Caisleán an Bharraigh. Chomh maith leis sin, i rith an lae, bhí siamsaíocht don aos óg agus sean le feiceáil.

Maidin de Sathurn, bhí seimineár Chonradh na Gaeilge ar siúl sa Plaza faoi stáisiún radio trí gaeilge a bhunadh. Bhí Déasún Mac an Easpáig (Des Bishop) sa lucht éisteachta agus Hector Ó hEochagáin ag caint ar son é a

bhunadh. Bhí Raidió na Gaeltachta agus na stáisiún gaeilge néamhspléach i láthair, mar sin léacht conspóideach ab ea é!

I rith an lae bhí bileogaí eolas le fáil ó beagnach gach cómhlacht a bhfuil bainteach leis an ngaeilge sa tír sa Castlecourt. Ag an am céanna bhí réimse leathain daoine, ó gach áit sa tír agus ní amháin na Gaeltachtaí, amuigh ar na sráideanna chun píosa siamsaíocht agus ceol.

Oíche de Sathurn, an oíche deirneach, bhí John Spillane agus Louis de Paor ag seinm in Óstán Cathair na Mart. Tar eis sin bhí cúpla deoch againn sa mbaile sula chuaigh mé fhéin agus na mic léinn eile ó UCD agus Coláiste na Tríonóide ar ais go dtí Club na Féile le haghaidh céilí agus craic. Bhíomar an go dtí a trí a chlog ar maidin agus céilúradh le lucht an gaeilge. Bhí aghaidheanna cáilúil mar Hector, Des, Bláthnaid Ní Chofaigh agus Joe Steve Ó Neachtain ó Ros na Rún in ár measc.

Thaithin an toireachtas go mór mór liom. Is iontach an rud é go bhfuil suim chomh mór sin sa Ghaeilge ag an aos óg chomh maith is na ghnáthdaoine. Bhí atmaisféir thar barr ann agus táim ag tnúth leis an chéad toireachtas eile an bliain seo chugainn i Corcaigh. Tá súil agam go mbeidh níos mó daoine ó Ollscoil Luimnigh ann chomh maith!

DIARMUID HEALY

AS everyone probably already knows, Aer Lingus have decided to remove their Shannon-Heathrow route and move the Heathrow slots to Belfast. From the 4,000 person protest in Limerick last week, it is obvious that this is not a move that the people of Ireland are happy with. Speculations have been made that if the Shannon-Heathrow air link is gone it will discourage business development in the West, Mid-West, and South West of Ireland. If this were true it could have devastating effects on the Irish economy. But I would like to ask the question "Why Heathrow?"

Heathrow is Europe's busiest airport, with 67 million passengers going through every year. It has two runways, and has to operate at its full permitted capacity in order to process these passengers. This is why the Heathrow landing slots are so valuable, as there is no way of creating new slots.

There is however 3 other brilliant alternatives that no-

Why Heathrow?

one appears to discuss.

Charles De Gaulle, Paris has four runways, and processes 58 million passengers per year. It has room to expand this by a further 25 to 30 million per year. It is an international airport and as such can compete with Heathrow for destinations. Because of the room to expand, it would be easier to get slots then in Heathrow. Is this a good alternative? If not, then how about Frankfurt airport?

Frankfurt airport has three runways, and processes 52 million passengers per year. It has room to expand its yearly passengers by a further 17 million per year, making it easy to get a slot here. Is this a good enough reason to pick Frankfurt instead of Heathrow? If not, then how about the fact that it fly's to a total of 265 destinations, which is more than Heathrow. Still not good enough? Ok, so

how about Schipol in Amsterdam?

Schipol airport processes 55 million passengers a year. However, it currently has six runways. This will make acquiring slots reasonably easy as it has massive room to expand. If this wasn't a good enough reason, then how about the fact that it fly's to 91 different countries? Still not good enough? Well there's also the fact that it has won 120 prizes, among those were "Best Business Airport", "Best

European Airport" and "Best Airport in the World". This should make it an obvious, and probably better, replacement for Heathrow.

Most business travel has its final destination in America or somewhere in Asia, not in London. Schipol, Frankfurt and Charles De Gaulle all fly to as many, if not more, destinations in America and Asia as Heathrow. On top of this, if London was your final destination, London has three(?) other airports that you can go to instead of Heathrow. The Heathrow slots are gone. Get over it and move on to one of Europe's other fine International Airports.



Top 10 ways of saving paper

NICOLA HOGAN

1. E mail or text information where possible.
2. Research information on the internet and store in USB stick or CD as opposed to printing it out.
3. Print only when necessary and get as much information on each page as possible.
4. Set the printer to print only the information you need, nothing else.
5. Set the printer to print double sided where possible.
6. Reuse discarded single sided paper "scrap paper" by printing on the other side.
7. Submit course work double-sided where permitted.
8. Avail of the library's free newspapers, books, magazines etc. as opposed to purchasing a new one and swap monthly magazine with people with similar interests.
9. Look in second hand book shops and avail of library clearouts before purchasing new books.
10. Avail of the university's online information tools such a public folders and share point portal where possible.

Letters to the editor

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

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

Sir

Where in God's earth did we find some of the occupants of this lovely University? The Students' Union common room is an exceptional heap of rubbish, constantly in a state of filth and therefore constantly unusable. The people with whom this mess lies are clearly the users and fairly and honestly, it can only be stated these people are incapable of clearing the rubbish to the bins provided.

It is with annoyance and even distain that I find myself writing this letter as a shameful representation on people who are being given so much access to a better life and this is as much appreciation as is shown for it.

The Union is clearly a space for all UL students and yet a few lazy people have no regard for this space and so the question has to be, should it remain an open common room?

Is this all it is to be space for, FILTH?

Yours,

Damien Cahill

A Chara,

I was strolling towards the Jonathan Swift on Tuesday Evening the 30th October, as us godless Drama geeks tend to, when I discovered a Christian Union poster. The poster warned that cowards and 'non-believers' along with people such as murderers and the corrupt, would be destined for the fiery lakes of burning sulphur.

Now, try getting inside my head for a minute (as scary and all as that experience may be), I'm a little Johnny no god, plodding around happily after handing in a project earlier in the day, when I come across a poster confirming my eternal damnation. What made it a bit disturbing was that I as a 'non believer' was apparently higher up the pecking order of 'condemned' than mur-

derers. "Johnny may be a dirty murdering bastard but at least he says his prayers" I mean don't get me wrong, I appreciate being warned about my pending doom while I am still young enough to do something about it. I have been flagellating myself ever since. (The blisters are getting a bit sore) However as an experienced P.R.O, I am a bit worried on the impact it may have on the CU's image. At the risk of being controversial, I would imagine a large percentage of the college population are 'non believers' or at least 'laissez faire' Christians. Therefore do the CU really think that condemning a large percentage of the student population to a fiery doom will endear them to that population. It's a little too Fred Phelps-ish for me. I mean what's next? God hates fags pickets outside the SU?

Of course from a practical point of view I foresee a further problem. Do the CU really think that talking to people in cold, damp Ireland about burning sulphur will truly scare them off their flawed, heathen existence? "Jeysus mick, don't bother going to mass this morning. According to this Christian crowd if we stop believing in God we get free central heating when we die." "Really Tom? Oh yeah, that's the dog's boll****s!"

The CU really should not overlook Irish people's instrumentalism.

Finally, if they really want to save souls, perhaps they should be less like Fred Phelps and more like Ned Flanders. Because remember, "everyone that counts loves Ned Flanders!"

Is mise

Donal O' Driscoll

Sir,

Call me an engineer but I always assumed that a bridge was the shortest distance between two points.

Yours,

Cillian Bourke

El Presidente

International Students and Fees

IN recent years the number of International Students in UL has grown in a big way, and across the country as a whole. This has been great for diversity on campus, and has really contributed to the development of the University.

But International Students are not treated in the same way as conventional students. They are considered the cash-cows of the Irish education system, both by the Universities and by the Higher Education Authority. Fees of up to €15,000 per year are levied on non-EU students, while many students who were born abroad or whose families moved abroad for a number of years are liable for around €5,000 every year.

This has the effect of excluding huge numbers of young people from the chance to get a third-level education, and of creating a false divide between people of the basis of their passports. This is part of a wider process of commercialisation and privatisation currently underway within the education system, and is being pushed by the Higher Education Authority (HEA), which attempts to apply market logic to the organisation, and most importantly the funding, of third-level. But the purpose of a University is not to make money or produce products, it is to educate - and that means everyone, not just those who can pay!

While Ireland is far from perfect, our Free Fees system for many students makes us one of the most inclusionary countries in Europe in terms of participation in third-level, despite spending less much less than the average % of GDP on education (OECD, Education at a Glance 2007).

Ireland is no longer a monocultural place, and it's much the better for that fact. International students need to be recognised as equal to all other students, and treated as such. This is something the Students Union will be campaigning on, so if you can tell about your experience of this, or want to get involved, please get in touch! The Government and the HEA need to see that this policy of enormous fees is exclusionary and change it now.

Education is a right, not a privilege!

St.John Ó Donnabháin, ULSU President
st.john.odonnabhain@ul.ie



Need to get something off your chest?

Visit the ULSU web forum

www.ulsu.ie/forum

Clashes on Iraqi-Turkey border spark fears of full-scale conflict

NIAMH CLOWRY

ATACKS launched by Kurdish rebels against Turkish troops on the Iraqi border have been strongly condemned throughout the world in recent weeks, as the possibility of the escalation of the violence looms dangerously on the horizon. The clashes which left twelve Turkish soldiers dead, prompted the Turkish military to respond with a counter-offensive in which thirty-two rebels were reportedly killed.

Tension on the border has significantly increased since the Turkish parliament authorised troops to hunt down rebels thought to be hiding in northern Iraq. This deployment of as many as 100,000 troops along the border, in an attempt to stop rebels crossing from Iraq into

Turkey has served to heighten already worrying tensions that have been simmering for some time.

Although the northern Iraqi province has been relatively peaceful despite the high level of insurgency in the rest of the country, these new clashes are considerably worrying, not only for Turkey but for the international community as a whole. Certainly the US, a powerful ally of Turkey, fears an offensive on the part of Turkey could seriously destabilise the most peaceful part of Iraq and would place the US in a position which it neither desires nor needs at this juncture. Significantly the Kurdish Worker's Party (PKK) operating from the northern province of Iraq has been listed as a terrorist group by the US State Department. Yet Washington is opposed to

Turkey launching a cross-border operation into Iraq amid fears that such an incursion could spark unrest and fighting in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq. Double standards and a conflict of interests for the US no doubt are going to case this saga to run and run.

As it currently stands Turkey seems ready and willing to launch such an offensive with or without US support, with various news agencies reporting that the Turkish parliament has passed a motion allowing the government to send troops into the province with immediate effect. This proposed action however could serve to seriously destabilise the already fragile region and it could also lead to terrorist counter reprisals both in Turkey and within the



territories of Turkey's allies.

