

# An FOCAL

walkout Wednesday  
pics p14-16

University of Limerick

UL GAA p23

EDITION 5 : WEEK 8

THE OFFICIAL PAPER OF THE STUDENTS' UNION

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## Classes Washed Out as students Walk Out



BY AOIFE BREEN  
NEWS EDITOR

**S**TUDENTS across the campus upped and left their classes last Wednesday to emphasise the negligence that they feel they have suffered at the hands of the University who have not fulfilled the conditions that they promised in 2002 when the Students' Union entered into a partnership regarding alcohol on campus.

The SU and Stables' courtyards were alive with activity for the afternoon where hundreds of students convened to witness the potential of UL clubs and societies. A 'delighted' Campaigns and Services Officer, Patrick McHugh, commented on the day's events as being 'a clear indication of what the broad

student experience can be' while SU President St. John Ó Donnabháin remarked that '[The events] just go to show what we've been telling the University for a long time - that free Wednesday afternoons would revolutionise the campus by enabling students and staff to organise all kinds of activities'.

Water was a prominent feature in the main courtyard during the afternoon where UL Outreach locked volunteers into the stocks and invited students to throw sponges - or even entire buckets of water - over them. Presidents of many clubs and societies - including SU President St. John Ó Donnabháin and CSO Patrick McHugh - offered up their services to get wet to raise money for the charity.

Members of UL Kayak Club took to the waters also, staging one of the major hits of the afternoon - the Five Fountain Challenge. Kayakers raced across the campus in an energetic competition to see who could splash in all five before returning to the courtyard in the quickest time.

Outdoor Pursuits Club reached new heights as they

scaled the equivalent of Mount Everest on their climbing wall in the PESS Building: a wall which is currently under threat as the renovation of the building looms closer with no commitment having been made by university authorities regarding its future. The Club also managed to raise almost €1000 for the People In Need Telethon, encouraging climbers to make a contribution before embarking on their journey to the summit.

In the Stables courtyard members of the Environment Society hosted a 'Green Fair' with many local artisans and producers selling their goods at stalls throughout the day.

Energetic trampoliners and American footballers showed off their abilities outside the SU as well, while members of campus political parties hosted a 'Pisstake Dáil' discussing 'the potholes outside Deputy Sheehan's house' before being dissolved by a water fight.

The Law Soc, Debating Union and Drama Soc spent the early afternoon engaged in a series of 'witch trials', involving a series of accusations, feeble defences and more water punishment.

The DJ Soc and Music Soc had something of a 'sound-off' between each other as they fought to claim the most noise in the courtyard and members of Photo Soc ensured that the day's events were all captured on camera.

Walkout Wednesday was reported on by all three national daily newspapers the following day, as well as local papers last week and local radio news radio throughout the afternoon.

Mr McHugh remarked on



UL Kayakers after completing the Five Fountain Challenge

the activities stating, 'If ever an example has been given of diverse student participation, learning and social inclusion on the campus, Walkout Wednesday clearly shows this and indicates the real urgency that exists on redressing this

outstanding term of the Alcohol Policy'.

Mr Ó Donnabháin went further to challenge President Barry and commented, 'If Don Barry really means what he says about making the University a social centre for

students, staff and the people of Limerick, then clearing Wednesday afternoons of all classes must be given top priority.

## Defiant Don Takes on CRC

AOIFE BREEN

**P**RESIDENT Barry put himself before Class Reps' Council in week 6 to brief it with his plans for his term in office over the next decade while also issuing a number of controversial responses to some representatives who posed questions on the night on such issues as the alcohol policy,

library resources, international scholarships and the climbing wall in the PESS.

Professor Barry gave a brief introductory speech before taking questions from Council members that lasted just over an hour. The President emphasised his priorities for the coming years and how he hopes to achieve those goals. He spoke of three main areas which he intends

to make the University renowned for, including the significance of its contribution to regional and national priorities, for world class research and scholarship and for the student experience, the latter being the one to which he has claimed to assign the most importance.

The University head told those in attendance that



ULSU President St. John O Donnabhain in the stocks

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# EDITORIAL



BY SEAMUS RYAN  
EDITOR

**I**N my first editorial of this year I mentioned that 'UL has occasionally had a reputation as an education mill where many students are churned out without time to sufficiently develop as individuals'. Not so last Wednesday as eight kayakers decided to brave the water and campus security to race across every university fountain

as part of the Walkout Wednesday events (I had the joy of being the race-starter). As student protests go, it's not as though it's comparable to the actions of Kostas Georgakis in 1970 but as non-violent civil disobedience goes, knowing the territoriality of UL authorities toward our precious fountains, it was pretty significant. It's interesting to contrast the actions and commitment of those students, and all students who participated in the Wednesday walkout, to the lack of action and lack of commitment from university authorities on fulfilling the basic promises made when the Alcohol Policy was first approved.