Clearly in an age of terror, a strong non-aligned intervention into the dispute is urgently needed in order to prevent these clashes from escalating into an all out

conflict, whatever the wrongs and rights of the current situation may be. However with American involvement so deeply entrenched in both Iraq and Turkey one wonders what the outcome of the

dispute will be in the long term and the implications any more conflict will have on the future stability of the region as a whole.

Howard Marks - Student Icon

DIARMUID O'KEEFFE

THE classic English poet William Blake once wrote that the path to excess leads to enlightenment. On Monday night, as the lights went up in the Jean Monet theatre, the counter-culture of UL paid homage with a standing ovation to one of the great hedonists of our time; Howard Marks. Mr Nice spent two hours playing a blinder to his audience, charmingly telling the yarns of his life as one of the most successful multinational drug barons, now and again spinning off in tangents due to his obvious Rasta-intoxication.

The night began with a brief introduction of the man through a montage of news and documentary footage, obviously a quickstart guide to those unfamiliar with his past. I sat there wondering how a man with such intellect and amiability could find himself in such an occupation but held judgement until I heard the last word from the horse's mouth. Once the scene was set, Mr Nice took to the stage looking like so many of those middle aged 24-

hour party people I had encountered in Manchester. He engaged the audience with the poise and stride of a stoner who no longer suffered from paranoia, telling tales of his battle with the establishment over the years, unwitting them for so long with such ingenious scams. Listening carefully, I realised that Marks was a man who calculated odds and largely got it right.

After recounting various adventures in Europe and the Caribbean, Mr Nice began to explain his experiences with psychoactive substances in South America. He spoke of trips to Peru and Columbia throwing in references to cocaine to keep his material contemporary. But his exploration of the Shamanic world was the highlight of the night. He spoke of the world of mushrooms, toads and cacti, the "flesh of the gods", the substances that are said to detangle the fabric of space-time- to open the doors of perception. As he spoke of these memories his voice grew low and his eyes remained shut. It seemed as if he were attempting to delve into his mind and put words to those experiences. Something told

me however, that primitive linguistics could never part with the visions he had attained.

The night came to a close with Mr Nice switching off the stage persona and allowing the audience to engage with Mr Marks through a question and answer forum. This is unfortunately where the counter-culture failed to shine with stunningly banal questions such as "What is the most f***ed you have been?" and "How much dope did you smuggle into Ireland?" I felt that this generation of students had missed the point. There is no doubt in my mind that Mr Marks is a man who saw the system for what it was and played it like a harp from hell. He is also a man who had no time for religious dogma but had a spiritual yearning that led him on a journey of mind expansion through drugs. Like the images of Marley and Guevara that were displayed on screens throughout the evening, Howard Marks, through the actions of his life, has elevated himself to the status of student icon.

UL Socialist Youth: Eyewitness Report from Rosspoint

CIAN PRENDIVILLE

MORE than 150 protesters from the Mayo area and around the country gathered at Shell's gas refinery at Bellanaboy on October the 12th, including 6 members of UL Socialist Youth. They were met with a massive and forceful Garda presence, backed up by the Public Order Unit.

Some fencing that Shell had laid down illegally on land owned by locals, in preparation for the building of the unsafe onshore pipeline was ripped up by locals and given back to Shell, marked "return to sender". However, unfortunately, the large presence of Gardaí meant that there was an insufficient number of protestors to seriously impede Shell's work for the day.

A number of people, including myself, had their thumbs twisted. I was also lifted off up by the hair. A fellow member of UL Socialist Youth had his shoe thrown into the river by one of the police men, who later apologized saying he wouldn't have done it "if I knew it was your good shoe".

From my own experience there, I thought the excessive force used by the Gardaí was far out of context with what was necessary. They were quite blatantly not there to mediate or to enforce the law, instead they were there as a private Shell force. Despite this I thought the protest was quite encouraging, especially the local participation. This was a real boost for all the people from UL SY, seeing the palpable anger of the locals.

Continuously Socialist Youth have highlighted how, even with Eamon Ryan in position as Minister for

Energy, the giveaway of gas and resources off the Irish coast continues. The Department of Energy's own analysis suggests there could be \$600 billion worth of crude oil or gas off the west coast. Yet despite this, Ryan is proposing to continue the giveaway to private companies like Shell and Statoil.

By time of print we will have attended another protest in Rosspoint on the 10th of November. If you want to come along to future protests and activities, join UL Socialist Youth today!

Skydive UL

EGM & Christmas Night Out

**Meeting John Holland Theatre
Wednesday 21 November
7pm**

Refreshments for the night for those in attendance at the EGM

STUDENT SPEAK

This week Janelle Eagleton asks UL students 'What do you think of exams being on before Christmas?'

Maria Edgeworth
 4th year Law & European Studies
 "It's good for people doing FYPs because they'll have 5 weeks to do them after Christmas... is that a boring answer!?"



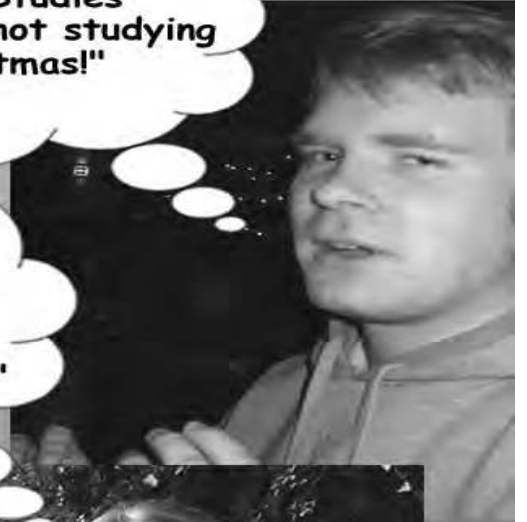
Helen McGuire
 4th year Public Administration
 "I think it's a good thing... but is it the end of Xmas Days?"



Caitliona Gallagher
 2nd year Applied Languages
 "I think it's good that we don't have exams after Christmas anymore but it means that the assignment deadlines have been pushed forward"



Jamie Quane
 4th year Law & European Studies
 "I'll miss not studying over Christmas!"



Laura Power & Amie Clancy
 4th Year Language & Cultural Studies
 "It's great, we get 6 weeks holidays! Sweet!"



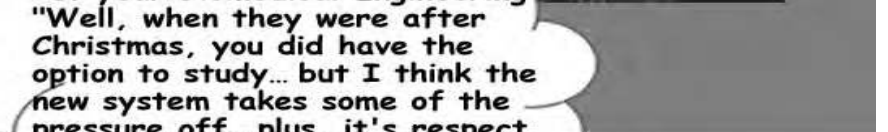
Rachel O'Brien
 4th Year Business Studies
 "The exams are creeping up very fast but it'll be nice to have a break over Christmas and not have to worry"



David Heskin
 4th Year Business Studies
 "It's good because I'll have Christmas off... and 5 weeks to do my FYP!"



Eoin Kinane
 1st year Biomedical Engineering
 "Well, when they were after Christmas, you did have the option to study... but I think the new system takes some of the pressure off... plus, it's respect for Jesus Christ's birthday"



Anne-Marie Campbell
 4th Year Business Studies
 "Stop asking Questions... You're making me angry"





Desperate to see an, er, kitty!



After you take this picture Im gonna eat your face' fa la la la la



Chav babies are the best kind.... they grow up so fast



Calm down you crazy Germans



I'm bringing sexy back



I love that I can wear my debs dress, 20 years on!



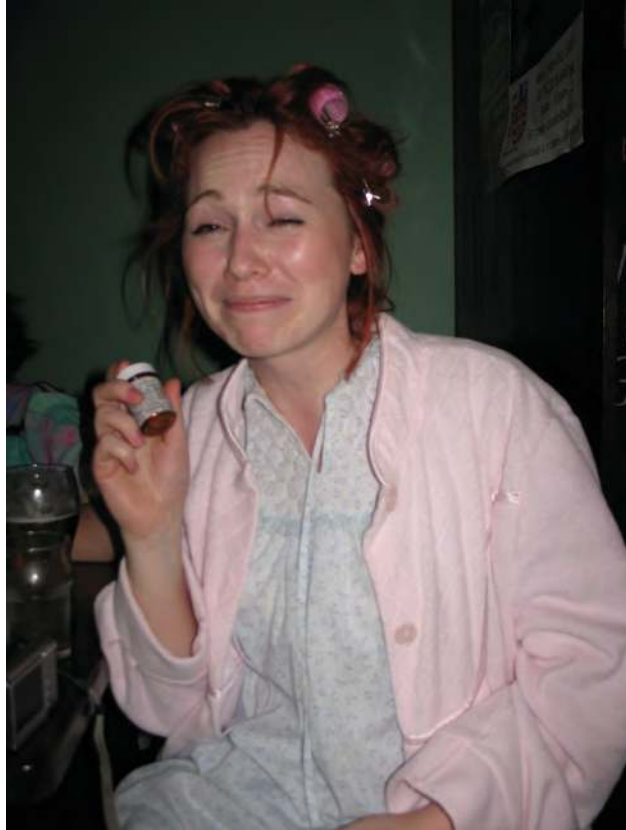
Happy postman, happy smurf, happy dracula = happy hands



I'll give ya a fiver for that there camera sham"



Maybe Darth Vader should be washed out



It's not easy being a postgrad... I've gotta try and look young every day



Oh thats new pussycat...im hoping it's your tail!!



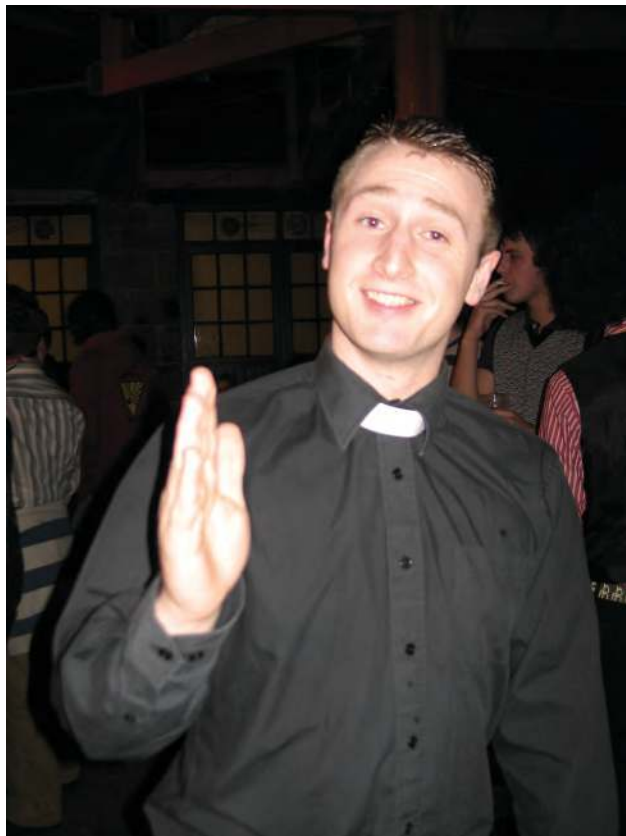
Godess or god-damn-mess...you decide



Look at my package...it's big it's square and it's yours for a good price



The best feel Paddy's had all year...



I'm tellin ya us priests are underrated....I can bake, knit sow and FLY



This tin foil brings out the colour of the ginger's eyes dont you think.....



ULSU ENTS

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€100 cash - good idea, or a great one

So its week 10 and we're getting to that time of year when everything calms down. We take a breath, figure out if it was a good term or not and then get working on second semester and making sure that those 15 weeks are every bit as good if not better than the previous 15 weeks.

A few people have made enquiries about what and who is happening in second semester. Heres what we are looking at so far, we would hope to have confirmed dates for the next edition of An Focal.

Schnitzel Comedy

Neil Delamare
Andrew Maxwell
Jason Byrne
David O'Doherty

Swift/Monnet Sessions

The Saw Doctors

Green Sessions

Fight Like Apes
Hooray for Humans

Also keep an eye out for the Penguin Sessions. Following on the success of the the Declan O'Rourke gig in Javas we're going to try and do a few more solo acoustic gigs in the venue. We hope to have a line up finalised before the end of this semester. By the way they are called the penguin sessions in honour of the scary penguin that is in residence on the window sill in Javas. He's kind of freaky but cool at the same time! If you havn't seen him then check him out, but be careful he does stare back!



Christmas Daze

We're being asked lots of questions about Christmas Daze so here are some of the answers. Firstly for all those first years who aren't quite sure what it is and have heard rumours of the mystical Christmas Daze. It's the craziest three days on campus outside of Rag Week when we all get into that Xmas Spirit and head to the Stables for lots of merriment and Xmas cheer. It's Santa hats and Xmas tunes all the way with an occasional outbreak of carol singing during the day!

It's happening on November 27, 28 and 29 and you need to buy your tickets in advance. Be warned they do sell out. The tickets go on sale on Tuesday Week 10 at 7pm, so even the ticket selling turns into a bit of a party! Tickets for the night are 10 euro. And profits over the week go to local charities.

Ents on all of the nights is provided by Ber and his box of Christmas tunes followed by Free Beer. We know it's a bit early in the year to start the whole Christmas buzz but if we don't do it

now then exams are around the corner and nobody wants Xmas Daze the night before a 9am economics multiple choice with negative marking!

Last year the three nights rased in excess of 10,000 euro for local charities so put your hands in your pockets and buy your tickets.....

Rag Week

Seeing as we're on the subject of charity I'll take a moment to share a few Rag Week thoughts with you.

Extra Night

The dates are March 10th to 14th. We've added an extra date to the event , for the last few years we've finished up on the Thursday this year we're going all hard core and adding in the Friday night. The main reason for this is to give people on Co-Op and TP a chance to come back for a night of debauchery if they feel they're missing out! We're also going to invite back the 2007 graduating class so that they can relive old Rag Week memories and finally its for the stragglers who didn't have enough in four days and nights of excess and feel the need to end the week in style!

Line Up

We're hoping to have the line up finalised by the next edition of An Focal so that we can send you home for Christmas salivating at the thoughts of coming back for a massive Rag Week. We're currently in negotiation with a number of artists and we hope to have 5 seriously good gigs for you to choose from. If you have any ideas of what you would like to see then let us know and we'll see if we can book it. Just leave a comment on our Bebo page (Ulents) and we'll work away on it. Before you ask Snow Patrol , The Frames , The Killers etc are just a little bit out of our league for Rag Week, unless of course you want to pay a 60 euro ticket price... didn't think so!!

The daytime line up has to be sorted too, we're looking for lots of new ideas and even some old ones... If you have any ideas for a way to kill some time in the courtyard over the week then let us know, the wackier the better. If they can raise money for charity that's a good aspect too. So put your heads together and get some ideas down on paper.

Bands Competiton

Lots of people tell us about bands from home who are brilliant and would love to do a gig down here. Well nows their chance, we're going to run a competition through our Bebo pages to win a support slot at Rag Week. That's a gig supporting the likes of The Blizzards etc in front of 1000 people. Nice work if you can get it.

The idea is that you need to drop a line on our comment section suggesting a band that you think would be worth giving a support slot to. We'll pick the 5 bands that are nominated most... put their music up on the site... and run a poll to see who gets the gig.



So you can nominate anytime from now until the end of Week 11 and voting in the poll goes from Week 12 to Week 15. We'll have prizes for the people that nominate the winning band as well as VIP passes for the band to give to their two biggest fans. So get thinking and nominating and we'll see who wins!

Charities

Last year we raised over 20,000 euro for charities in Rag Week , we did this because firstly the gigs all sold out and made lots of money and secondly lots of people volunteered, got involved and raised money through running events, collecting and just doing their bit.

Our aim this year is to make over 20,000 again and its going to take a massive effort from everyone to achieve that. If you want to get involved then contact the Welfare office and they'll take your contact details. You can run around for the week or you can just give us two hours of your time. Every minute someone helps out counts and helps increase the charity money. Getting involved also gets you a Rag Week t-shirt and an invite to the Apres Rag Week Party which makes all the Rag Week parties look quite tame.

If you are involved with a charity and would like to see them as a recipient of Rag Week money then contact the Welfare office and they will let you know about the procedures. The Welfare Working group make the final decisions on the charities, but if you're not in you cant win!

Rag Radio

I had a few people get in touch with ideas ro rag radio but not



ULSU ENTS

www.bebo.com/ulents

Sponsored by **Ulster Bank**

€100 cash - good idea, or a great one

enough. If you think you have an idea or maybe you want a career in radio but don't know where to start then this is your chance. Mail us at keith@eightball.ie or on bebo with Ulents and let us know you're interested and what your idea is and we can go from there. It might seem like a long time away but when you think we have all of January off it's not that far off at all.

Crew

We're going to have to take on new bodies for crew for 2nd Semester and Rag Week in particular. If it's something you'd be interested in and think you'll be able for it then pick up an application form from main reception of the Students' Union. Interviews will take place before the end of semester.

If you are selected you will then have to do a weekend training course in order to comply with state legislation regarding security work. It all sounds like a bit of a pallaver but it's the law and once you have it done, you're crew and it's a whole pile of fun!

Thomond Ball

The Thomond Ball is scheduled for Thursday Week 4 of second semester. We're letting you know now so that you can prepare in advance. Tickets will go on sale on Monday Week 2. There was an old tradition at the Thomond Ball of an awards ceremony and this is something that we want to reinstate this year. This involved lots of real awards with decent prizes and dodgy awards with booby prizes.

It was a massive part of the event with all students from the education faculty voting on these awards for weeks in advance of the event itself. If you have any ideas for the awards then let your class reps know. We'll put together a ballot paper of awards and candidates for Monday Week 2, when the tickets go on sale and you can submit your ballot paper the day before the ball.

Throw in a band and a DJ and hey presto you have the makings of a right good night!!

International Week

We're looking to run a new event in Week 1 of second semester but we're not sure of the format yet! We basically want to run a week highlighting the best bits of indigenous Irish culture and showcase the best bits of new International culture that we are surrounded by in modern Ireland. It's basically, without trying to sound too bulshitty and waffly, a celebration of diversity.

We're investigating the possibility of putting up a marquee and some of the ideas we're exploring include a giant ceili, international food fair, Irish Beer festival etc. If you have any ideas then let us know. If any of the clubs and socs out there have any ideas on either an event for the week or on ways of putting the Marquee to use during the day as well as the night then let us know.

**TRYING TO FIGURE OUT
WHAT TO DO THIS
WEDNESDAY?**

HOW ABOUT SOME.....

PUB ORIENTEERING!

**AFTER DRAMA SOC'S PRODUCTION
OF
'ALICE IN WONDERLAND'
JONATHAN SWIFT THEATRE
WEDNESDAY, WEEK 10**

TEAM OF THREE, €15.

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AONTAS NA MAC LÉINN
ULSU
Ollscoil Luimnigh

NiteLink Bus

Nightlink Timetable 07/08

Route A On the hour
19:00, 20:00, 21:00, 22:00, 23:00
Start Stables Archway
Stop 1 Dromroe Village
Stop 2 Thomond Village
Stop 3 Cappavilla Village
Stop 4 Plassey Village
Stop 5 College Court
Stop 6 Courtyard Student Village
Stop 7 Brookfield Student Village
End Stables Archway

Route B On the half hour
19:30, 20:30, 21:30, 22:30, 23:35
Start Stable Archway
Stop 1 Killmurry Village
Stop 2 Elm Park
Stop 3 Oaklawns
Stop 4 Killmurry Lodge
Stop 5 Superquinn
Stop 6 Brierfield
Stop 7 Courtyard/Brookfield Roundabout
End Stables Archway
* Spar & Milford Grange on request

Route C 23:35 ONLY
All routes A & B stops on request
Please note Route C is a drop off only route.



Ul.motormouth@gmail.com

OKAY people...time to get your asses in gear at this time of year. You need to make sure your car is ready for winter...as my grandad reminded me last week telling me that I need 2 new tyres on the back of my car!!

So I'm gonna keep it short and sweet this week. You need to check a few things...

1. If your car hasn't been serviced this year; now is a good time to get it done.

2. Check your lights...this is NOT part of a service. Always keep a spare of each type of bulb

- Front indicator
- Side indicator

- Reverse
- Headlight
- Rear light
- Brake light

3. Check your tyres. The weather is getting colder and wetter and if your tyres aren't fit for the road...your insurance premium might find itself 3 or 4 times higher because you couldn't stop in time...at best...at worst...I'll leave that to you!!

4. Know how to check your coolant and oil levels.

5. Keep your windscreen washer fluid/water topped up...last thing you want is to end up stuck behind an arctic truck in Kerry, Kilkenny or Galway with spray coming off the road and no washer fluid/water...believe me...I've

been there!!

6. Buy a tow-rope, warning triangle and jump-leads...sets available in motor factors and the likes of Halfords...shop around...I'm sure EBay could be useful too.

7. KEEP YOUR PETROL TOPPED UP...You should refill the tank at half full, to stop water freezing in the fuel lines and causing you grief (yes water does get into the tank...from vapour).

8. Fog-X or a similar anti-fogging product might be a good idea and reduce the petrol used to keep the windows clear in winter.

Light-Up, Belt-Up, Be Safe!