November 28. That's the date on which it is now inevitable that the Students' Union will withdraw from the university's alcohol policy. Without student participation, for virtually all practical purposes the policy is dead. Criticism of the policy and its implementation had grown over the past few years until the referendum to withdraw was taken on March 30 last. Passed with a 94.92% yes vote, this was the highest majority in any SU referendum in over a decade. The SU asked for student support to pass it. It got it. It will continue to meet the terms of the referendum as passed.

The provisions of the referendum were very particular. Rather than merely passing a proposal that the SU withdraw from the policy, leaving the university and students free to renegotiate a new one at any point after November 28, the decision binds the Students' Union to remain outside the policy until the terms as agreed are made. There is no possible future discussion on a drastic compromise, there is no manoeuvring room, there is no possibility of mind-changing. A referendum is the highest binding authority of the Students' Union, its terms can only be overturned by another referendum and its binding nature never expires.

At his address to Class Reps Council on Thursday of week 6, UL President Don Barry was steadfast that in his view the students and the Students' Union were 'barking up the wrong tree' with regard to Wednesday afternoons. When the Students' Union signed up to the Alcohol Policy five years ago, it had a short number of requests that it put on the table. Chief among these was the return of free Wednesday afternoons, as a major step the university should take in promoting a healthy and varied lifestyle for students. The university readily agreed and promptly ignored that commitment and other promises made. It turned out to be a very bad deal from the student point of view. It was, as this editor said in a clubs and societies council meeting in March 2002, 'bollocks'.

Don Barry agrees that the Policy 'has completely failed'. Where we differ in opinion is how and why. Students and student groups have lived up to their commitments under the policy. University authorities have not. On the day after Walkout Wednesday that point was hammered home to readers of national newspapers. At the next action taken by students working with the Students' Union that point will be hammered home again.

## Quotes of the fortnight

- **I must find new ways to torture ye**  
*ULSU President St. John ÓDonnabháin tells SU reception staff of his future plans for them*
- **Sit down or you're all marked absent!**  
*Societies exec member and recording secretary Derek 'The Enforcer' Daly at last week's C&S council*
- **Well, do you think you'd take 'Concrete Keith'?**  
*Ents honcho Keith Pigott talks to St. John about his ambitions to become a wrestler*
- **Ah, it's really good, but he's a bit fucking angry, isn't he?**  
*A first-year student in the Stables offers his opinion on a recent Seamus Ryan editorial in An Focal*
- **I'm scary in the dark, I'm scary in the light. I'm generally a very creepy guy really**  
*Drama Soc's Maurice Cotter, caught muttering to himself in the empty UL corridors on the Bank Holiday weekend*
- **Fathers' rights are just something that women thought up to scare men**  
*Debating Union member Diarmuid Healy at the Fathers' Rights debate*
- **You're all Philistines**  
*UL President Don Barry addresss Class Reps Council. As Hal Roche would say, it's the way you tell 'em*
- **If she thought that American fundamentalist Christians were burning her books before...**  
*Eamon Quinlan, UL Ogra FF chair on JK Rowling's statement that Albus Dumbledore was gay*
- **The Dail has literally and figuratively dissolved**  
*Emma Kerins after the pisstake Dail in the courtyard turned from a slagging match into a waterfight*

**Ulster Bank**  
let's do things differently

Dear Ulster Bank

I'm a bit of a shopaholic, I guess at times we all are. The only thing is, buying DVDs and CDs tends to be pretty pricy around town unless there's a sale on and that never seems to happen when I wander in, maybe I'm just going in on the wrong days. Anyway, things would be so much easier (and cheaper) if had a credit card that I could use to buy stuff on the web. Even something with a low limit that wouldn't get me into trouble financially - something I could afford to pay off the balance on. Is there any way I can apply for a credit card? Help me please!