Just Your Average Sex Column

ALEXANDRA GAVIGAN

FOREPLAY - ladies and gentlemen, mostly gentlemen this is one part of the whole sexual experience that should not to be ignored. EVER! Given that only approximately 20% of women can just achieve orgasm from sex alone it seems that it's pretty damn important unless you're the wham, bam, thank you M'am 5 minute wonder type - in which case you're not really worth shagging anyway! Besides it's not like foreplay is that much effort anyway you just have to kiss teasingly and embrace the action of hand stimulation (of your partner as opposed to yourself - although on reflection, whatever works for you).

Kissing - from a girl's perspective it's one of the most important pre-sex actions. Kiss like you mean it, not like it's just filling in the space before sex. Change tempo and pressure and a little bit of biting here and there is

never a bad thing. It only becomes a bad thing when you hear a gagging sound (extract your tongue at that stage) or you draw blood. As for kissing elsewhere else, rarely a bad thing so get moving. Just be careful you don't turn your partner purple where it's visible - it's not cool, it's not nice and it makes you look like you haven't ever had a proper meal. If you're going to give a hickie, give it somewhere private - that way it's just something that the two of you know about as opposed to the entire campus.

Breast stimulation - we know, boobs are infinitely fascinating things. Men don't have them thus they are interesting. What they are not, is able to withstand heavy force - if you are a grabber pay attention. These are delicate parts of the female anatomy - they are not stress balls or cooker knobs. We do not like it when you squeeze like your life depends on it or twist - we don't do it to you, don't do it to us! Light stimulation is

usually the best. Build it up...

Other stimulation - this isn't something that I can help anyone out with realistically as this column is aimed for young people and this doesn't happen amongst young people. Ok I'm joking. Genuinely though, everyone is different so this is something you and your partner have got to figure out yourselves. One word of advice that I'll give - and this applies to male and female don't be afraid to guide and point out what feels good and what doesn't. It's the only way to learn.

At the risk of sounding like the closing of a Jerry Springer Show episode take your time. It's the best way to figure out what you like and as importantly, what your partner likes. Let's face it sex is never better than when both people have a good time!!

Bertie's Millions

NIAMH CLOWRY

BERTIE Ahern can afford to smile, quite literally. Not only has he been given the go-ahead for a 14.6 per cent pay rise bringing his annual salary to €310,000, (£217,000), but the Taoiseach is now ranked as the highest paid leader of the world's richest nations. Mr Ahern comfortably beats President Bush, who earns only £200,000, into second place. Whilst British Prime Minister Gordon Brown has to settle for the third place prize with £187,000 a year.

In a week when Finance Minister Brian Cowen, warned that the glorious days of the Celtic Tiger were coming to an end and that the population at large would have to tighten its belts, so to speak, it came as quite a shock to hear the extent of Mr Ahern's pay increase. As for the Taoiseach's defense of the new pay deal, he argued that unlike Mr Bush and Mr Brown he does not have the

luxury of having free accommodation as other world leaders do. Interesting comments from a man who seems to have trouble remembering how he 'paid' for his house in the first place, or was that money solely for renovations, one gets as confused as the Taoiseach at his stage.

Of course the Taoiseach as always is well able to defend himself given that he was awarded the increase by the Review Body on Higher Remuneration. The body recommended the increase in order to match the Bertie's salary to the equivalent private-sector wage.

The opposition has expressed anger at the move, but Mr Ahern says the review body is an independent organisation and its recommendations will be implemented by the Government. No surprise there really, Bertie has never been one to look a gift horse in the mouth. Of course Mr Ahern was not the only one to

reap the benefits of life in public office. Ministers too saw an increase in their salaries, as did Committee Chairmen and Women and party Convenors on both sides of the political divide.

Whilst the population might see themselves with less to spend in the coming months it seems that the nations politicians, those in government at any rate, need not worry themselves unduly about the Last Days of the Celtic Tiger, though maybe it would be beneficial for them to take a trip to the less fortunate parts of the country so they could see where their wage increases could have been spent, although I think there's more chance of seeing a flying pig than that happening. A career in politics seems to be a sure fire way to make a quick buck these days, if one is a money driven, egotistical crowd please who says much but does little and gets paid a considerable wage for doing just that.



Bertie talks shop with former World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz

New Spectacle On Our Already Spectacular Campus

FINN MCDUFFIE

THE Living Bridge could be walked across for the first time on Tuesday afternoon of week 9. As Tuesday evening got darker, it wasn't long before the bridge's lights were switched on and word got out that our new and spectacularly lit link with the Clare-side campus was up and running.

The Limerick-side entrance to the bridge is subtly hidden behind the Millstream building. I found it by night. The first few metres of the bridge flooring were lit by various, changing colours. As I glanced across the river, the bridge ahead was an amazing sight. Each side railing was lit by bright white LEDs and the ground was lit by skirt-lighting or mild greens and purples. As I walked

across I'd come across parts of the bridge with seating. This seating was originally envisaged to accommodate social gatherings, informal teaching sessions, music and dance performances as well as a wide array of educational, social and cultural activities.

In a unique design by Wilkinson Eyre Architects, London, the bridge includes four platforms. Interestingly, the consulting engineering company involved, Arupcompany with responsibility for that faulty bridge in London that kept swaying every time pedestrians took footsteps in unison. The bridge had to be closed. Though I noticed a lot of bouncing and swaying as I met passers by, I doubted the somewhat novel feeling of being bounced up and down was in any way dangerous.

The bridge did cost a staggering €16.5 million. Eiffel Construction, France's largest bridge builder, made the contract with UL. But the living bridge is almost amazing enough to make you forget about that, especially by night. At 350 metres this is the longest pedestrian bridge in Ireland and will serve to connect the North and South elements of the UL academic community and campus.

I must admit, I used to be one of those who thought a cheap rope bridge would be an interesting way to link the North and South elements of the campus. But now that I've seen the bridge, I'm somewhat swayed - if you'll pardon the pun.

Should UL join USI?

Seamus Ryan introduces this fortnight's An Focal head2head debate

UL has had a long history outside the folds of the Union of Students in Ireland (USI). It hasn't been an affiliate of the organisation since 1991, a year where almost all of the seven universities removed themselves from the organisation. The Students' Union has had an ongoing consultation process for the past year on whether ULSu should re-affiliate to USI. Seeking responses from UL students, representatives in other colleges, both affiliates and non-affiliates and USI themselves, the process is still ongoing.

The reasons behind UL's disaffiliation from the organisation were varied but simple. Firstly the ongoing cost of affiliation was held to be too high. Secondly there was a disagreement about representation as USI had abolished the post of Limerick Area officer that year. Thirdly in the early 90s USI was very much an organisation that prided itself on pushing social progression and UL students at the time felt that this was not the job of an organisation that had student representation as its core raison d'être.

A number of years ago UL held a referendum on re-affiliation which was passed but non-quorate. The issue came up and was discussed at Class Reps Council last year. Regardless of people's individual feelings on USI, their role and the need (or lack of it depending on opinion) for UL to join the organisation, a representative body such as UL Students' Union (or a students' union in any other Irish college) should periodically examine the need for their representation in the de facto large representative body - if they are a member to consider whether it is worth staying or not, if they are not a member to consider whether they should join or not. This process should involve as many students as possible, as always it's their view that counts.

This fortnight's head2head debate considers the arguments on both sides, both for joining and remaining outside.

Yes!

LET'S dive right into this argument - what do the students of the University of Limerick stand to gain from affiliation with USI? The answer; a real voice on a national stage. When the recent Student's Union Road Safety Campaign made national newspapers all parties were delighted, as this was a major success; to have us, UL Student's Union anywhere near the front cover of a national newspaper was an achievement. What if we could join an organisation where this wouldn't be a once-in-a-semester feat? Where our representatives were consulted and their views aired in the national media on a continual basis? Where our opinions are truly taken into account? Where delegates we select meet with the government regularly to inform and challenge them on the rights and needs of students? It can happen, but USI is the only viable way forward.

As it stands, our Sabbatical Officers attend USI Officer training at a considerable expense to the Student's Union. This is not only valuable training for them, it also gives our Officers the chance to get to know Officers from other colleges, an opportunity they don't necessarily come across all that often. Of course there is the Forum of University's Student's Unions (FUSU), which was a wonderful idea for bringing Universities together outside of USI, but in practice was a complete failure. At least one FUSU meeting that ULSU planned to hold in the past year was cancelled due to lack of attendance, the reason behind that lack of attendance being that Officers, with their undoubtedly busy schedules will make time for USI, but not for FUSU. Ireland is a small country, at this moment in time there is only room for one central students' organisation and from where I'm standing that is USI. UL should be doing its best to make its voice heard as loudly as possible, joining those with the same aims as us in an effective way of making that happen. By showing a united front student's increase their chances of being able to make any real changes.

But what about accountability within USI? Well, after a leaked letter, a vote-of-no-confi-

dence in their leader and his subsequent resignation, the usual anti-USI rhetoric abounded, but in hindsight, what do we learn about USI from this episode? We learn that it is, despite accusations to the contrary, a transparent organisation which holds its officers fully accountable. It does not allow for unprofessional behaviour within its ranks. It is an organisation unwilling to let its standards slip, which at all times holds the best interests of students at heart.

The cost of USI comes hazed in propaganda from the anti-USI camp, €60,000 a year, they cry. Realistically however, this is a fiver per student, one drink on a night out, less than the price of a meal anywhere on campus. For this you get representation from a national body, Sabbat training and Pink training (LGBT), involvement in national, headline campaigns and a voice for UL, which is otherwise at risk of being marginalised between the Dublin colleges and UCC. There is also the issue of shirking our responsibilities; when USI make breakthrough achievement it is not just the colleges they represent that benefit, we do too. As such we leave nearby UCC and NUIG to cover the administrative costs of USI while we greedily reap the benefits when it suits us.

Of course, USI has problems, no one wishes to suggest otherwise, but if UL really wants a voice on the national stage why wouldn't it join with colleges with similar aims? Why not rejoin and actively participate in making the USI the kind of national organisation we want to represent us?

Or we can stay as we are, arm-chair critics of USI with no real alternative of our own, hoping that they'll get the job done soon so we can reap the benefits.



KATIE HARRINGTON

No!

SO the issue of the national question pokes out its ugly head once more, this time in terms of national student representation under the guise of the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) who have claims to the title of being 'the sole national representative body for students in Ireland'; well, then, we all better run to join up lest we be lost in the sea of students and not have our voices heard by those in Leinster House.

USI guarantees a unity of the student population; an umbrella organisation bringing together all the students' unions across the country to fight for the common student cause. USI was one of the few places where women could access information on abortion in the early 1990s at a time when everyone else gave them the cold shoulder. USI led successful campaigns to increase the grant and to abolish fees. USI was the national voice; the national power; the national student body. But is it really anymore? Is USI contributing as much now to the student battle? Has USI become the weakest link? Is it time to wave goodbye?

The USI of the new millennium would not appear to have achieved much. In fact, what has it really achieved at all? Nothing jumps to mind. Has it achieved anything? It wouldn't appear to be so. It hasn't achieved anything more than our own Students' Union has managed, but without charging the additional fee of €5 per student. Yes, in 2005, ULSU managed to speak one-to-one with the then Minister for Education, Mary Hanafin regarding the reintroduction of fees, at which time she guaranteed then-President Fintan Breen that she would not like to see them brought back in. Last year's referendum on the Alcohol Policy showed that student activism at UL is not suffering due to our non-affiliation and in fact, ULSU's campaigns have flourished tremendously this year, taking into consideration that the most recent of such - 'Walkout Wednesday' - made it into all of the national newspapers the following day. We are creating our own national voice. We are making ourselves heard. Do we really need to give €60,000 a year to USI to do what we can already do quite well?

Re-affiliating with USI might not just condemn our future endeavours but would also stifle our own initiative as we wait for head office to tell us what to do. The current structuring of



BY AOIFE BREEN
NEWS EDITOR

USI is a clear example that member unions are just sitting; waiting for HQ to deliver out posters and leaflets for whatever the next campaign they decide on. The bureaucratic, top-down approach of USI would cripple our SU's own initiative and force us to converge into a national monotonous conglomeration of whining students, rather than each Union addressing precisely what affects its own students. USI as it currently stands does not allow for bottom-up participation; members subscribe with their annual fee for rule from above.

USI is in trouble: it knows it itself and member unions know it. Things began to heat up when Mary Immaculate College pulled out in 2004; then there was the 10K charity walk debacle in one of USI's strongest members, UCC. The Southern Area Officer failed to convince Class Reps' Council last year that re-affiliation is the best option for UL. Then only a few weeks ago USI really went on fire with the resignation of President Richard Morrisroe after an open letter calling for him to leave because, quite simply, he 'lack[ed] the necessary skills to lead a national union'. And with that he was gone, soon to be followed by Steven Conlon, the Equality Officer and alleged author of said letter. With such internal upheaval, how can USI possibly expect to offer stability and representation to any students' union - particularly one such as UL which is thriving quite well since its decision to wave goodbye in 1991?

The fundamental issue is that USI needs UL, rather than the other way around. UL is one of Ireland's leading university's that has a strong students' union engulfed in student activism. ULSU has advanced considerably since disaffiliation and USI recognises its importance within a national framework. But USI isn't what UL needs. There are other national arenas in which ULSU can unite with other students' unions - FUSU (Forum for University Students' Unions) for example - which are providing better national representation than USI ever did.

USI is the weakest link; goodbye.

Campus Sport

Goals Galore As CIT Edge Out UL



BY TOMÁS MCCARTHY
SPORTS EDITOR

CIT 4-9
UL 3-11

CIT sneaked a dramatic one point victory over UL footballers in a thrilling senior league encounter on pitch 1. A strong second half comeback by the Rebel outfit which included four goals earned them the spoils. UL will be left wondering how they lost a game that was theirs for the taking.

UL started like an express train. Carthach Keane had the first score on five minutes which was added to by Enda Varley and another Keane effort. Then on 16 minutes UL

hammered home a goal through full forward Barry Moran. Keane was at the heart of the move fisting off the post before Moran finished the rebound to the net. In this period David Moran and Gary Brennan were lording affairs in the middle of the park. CIT had to wait until the 17th minute for their opening score. UL raced back into a six point lead with a glorious left footed strike from Enda Varley. CIT responded as the tempo lifted with three points on the trot. Indeed the UL defence began to creak at this stage and were lucky to keep their goal intact. They held a three point 1-6 to 0-6 lead at the change of ends.

The second half turned into something of a rollercoaster ride. UL once again began brightly with two goals in four minutes. Within seconds of the restart Paddy Burke burst through the middle and crashed the ball to the net. Minutes later another Burke surge deep into the CIT half resulted in a simple finish

for Paul Larkin. UL now led 3-6 to 0-6 and seemingly in total control. There was a sting in the tail though.

CIT replied immediately to Larkin's goal and were rewarded a penalty moments later. Donncha O'Connor converted the spot kick low into the corner of the net and suddenly it was game on. The UL full back line was now falling to pieces under intense pressure as CIT smelt blood. On 44 minutes CIT found the net once more to narrow the gap to four. As the CIT dominance continued Donncha O'Connor fired home yet another goal on 47 minutes to leave the minimum between the teams. Substitute Jimmy Falvey landed a simple free for UL before things got even worse for the home outfit. A quick free caught out the UL defence resulting in the CIT centre forward flicking the ball to the net. This left CIT 4-6 to 3-8 ahead. David Moran landed an inspirational score to square things up again in a bizarre

second half. Falvey fired another easy free to put UL a point up. CIT replied but Paddy Burke looked to have given the home side the win with a fine score. It wasn't to be though as two late late points for the Cork college sealed an astonishing victory.

This was one of the craziest games of football this reporter has witnessed for a while. The second half ebbed and flowed and the game was really in the balance until the end. Serious questions need to be asked of UL's mental strength after surrendering a nine point lead. In the second half they completely faded and let CIT back into the game and they took full advantage. Lessons need to be learned from this game if UL are to progress further this year.

UL Scorers: P Larkin (1-1), P Burke (1-1), B Moran (1-0), C Keane (0-2), E Varley (0-2), J Falvey (0-2f), D Moran (0-1), P Carroll (0-1), D Murphy(0-1).



Photo Will Lyons/UL Photo Soc

Senior B footballers Shade It

LIAM TOGHER

UL 1-11
CIT 2-7

THE first day of November brought with it some good news for UL's senior B football team. A match at home to CIT was always going to be a close-fought affair and so it proved, with an unexpectedly high and at times quite vocal turnout backing the hosts.

The match began amidst a swirling breeze that was of no great benefit to either side. UL started much the better but hit three wides before taking the early lead. Unfortunately, CIT went ahead on seven minutes after a somewhat fortuitous goal, but some excellent work by the UL half-backs frustrated the visitors and the

scores were level once more by the quarter-hour mark. In the 20th minute, a hopeful free kick found its way into the CIT net, although their keeper hardly covered himself in glory. Just as UL seemed in control, however, the Cork team pinched a second goal on 26 minutes to equalise and tapped over a point to assume a half-time lead.

Despite being in arrears, UL knew that there were chinks in the CIT armour and were in no mood to panic. Two points, one of them highly contentious, in as many minutes after the interval swung the initiative once more. At the two-thirds mark of the game, the home team scored three points in three minutes to establish a 1-9 to 2-3 lead. CIT responded with two points to set up a tense finish and UL failed to make

the most of two excellent goal chances. The away side clawed their way back to level the game with two minutes remaining but a splendid winning point just before injury time earned the victory for the home side.

UL's shining lights included midfielder Mulvey and Derek Neary. It was by no means a perfect display from the home team, but they definitely played the better football and, had they lost narrowly, it would have been harsh seeing as the woodwork denied them no fewer than five times. Rather than be left cursing bad luck, though, they got the job done professionally and are in good stead to have a productive league campaign. Well done to manager Davy Jones and co.

O'Neill Disappointed With Narrow Defeat

Tomás McCarthy spoke with the UL football boss

THE last thing a manager wants to do after an agonising defeat like this is to speak to the media. Cian O'Neill wasn't going to shirk this unenviable task though and spoke frankly to An Focal about his sides display.

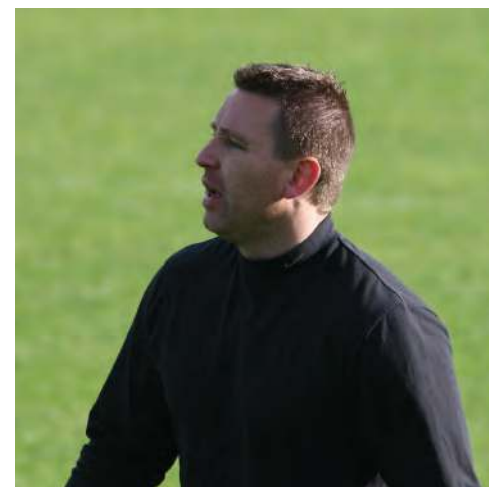
O'Neill probably summed it up in one word "disappointing". "The performance itself was patchy. We opened the game very well dominating for 15, 16 minutes of the match". He said they let CIT back into the first half but that his side were confident entering the second period. "The second half was a replication of the first only worse". O'Neill couldn't quite explain UL's second half display. "I'm yet to put my finger on it whether it was a concentration issue or maybe

a little bit of anxiety. They just faded physically and more worryingly mentally. We let them back in and they smelt they were in with a chance. In fairness to CIT they only had one game plan and it worked very well."

The UL manager didn't put all the blame on the full back line. "Their half forwards and midfield had too much time on the ball. It wasn't a full back issue the ball coming in was too easy." So what can UL work on for the days and months to come?

"We need to be more organised carrying the ball out of defence. Concentration, focus and the simple game played effectively that's the key thing". As O'Neill said himself it's still only November.

UL manager Cian O'Neill.
Photo Will Lyons/UL Photo Soc



Bohs Off To A Flyer At The Bowl

CONOR MCGRATH reports from the UL Bowl

THE UL Bohemians are flying high at the summit of the AIB League table thanks to two wins in their first two matches of the season. These impressive home victories came against sides such as Lansdowne and UCD.

The UL Bohs have clearly adapted to life without Thomond Park for the brief future and have made a stomping ground out of the Bowl behind the Sports Arena. In their opening match of the campaign the UL Bohs came up against the might of UCD

and won 16-8. The match started off as a tight, dour affair with both sides failing to adapt to the blustery conditions, especially as the half time score was 3-3. In the 2nd half the UL Bohs were patient in their play and it led to a brilliant try courtesy of Lupeni Siale on the wing. However, it was the brilliance of Fergal Lawlor's kicking which insured an opening victory for the home side.

The UL Bohemians came up against Lansdowne the following weekend. This match was another tight affair as the UL Bohs were lucky to pull away in the final twenty minutes for a 19-6 victory. In the first half Lansdowne's kicking

game and their line out caused havoc for the home team's defence but some resolute defending by the UL Bohs kept the score at 6-6 at half time. As expected the UL Bohs cranked it up a notch in the 2nd half and their superiority was confirmed due to the tries scored by Barry Murphy and Tommy O'Donnell.

The only disappointing aspect was the lack of attendance at both games. There was a decent crowd at the first game but the lack of atmosphere was startling. The attendance at the 2nd match was abysmal to say the least. In my view, the games are poorly advertised by the club, especially with the Friday emails.

They don't work because most people are gone home for the weekend at that stage. This situation will have to be rectified soon because home advantage counts in the important games. I also think that students should not be charged 5 Euro to see the local team. Most of them are trying to voice their support so why hunt them away?

On a brighter note, the Under 20 team absolutely demolished Cork Con 85-7 in Cork thanks to a handful of tries from Paul Granelle, Ross Butler, Darragh Lynch, Myles O'Riordan, Philip Gardiner and Giles Boland. One feels that justice was served...