*Desperate student*

Dear Student

As part of our student package we offer a Student Credit Card. You can avail of this by coming in to the Branch and completing a Credit Card Application form. The Credit Card we offer has a very manageable limit of E450.00. The Ulster Bank Student Credit Card can be used at all retail Outlets and on the Internet. If you are considering travelling abroad in the next couple of months this can be your fall back in case of emergencies. The good news is that Ulster Bank credit cards are interest free for the first 9 months on balance transfers and purchases. After this period if you clear your balance in full within 25 days you won't be charged interest either. If you wish to pay off your balance gradually you can pay as little as E5.00 or 3% of the balance owing whichever is the greater. If you have reached your E450 limit the most you are required to pay on your credit card is E13.50 per month. The rate is currently 16.5% apr variable on purchases. Payment couldn't be easier you can register on Ulster Bank Anytime Internet banking and pay on line or you can call to any Ulster Bank branch and pay at the branch.

*Ulster Bank*

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UL Clubs & Societies

# Students walk out of classes and into campus

AOIFE BREEN

**H**UNDREDS of students took to the courtyards to witness the activities of a number of UL clubs and societies last Wednesday as part of the wider initiative to highlight how big a role that these student organisations have in creating a vibrant atmosphere on campus.

Without a doubt there was a considerable buzz in the SU and Stables' courtyards for most of the afternoon as students chose to 'walkout' of their scheduled classes and decided instead to participate or watch the activities of campus clubs and societies.

Enviro Soc took over the Stables' courtyard with their 'Green Fair' that lasted from 10am until 4pm and proved to be a popular attracting providing many alternative tastes and products while Ultimate Frisbee took to the green in front of the library.

Meanwhile in front of the Students' Union, members of Debating Union, the Law Society and Drama Society joined forces in presenting a 'Salem Witch Trial' while later on in the afternoon members of Ógra Fianna Fáil, Young Fine Gael and Labour Youth hosted a pleasantly comical mock Dáil which was subsequently dissolved, ironically, by water sourced from the Kayak Club's paddling pool located right beside 'Leinster House'.

Indeed, water played a

key part of the afternoon's events, with the kayakers racing around the campus to get wet in the fountains and UL Outreach locking people into the stocks before blasting the hose on them in the name of charity.

Charity was also the basis for Outdoor Pursuits Club's hike on their climbing wall which saw over 12 hours of scaling the wall to match the height of Everest while also raising almost €1000 for Telethon.

Skydive UL were a bit put out by the afternoon having failed to receive a response from the Buildings' Department regarding permission to do a training jump onto the sport's field. Instead, members decided to collect signatures on a petition that requests that they may use the University's facilities and resources for their club.

However successful the afternoon was, it was a slight dampener on events that the SU AGM did not reach quorum and therefore could not ratify any of the motions or resolutions on the agenda, including the amendment to the Constitution which would have seen the final chapter in the Postgraduate Students' Association's struggle to reintegrate with the Students' Union.

The free gig that followed that night showcasing class act Delorentos was, however, quite popular with almost 550 people in attendance in the Stables' courtyard.



## WALKOUT WEDNESDAY Special Report

Aoife Breen  
News Editor

### OPC's feat for Telethon

**M**EMBERS of Outdoor Pursuits Club soared to the top of Everest in the PE and Sports Science Building last Wednesday to highlight their activities on campus and as a contribution to the Clubs and Socs fest that took place in the afternoon as part of Walkout Wednesday.

Over a hundred participants scaled the climbing wall in the PESS to match the height of Everest while also making a contribution to Telethon. Between the climbers they successfully soared 8848 metres over 1180 climbs of the wall, equivalent to the height of the world's tallest summit, as well as collecting almost €1000 for the cause.

Asking OPC President Fergal Dempsey if the club has any plans to venture the height of the Asian mountain, the 'tired and proud' member responded, 'Yes, the club is looking forward to an adventure to the Himalayas within the next two years and to being the first University club to make it to the top of the mountain, but for now our feat at the wall will do.'

The Club collected contributions from climbers and onlookers on the day for Telethon, including a €160 donation from Clubs' Officer and OPC member Áine Manley who won the bid to make the final climb to the top. She told An Focal, 'It was for a brilliant cause and it was great to help out. We're all exhausted now though!'

Climbers had reached the



halfway mark around 3pm, having begun the mission early in the morning at 8am with Ms Manley finally taking to the wall at 9pm.

Mr Dempsey went on to comment that, 'Nine years ago we abseiled the height of Everest; this year we decided to climb up instead.'

He continued to stress the importance of the climbing wall in the PESS Building to the Club and the fear that members have about its future: 'The PESS is going to be refurbished and our wall will be knocked. We haven't

had any reassurance from the University regarding the future of the wall, which is an integral part of our activities. The Climathon really highlighted how much the wall is part of our club here at UL; it's our home.