Photo Will Lyons/UL Photo Soc

UL Sports Roundup

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

will be a fundraiser poker night on Wednesday Week 10.

OPC

The club have been busy recently hillwalking in the Knockmealdowns, the Comeraghs and also in Killarney. In week 9 Fermanagh was the venue for some caving training. Hectic times for OPC!

Rowing

The UL rowing club held a very successful quiz night in the Sportsbar on October 30. Rowing stars such as Gearoid Toweys made a special appearance on the night to present prizes.

Railway Cup

Seamus Hickey lined out for the Munster Railway Cup team that defeated Connacht in the final under lights at Croke Park recently.

Basketball

UL basketball club had a good start to their league campaigns with both the men and women winning against UCC. There

Stars Spotted On Campus
An Focal Sport has spotted some major sporting stars in the last few weeks. Richie Bennis was seen in the Sportsbar in week 8 along with Limerick hurlers Damien Reale, Brian Murray and Brian Begley. Of course some Munster rugby players like Jerry Flannery and Anthony 'Axel' Foley popped up also on campus.

Bebo

Check us out on www.bebo.com/anfocalsport for all the latest UL news, views ,etc.

Also you can email your comments to mossy.mccarthy@gmail.com Go on Give It A Lash!

Fantasy Football

My position has improved at last in the Premier League Fantasy Football. I am now up to 1,206,757 in the standings. The comeback is on!

SPORTS QUIZ 5

LIAM TOGHER

1. Who knocked Arsenal out of the Champions League last season?
2. Which Premiership player's former clubs include Celtic, Newcastle and Liverpool?
3. Which European team's home ground is the Estadio Dragao?
4. Where will the Olympic Games be held next year?
5. The James Stephens hurling club is in which county?
6. Which eastern European nation recently beat Scotland to damage their Euro 2008 qualification hopes?
7. Trevor Brennan played regularly for which French rugby club?
8. Who was named as the 2007 Hurler of the Year at the GAA All-Stars ceremony?
9. The Crucible in Sheffield hosts which annual sporting event?
10. Who is the manager of AC Milan?
11. Which country staged the final round of the Formula 1 championship this year?
12. Does Philippe Senderos play for France or Switzerland?
13. Which Armagh legend is the newly-installed manager of the Kildare footballers?
14. Who won the 2007 Six Nations?

ANSWERS TO SPORTS QUIZ
1.PSV Eindhoven 2.Craig Bellamy 3.Porto 4.Beijing 5.Kilkenny 6.Georgia 7.Toulouse 8.Dan Shanahan 9.World Snooker Championship 10.Carlo Ancelotti 11.Brazil 12.Switzerland 13.Kieran McGeeney 14.France

UL Take Gold At Munster Cross Country

CIARÁN FITZPATRICK

UL Athletic club got their year off to a great start with when taking gold in the team event at the Munster Colleges Novice Cross Country Championships.

In what was the first running of the event, UL, on 21 points, were four point winners over UCC who finished on 25 points. CIT finished

3rd with 48 points. David Quinn was the leading light on the UL team. He continues to improve and his 2nd place finish will be no surprise to anyone keeping an eye on his form over the past few months. Having being in contention from the start it was only on the final lap of the three lap race that Quinn lost contact with eventual winner William Hughes of Coláiste Stiofán Naofa.

Peter Francis also had a good run to follow Quinn home in 3rd place. Colin Butler in 7th place and Mícheál Keane in 9th completed the UL scoring with Mick Dore and Robert Baer providing able back-up in 12th and 13th respectively.

On the same day, club captain Rory Chesser, who wasn't eligible for the novice race took gold in the Munster under 23 cross country.

Other UL athletes showing good form recently include Michelle Finn who took silver at the recent British & Irish Mountain Running Championships and Gavin O'Sullivan who finished 7th in the Rathfarnham 5k Road Race in a time of 14:56.

Early season form suggests good things for UL athletic club this season. With the Indoor Championships likely to be held

before Christmas, the college will be looking to regain the overall and men's team titles along with retaining their women's team title before hosting the Cross-Country championships in spring. In their constant quest for excellence the cross country squad are foregoing their Christmas holidays to go altitude training in Kenya with no stone left unturned as they aim to

impress on home soil in February.

Firstly though, the club will look for a good result at Irish Universities Road Relays to be held in Maynooth on November 17th while many athletes will be competing with their clubs in the National cross country the following week. With busy times ahead it promises to be an interesting year for UL athletic club.

NUIG Firepower Outguns UL A Ladies

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

**NUIG 2-14
UL 1-13**

NUIG defeated UL ladies in an absorbing senior league clash played at pitch 1 on October 24. A strong second half display for the Galway girls proved sufficient to fight off a battling display from UL.

The first half was end to end stuff. The sides traded four points each in the opening 12 minutes. UL started well with Brid Stack controlling matters at centre half back. UL added three points in as many minutes to lead 0-7 to 0-4. The quality of the point taking was a joy to watch. Incredibly the momentum swung to the Westerners as they grabbed 1-2 which included a well placed goal. This made 1-6 to

0-7 in their favour. Laura Walsh responded with a goal on 23 minutes. Sarah Tyrell hammered the crossbar but Walsh was on hand to squeeze the ball under the keeper. Fine interplay between the forwards led to more points from the industrious Tyrell and Louise Brett. UL finished the half 1-9 to 1-6 to the good.

The biggest concern for the small contingent of onlookers entering the second half was the swarm of midgets taking advantage of the crisp, bright evening. It even left some questioning their wisdom to view the rest of the game as the midgets threatened to spoil proceedings. On the field UL made a tactical switch with Brid Stack moving to full back and Jenny Johnston out to centre. It was a move that would prove costly.

UL extended their lead

though early in the half to four 1-11 to 1-7 with a Laura Walsh point and a Geraldine O'Flynn free. NUIG were now coming in waves and fired the next three scores including a goal from their wing back. Louise Brett fired over the equaliser. The movement in the Galway forward line was far better. Niamh Fahy ran the show from full forward taking advantage of UL's switch and put NUIG ahead again. On 43 minutes Laura Walsh was through one on one with the goal at her mercy but the Galway goalie made a fine save with her feet. UL's chance had come and gone. Despite the best efforts of Geraldine O'Flynn, UL would only score once more. NUIG added further points with Fahy at the centre of everything productive and they went on to win by four points.



Geraldine O'Flynn on the move

A most enjoyable game from which UL will take a lot out of. The second half collapse will be of concern as the home team only landed four points. UL can take pride from the performances of Geraldine O'Flynn, Sarah

Tyrell, Louise Brett, Laura Walsh and others.

UL: L Callaghan, L Kidney, J Johnston, M Smyth, R Jordan, B Stack, A Casey, G O'Flynn (0-4 3f), F Heavey (0-1), E Coomey, S Tyrell (0-1), S O'Brien (0-1), M

O'Donaghan (0-1), L Walsh (1-2), L Brett (0-3).

Subs: C Donnellan, M Kenny, M Stack, I Larkin, D McQuinn, C Phelan.

Five Star UL Ladies Run Amok

Tomás McCarthy reports from pitch 1

**UL 5-12
GMIT 0-4**

THERE won't be a more one sided game seen in UL this year. UL senior B ladies strolled to a 23 point victory over GMIT on November 5 in a game that never resembled a contest.

It was apparent from the early stages that there was only one team in this game. Captain Julie O'Neil and midfielder Fiona Heavey had early scores on the board for UL. In the 8th minute O'Neil found the net after being set up by Richael O'Brien. GMIT did manage two scores from play through Martina Conroy but UL continued to dominate. Mary O'Donaghan rattled the net again on 17 minutes as the game now turned into backs against forwards. UL proved wasteful though and kicked an incredible twelve first half wides. They were now camped in the Galway half of the field and eventually the scores flowed. The lively Richael O'Brien goaled on 27 minutes and added a point also. This left UL 3-5 to 0-4 ahead at the break.

The second half was more of the same. UL didn't let up creating chance after chance.

Richael O'Brien at the second attempt tapped home her second goal on 37 minutes. The UL backs were having an easy time as GMIT failed to register a score or even an attempt on goal in the second period. The wides continued to mount and UL ended up with a tally of 22 to their name. Claire Carroll, Sandra Wall and O'Brien had more points keeping the scoreboard ticking over. UL could now afford the luxury of bringing on their five substitutes. One of these Noelle Connolly made an immediate impact firing low to the net. Two late points from the hard working Julie O'Neil put the icing on the cake.

Any serious analysis of this game would be pointless. From 1 to 15 UL were completely on top giving their counterparts a run around. Just please work on the shooting!

UL: L Callaghan, M Stack, A Ward, J McNulty, A Casey, R Jordan, P Raftery, C Carroll (0-1), F Heavey (0-2), J O'Neil (1-4), F Rachford (0-2), Sandra Wall (0-1), R Boyle, R O'Brien (2-2), M O'Donaghan (1-0).

Subs: E O'Connor for Boyle, A Carney for Raftery, S O'Brien for Heavey, E Coomey for Rachford, N Connolly (1-0) for O'Brien.

UL Camogie Overcome CIT

AIDEEN HOWLIN

UL senior camogie team started their league campaign with a win against CIT on Halloween night. The ladies provided the few spectators with a gutsy performance to overcome the Cork outfit by 3-17 to 2-10.

The opening minutes were tentative with both sides trading points to keep the game close. However, an early goal by Deirdre Coomey allowed UL to take the lead and push forward. The teams once again swapped points until CIT came on the attack and scored their opening goal. Both teams battled hard with UL remaining on top until the half time whistle.

Some tactical switches at the break saw the free taker Aine Lyng move to centre of the park with wing forward Ciara Johnson moving into the corner. This proved fruitful with the opening score being a goal for UL from Johnson. The UL ladies continued to press on with some well taken scores from smart play. From midway through the second half the girls really pulled together to pull off some fantastic scores. This dominance in play was topped

off with a goal from substitute Tina Hannon. At the final whistle, the UL girls came out on top with an impressive team performance.

Both goal keepers on the panel were called upon for their skills, Siobhan Murphy made some vital saves and Joanne Nolan was called upon for her accurate puck outs. The full back line marshalled by Karen Brady, Paula Rafferty and Mary Coleman came to grips with any attack and ensured that no loose ball was left in the square. The half back line was held firm by the solid play of Shelia O Sullivan, Mary Ryan and Miriam Maher. The centre field paring of Helen Murphy and Caroline Kelly worked tirelessly delivering the ball up and down the field to the high scoring forwards. The half forward line of Ciara Johnson, Edel Maher and Aine Lyng gelled together as a unit to put on an excellent display of scores and skill. The full forward line of Ursula Quinn, Deirdre Coomey and Sinead McAuliffe tested the CIT full back line on many occasions with excellent results. The forwards worked well together with all six marking the score sheet. The introduction of the subs,

Roisin Murphy, Joanne Nolan, Ann, Aideen Howlin and Tina Hannon showed the strength in depth of this UL team.

The Freshers tournament was been set for the Saturday 24th November in UL. We hope to put forward a strong team. Therefore numbers at training is paramount.

Freshers training takes place Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6pm in Maguires. Senior training also takes place on Mondays and Wednesdays at the same time and place. UL camogie hope that you will support our fundraiser in buying as many raffle lines as you can.



SO, WHAT DO YOU DO IN COLLEGE?

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

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

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

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UL Run Riot in Galway

RICHARD O'BRIEN

THE UL women's soccer team recorded a very impressive 8-1 away win over NUIG on Wednesday of week 7. This makes it two wins out of two for the side. UL's Ruth Fahy opened the scoring with a skilful volley into the top corner, from a Sarah Considine corner. An eventful first half saw two UL players; Sarah Considine and Kacey O'Driscoll receive yellow cards for talking back to referee and lines people. This didn't faze either player, and O'Driscoll was unlucky soon after to see here long range effort rebound off the crossbar. Jennifer Critchley (now the league's top scorer) added a second for UL, before NUIG's Nikki Jarman converted a penalty to give the

home side some hope of a comeback. They came close to an equaliser just before the end of the half, and UL were relieved to hear the ref's whistle sound at the break.

The second half was an entirely different affair as UL really began to show their class. Critchley got a second, and Ruth Fahy completed her hatrick after first rounding a number of players to shoot through the goalie's legs, and then converting a penalty. Lindsey McKey continued in her rich vein of goal scoring form by netting a hatrick in the half, the final of which was a delightful chip from outside the box. UL introduced substitutes Madeline Lynch, Sarah Kiely, Natalie Bromell, and Richael O'Brien mid way through the second half, and UL were unlucky to

add two or three more scores before the conclusion. Not even the most confident of the UL team would have predicted such a huge winning margin against close rivals, Galway. It should be noted that NUIG were without the services of two key players; Meabh de Burca and Niamh Fahey, who featured in the Irish senior team's win over Romania last weekend. Nonetheless, UL coach Stephen Griffin was delighted with the win, and is very satisfied with the excellent start the women's team has made this season. UL will be hoping to make it three wins out of three in week 9 when they travel away to play UCC, but it is likely that they will face a much sterner test against the newly promoted side.



UL Run Riot

Quotes of The Edition

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

"Steyen's kick is long, long, long, high, high, high and... wide, wide, wide."

George Hook in the commentator's role for the RWC final for Newstalk delivering some classic lines as usual.

"Robbie can't hit a barn door for us."

Steve Staunton's incredibly accurate analysis of his captain's uninspiring performances. Maybe if Ireland changed their kit to all white...

"Go on Pierluigi!"

A UL student thinks he sees the famous Italian soccer ref Collina taking charge of a UL football match!

"Ireland are a drinking team with a rugby problem."

Ireland's World Cup in a nutshell summed up controversially by an English and History student.

"No amount of FAI drivel or Staunton spin can mask the fact that we are on a rudderless boat with a captain who has lost his sealegs."

Journalist Mark McCadden poetically sums up the Stan situation.

"The smart money is on South Africa."

An Focal's Conor McGrath gets his RWC prediction spot on (for once!). Your job is safe for now McGrath!

"This nonsense will have to stop."

Who else but Eamon Dunphy commenting during the Ireland v Cyprus game. Not Stan's biggest fan!

The Magic Numbers

LIAM TOGHER

- 13 Our very own Liam Togher's position, out of nearly 40,000, in the Euro 2008 qualifiers Predictor game on uefa.com. He's not called Jimmy Magee for nothing.
- 7 Goals scored by Heerenveen striker Afonso Alves in his team's 9-0 win over Heracles in the Dutch league. What's that about football being a team game?
- 0 Umpires at both senior football matches between UL and CIT recently. Thank God they were clean games or else the refs would really have been over worked.
- 5 Number of times UL Senior B footballers struck the woodwork against CIT. If the Sigerson doesn't work out, there's always the crossbar challenge to be won!
- 74 Years since Clare hurling champions Tulla had won the county title prior to October. Cue a right oul hooley in the town afterwards!
- 32 Ireland's position in the FIFA rankings. That's one below the world beaters of Guinea. As Bertie would say "Aw, Jaysus!"
- 5 Years by which Colchester striker Teddy Sheringham is older than Sunderland manager Roy Keane. By 2031, he'll hit retirement age during a spell with Wigan, who'll probably be back in League 2 by then.
- 2011 Year in which we'll all back New Zealand to win the Rugby World Cup again, only for a poxy Italian win to knock them out in the semi-finals.
- 99 Shirt number of Shakhtar Donetsk striker Cristiano Lucarelli. He must like the Daft Dave ads, then!

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www.clubsandsocs.ul.ie/events

Heineken Cup Discredited before it Begins



BY MARK CONNOLLY

As yet another Heineken European Rugby Cup (ERC) wings its way around in November, this is surely an opportune time to raise serious questions about the current format of the tournament and its effect on the sport overall. The present pool stage of the competition is overlong and predictable while its continuation smacks

of financial greed on the part of the organisers. It's quite obvious to any serious fan that many of these pool fixtures are mere formalities which contribute absolutely nothing but ticket revenue to the ERC.

Games like Calvisano's thrashing last year at the hands of Stade Francais, Leinster's destruction of Edinburgh and so forth are predictable, uninteresting and simply clog up an already congested season to the detriment of the player's welfare and the domestic leagues. English international players are demanded to play up to 50 games a year between various tournaments and to ask them to exert themselves further and risk serious injury once more for the sake of a formality is unhelpful for that player, his club, his country

and the game as a whole.

And yes, these games are indeed foregone conclusions. In last year's competition, no Italian team won a single match in their pool with the exception of Calvisano's two point home win against the now disbanded Scottish outfit Borders. More tellingly, Italian champions Treviso were annihilated 71-5 at home to London Wasps, a result that says far more than I possibly could about the worthiness of their participation and the fallacy of the current tournament structure.

This result occurred because, rather than invest in Italian club rugby, the ERC were happy to allow all of Italy's finest prospects drift towards the giant clubs in England and France who are already brimful of talent. This

policy simply serves to further emphasise the gulf between Europe's elite and also-rans. Until Treviso, Calvisano etc. can compete financially, the likes of Marco Bortolami, Sergio Parisse and Martin Castrogiovanni will continue to look abroad in search of better wages.

This problem is not unique to Italian rugby though. The Scottish Rugby Union (SRU) had to reduce the number of professional teams they support from three to two in order to save money and strengthen their remaining two squads, Edinburgh and Glasgow. However, last year, both of these teams struggled to make any impression and often found themselves on the receiving end of severe hammerings. Indeed, a cursory glance at the Scottish

World Cup Squad would show many of their best players at foreign clubs, such as Simon Taylor at Stade Francais, Jason White at Sale and with Rob Dewey on his way to Ulster.

The pool stages of the Heineken Cup have completely lost their credibility and only a seriously myopic spectator could still argue that it remains a fair contest between 24 at least relatively evenly matched teams. If the ERC are serious about creating a strong Europe wide competition, they must put their money where their mouth is and transfer their resources to the weaker clubs so as they can compete on an even playing field. If not, they should exclude them from it and with them, the embarrassment of

71-5 score lines. An embarrassment not just for Treviso but the competition as a whole.

However whilst the yawn inducing predictability of the forthcoming results in most matches will depress the rugby purist, one would be forgiven for considering to take advantage of that. I am not encouraging anyone to gamble and I acknowledge it is a dangerous habit but for a person predisposed to the odd flutter, betting against every Italian and Scottish side away from home (when they don't meet each other) and then accumulating those bets over the coming six weeks could prove a sound investment. I'll bet also that your turkey will taste that little bit sweeter coming at the bookies expense.

The Greatest Hurlers 1997-2007

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

To try and pick the best hurling team from the last ten years is really a thankless job. No matter who I pick someone is likely to complain that this player or that player didn't get in. After hours and hours of tough decision making here's the 15 lucky men who made the final cut. Agree? I didn't think so.

1. Damien Fitzhenry (Wexford)
2. J.J Delaney (Kilkenny)
3. Brian Lohan (Clare)
4. Ollie Canning (Galway)
5. Brian Whelahan (Offaly)
6. Seanie McMahon (Clare)
7. Sean Og O hAilpin (Cork)
8. Jerry O'Connor (Cork)
9. Ken McGrath (Waterford)
10. Jamsie O'Connor (Clare)
11. Henry Shefflin (Kilkenny)

12. D.J Carey (Kilkenny)
13. Joe Deane (Cork)
14. Eoin Kelly (Tipperary)
15. Paul Flynn (Waterford)

Hard Luck

Those who came close but not close enough.

Davy Fitzgerald, Dan Shanahan, Tommy Walsh, Tony Browne, Liam Dunne, Johnny Dooley, John Gardiner, Eugene Cloonan, Noel Hickey, Mark Foley.



Seanie Mc lines up another free



Henry with Liam McCarthy

The Strange Case Of The Gym In Tralee

Tomás McCarthy investigates

LIMERICK Lions became embroiled in a controversial Superleague tie against Abrakebabra Tralee Tigers two weeks ago away from home.

The game, which started in the Tralee Sports Centre, had to conclude in the Mounthawk gym. With a minute and a half played in the fourth quarter problems arose with condensation. The playing surface was declared unsafe by the officials present. This forced the teams to move to an alternative venue Mounthawk gym which had to hastily prepared. The Tigers led 69-61 when play was stopped and maintained their advantage in the new surroundings to eventually win 81-76.

The Lions voiced their annoyance afterwards with the officials. The official scorecard was signed under protest by the Lions. They claimed that under article 20 of the rules the game should have been awarded to them as the venue was inadequate.

This would have meant Tralee forfeiting the game and the Lions awarded a 20-0 victory.

From the Tralee Tigers' perspective they had a bit of the rub of the green. When play was stopped the referee gave them an ultimatum to have a new venue ready within an hour. The Tigers coach spotted the man who is in charge of Mounthawk in the crowd and asked him to get the place ready in time. An investigation is being made into the matter but at this point in time the result still stands.

The Lions are finding the

going tough in the South Conference this year. They currently lie bottom of the pile with a total of six points. After their opening day win over Ballina things have taken a turn for the worst with defeats to Belfast Star, UCC Demons and of course Tralee Tigers. Players like Thomas Davis, Kiah Thomas and Neil Campbell have been performing well and the Lions are well capable of making a recovery. If they can get that bit of luck they will be able to turn these narrow defeats into narrow victories.

Caption Competition

Best captions will get printed in the next edition. Email mossy.mccarthy@gmail.com or log on to the bebo www.bebo.com/anfocalsport



Benitez On The Brink

Tomás McCarthy says Rafa should get his P45.

IS it time for the curtain to come down on the tenure of Rafa Benitez? The real question is how long are the Liverpool faithful going to tolerate failure in the Premier League where it really matters.

Lets face facts were it not for a rather flukey Champions League triumph in Istanbul would Benitez still be in a job? Probably not. It has provided Benitez with a type of wallpaper to paper over his domestic cracks. Benitez achievements on the home front apart from a FA Cup have been unimpressive. Under the Spaniard a serious title challenge has failed to materialise. This is the biggest

indication that this job is too much for Rafa. Last season the Reds finished 21 points behind champions Man United. The season before, Liverpool were closer but still 11 points in arrears. Managers are ultimately judged on results and Benitez just hasn't delivered.

The rotation system being employed by Benitez really boggles the mind. Noone has a clue what will happen next. Normally in a rotation system the fringe players get moved around while the core players stay intact. For example Man United would never drop Vidic, Scholes or Rooney if they are fit the same as Chelsea would never ever put John Terry or Drogba on the sidelines. With Benitez though anything goes. It doesn't matter who you are you can and

will get dropped. Just ask Fernando Torres. This doesn't breed a healthy atmosphere at any club. It is only good for uncertainly and chaos. Players need to get used to each others styles of play in order to get consistency in performance. As of yet a proper strike force hasn't been formed. Will it be Kuyt and Torres or Kuyt and Voronin or Crouch and Torres? Who knows. When Liverpool made really serious title assaults in the mid nineties Robbie Fowler and Stan Collymore struck up a fearsome partnership. Rafa take note.

The fans have been extremely patient with Rafa. This season though that patience might just wear thin. Now there are no more excuses. Last season Benitez complained about the finances at the club which is now no



longer an issue. Benitez has bought big but has he bought wisely? The players he has brought to the club like Babel, Benayoun and Torres haven't quite set the world alight as of yet. After a bright start Liverpool are now getting unstuck and struggling for form. Their style of play is resembling the last dark days of the Houllier era when the only option was to hoof the ball long. Without Alonso the team lacks a leader in midfield and the team still relies on Steven Gerrard to

pull rabbits out of hats when they are in a bunker. Even the good aul reliable Champions League is proving tough these days. Progress?

For a club of Liverpool's great tradition their current form is hardly acceptable. Benitez appears to be making it up as he goes along. Benitez is a lucky general rather than a good one but it looks like his luck has ran out. Expect the groans at Anfield to continue.

The Score

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

Not all White on the night
Heading into November, the three relegation places in the Premiership were being occupied by Tottenham, Bolton and Derby. Interestingly, all three teams have white as their primary kit colour. Fulham beware, you're next!

The goal rush
So Pompey beat Reading 7-4 while Liverpool and Chelsea tonked Derby and Man City 6-0 respectively. It turns out that such humiliating scorelines aren't actually restricted to the likes of San Marino, American Samoa and me playing FIFA 08 after a night on the tear!



Derby are in trouble

Want to be Liverpool manager?
So much has been made of Rafa Benitez's crappy rotation that a website has been established where browsers are invited to select the team they think the canny Spaniard will play in Liverpool's next match. Steven Gerrard to be partnered in midfield by Robbie Threlfall? You heard it here first!

Commentator's curse
The Portsmouth striker we all know as Benjani is not called that for nothing. His real name is Benjamin Mwaruwari, so difficult to pronounce even George Hamilton would have to sign up for elocution lessons before he gets it right.

For club or country?
A player's club form isn't always indicative of his international displays. Arsenal's first choice benchwarmer Jens Lehmann is a regular for Germany while Tottenham hotshot Robbie Keane can't hit a cow's rear end with a banjo for Ireland.

It's who you know
ASEC Abidjan might not be familiar to most Arsenal fans but the Gunners have their feeder club from the Ivory Coast to thank for producing defenders Kolo Toure and Emmanuel Eboué. Anyone wishing to play for Arsenal out there fancy a trip to Africa?

Der Kaisers
The Kaiser Chiefs are a well-known and not exactly riveting band from Leeds, but their football-loving members got the name from one of South Africa's most popular clubs. Expect a new album from Johannesburg rock quartet the Tottenham Hotspurs!

Child's play
Both Ryan Giggs and Gary Speed have scored in every season since the Premiership began in 1992. While it may not seem like an eternity ago, Arsenal's Theo Walcott was three years old when that historic 92-93 campaign began. And rookie Fulham defender Matthew Briggs was all of 17 months.

Who are ya? Who are ya?
It's time to pay tribute to some of the Premiership's less celebrated names through the years - the likes of Corrado Grabbi (Blackburn), Ricardo (Man U), Vicente Matias Vuoso (Man City), Frode Kippe (Liverpool), Christian Bassetas (Newcastle), Li Weifeng (Everton) and Milenko Acimovic (Tottenham).

Euro 2008 - Who Will Make The Final Cut?



BY ALAN KEANE

RIGHT it's that time again where another long qualifying campaign is over and yet again Ireland aren't in the running. That aside, it looks as if there'll be an exciting end to the Euro 2008 qualifiers. And for the first time recent history it's looking increasingly likely that there will be no team from the British Isles. Wales and the Republic of Ireland are no longer in the reckoning, Northern Ireland and England are depending on results going their way, and Scotland have to beat World Champions Italy to keep their hopes alive.

Without a doubt it has been an interesting qualifying campaign, (unless you're Irish in which case its been excruciating.) England would have expected to top their qualifying group considering the wealth of supposed talent at their disposal, yet they find themselves in the precarious

position of having to win their next two games and hope that Israel beat Russia in Tel-Aviv. Portugal (runners up last time round) also would have been deemed favourites to emerge as winners of Group A, yet they find themselves second best to a Polish side which was anything but impressive in last years World Cup. Surprise victors in last European Championships Greece are on course to be in Austria/Switzerland to defend their title as they head group C with a near unassailable lead of 5 points on nearest opponents Norway. Even sweeter for the Greeks is the fact their biggest rivals Turkey are teetering on the edge of elimination unless they defeat Norway in Oslo on the 17th of this month.

As a matter of interest only three teams out of the 56 hopefuls and no-hopers have failed to secure even a single point. They are; Andorra, The Faroe Islands and our favourite underdog, San Marino. If Ireland are going to succeed on the big stage they need to learn how to put away the minnows convincingly, as goal difference can be crucial in the final run in. Anyway this article is not about Ireland it's about the serious contenders for places in

Austria/Switzerland. Scotland in my opinion have the greatest chance of progressing. Although they face the Azurri in their second to last game, they are at home in Hamden Park, and the spirit they have shown in the face of adversity. Who would have thought that Scotland would come through to the business end of this campaign neck and neck with both of last year's World Cup finalists? The World Cup winners Italy desperately need to defeat Scotland otherwise they will not be on course to next year emulate France's achievement of winning consecutive major championships (World Cup '98 and Euro '00).

I think that everyone in Ireland should get behind Scotland and support them should they get to the finals. Firstly there is of course the Gaelic history and secondly there is the Celtic connection. Almost universal in Ireland is an affinity with Glasgow Celtic and when I looked at the Scotland squad there are 8 who have played or are currently playing with the Hoops. Thirdly and perhaps most importantly, who else are you going to support... England?



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Class Reps... snooze

WHEN we've been stuck for news in the past, the Most Supreme And Regarded Class Representative Council (class reps for short) has often provided us with adequate fodder to fill a few column inches. Not so in recent times as the last meeting wasn't quorate (see previous column about previous meeting not being quorate) as more than half of class reps aren't bothering their asses to turn up. Here's something you might not hear SU officers say: hey kids, it's not enough for you to get elected and wear the hoodie, it might be good if you bothered representing your class and turned up to the odd representative meeting. They're on Tuesdays of the even weeks of term in CSG01 at 6pm. But you knew that

already, you just didn't care. OK, sure, they can be boring. Sometimes people have nothing to say. Part of that reason is that people who might have something to say aren't turning up. You're not just the solution to the problem - you're also part of the problem. We're perfectly on for the idea of naming and shaming class reps who don't represent their classes by printing their names here and on the SU website, we're pretty sure we can find some SU types who are on for it too. The editor's got a personal policy of not editing our non-libellous material, something to do with 'balanced critical democracy' or something (that's a good thing by the way) and printing 80-odd names wouldn't take up much of our space if we ever see that attendance list.

So what did you guys miss? Well, as it happens, not an awful lot. The issue of the Tolglann has moved on, or rather it hasn't. Where it hasn't moved on is at class reps council, where the Cumann Gaelach, ah, we mean concerned class reps, have decided that class reps is not the body they want deciding on it (and with all due respect, when half of you won't turn up, can you blame them) and they've passed it over to the never-met-before Commission of Arbitration, which meets in a post-box somewhere on campus every few years. Nice having these decisions made in the open, then again it's not as though the original decision to ship out the Tolglann, used every few weeks when it was open, was made in the open either.

2007 boats, not at 2006 prices

We thought this one was funny in a tragic way - you know, like when a clown dies. Or when we presumed Marcel Marceau let out a loud cry of

pain when he died of a heart-attack. Apparently a semi-high profile UL club who recently bought a lot of boats with heavy support from the Enablement Fund found out when they bought them that for the past few hundred years and especially the last eighty, there's been this thing called 'inflation' that means that a pint of plain isn't still thruppence. Or more pertinently, that boats that they priced a year before putting in a funding application had gone up in price by the time they put the application in. Go figure, there's a lesson learned. Of course they're looking for a quiet bailout from the SU/clubs and socs funding to the tune of about ten grand, assuming they don't come back for more. This is an opinion piece, here's some opinion: when you find you don't have the money to buy six of something due to not doing your own leg work, just buy five of them. Don't buy six and then cry that you've no money. We'll wait to see how this pans out but we're hoping

it'll be a bit more noticed than the GAA clubs looking for a bailout for their own cockup in April, something that's been kept very hushhush by the few in the know. Someone should ask for an answer, we're merely providing the question.

The Living Bridge

We had to laugh when we heard about the very late invite sent out by the college inviting people to the opening but not an opening (the real one's coming in about four months) of the living breathing bridge. It's pointless including "students" in the invite if you don't actually email it to any of them. You'd think, like the odd invite to an on-campus concert or exhibition sent out five minutes before its start in UL (no, it does happen and it's always the same culprits), that they didn't want the smelly students to come. Could have been an oversight, there are only a few thousand of them around the place, they're easy

to miss.

Absences from... absences

Exact quote from an email on the staff list: 'Please note we still have a number of places available on the Absence Management Workshop scheduled for Thursday next 15th December, details below. This workshop is targeted at managers to enable you to understand and address absence issues within your area of responsibility.' Heavens to betsy. There's an issue with absences in UL and they can't fill the absences management workshops. Not good. Oh and the email got the date wrong - it's on November 15, not December 15. After you read this they'll have two days to send out the correct dates so there aren't any absences on the course. Giggles all round.

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