OPC have expressed their thanks to everyone who climbed the wall on the day or who contributed to the event, particularly their sponsors Lucozade Sport, Ballygowen and River Deep Mountain High.

### ULKC Get Ready, Set, Go

**K**AYAKERS threw their kayaks on their backs and held their paddles under their arms and ran around the campus during Walkout Wednesday to show their support for the commitment made - but not upheld - in the Alcohol Policy to keep Wednesday afternoons free for participation in extra-curricular activities.



Eight members of the club set off from the SU courtyard in the afternoon and raced to the five fountains on campus. The kayakers splashed in the main Plassey House fountain before running on to paddle the length of the Silver Pencils fountain, across both halves of the Schuman fountain (despite being finally intercepted by campus security) and then circled the library fountain before racing back to the SU courtyard.

The members competed against each other to make it back to the courtyard in first place. Brian McDonagh was the ultimate victor, but Kayak Club President - and competitor in the race - Ruan Dillon-McLoughlin commented that, 'it was definitely worth the effort!' He went on to remark that, 'It was an exhausting race but our onlookers cheered us on all the way and it shows the kind of stuff we like to get up to in the club.'

The Club also set up a paddling pool in the courtyard in which the kayakers engaged in some warm-up activities. The President noted that the afternoon was 'a great success for all clubs and societies and showed a snapshot of what they do on an on-going basis. It emphasised that students can have fun without alcohol with the help of clubs on campus.'

## What They Said

**St. John Ó Donnabháin, SU President:**

Walkout Wednesday was brilliant - fair play to everyone who got involved, and made it such a huge success! If Don Barry really means what he says about making the University a social centre for students, staff and the people of Limerick, then clearing Wednesday afternoons of all classes must be given top priority

**Patrick McHugh, Campaigns and Services Officer:**

If ever an indication has been given of diverse student participation learning and social inclusion on the campus, Walkout Wednesday clearly indicates the real urgency on redressing this outstanding term of the AP. I put it to the University in light of their ability to free Wednesdays of classes for an inaugural ceremony and for the honorary conferring, to not feign away from the real diverse student experience but create a solution rather than reinforce a barrier. This institution brags of its sporting athletes and student empowerment yet the University lags behind the Union at fostering that mentality at a grassroots' level

**Don Barry, President, University of Limerick:**

I understand that students and the Students' Union feel strongly on this matter and I share their concern that clubs and societies should flourish at UL. It is currently not feasible to create a timetable that avoids Wednesday afternoon but we will continue to explore ways whereby we can minimise and I hope eventually avoid the use of Wednesday afternoons for the scheduling of classes.

**Stephen Carmody, Societies' Officer:**

The fest went well with regard to clubs and societies and the national broadcast but it was a case of there being a strong showing from a minority and a half-hearted showing from the majority in the overall walkout

**Ruan Dillon-McLoughlin, President, UL Kayak Club:**

The afternoon really emphasised how much work clubs and societies do on campus. It shows that students can have fun without alcohol with the help of clubs.

**Caitríona McGrattan, President, UL Outreach:**

I think it showed staff and students who aren't involved - maybe due to academic commitments - what potential clubs and societies have on campus

# Four alumni honoured by ULAA

AN FOCAL REPORTER

ON October 19, The University of Limerick Alumni Association honoured four UL graduates who have made outstanding contributions in their particular fields since their graduation from the University at the annual UL Alumni Awards ceremony in the Hilton Hotel. The awards were presented to leading Academic Mary O'Sullivan (Outstanding Contribution to Academia); internationally renowned composer Patrick Cassidy (Outstanding Contribution to Culture/Arts); All-

Ireland winning camogie player Fiona O'Driscoll (Outstanding Contribution to Sport) and director of the Friends of Londiani charity, Helen Concannon (Outstanding Contribution to Society/Humanitarian Award).

Speaking at the UL Alumni Award Dinner, Dr. Matthew Cannon, ULAA Chairperson, spoke of the evolution of the awards programme as 'a way to truly recognise both talent and achievement. Graduates of our University continue to do themselves and their alma mater proud and the UL Alumni Association is honoured to provide this mecha-

nism to celebrate their contribution to their chosen field'.

Professor Don Barry, UL President, commented that 'It is inspiring to learn of our alumni's major contributions through their cultural, sporting, academic and humanitarian endeavours. We at the University of Limerick are proud of our graduates. Our mission is enhanced each time they achieve success in life, succeed in their careers and contribute to society'.

Keynote speaker at the awards ceremony, legendary broadcaster Mr Micheál O'Muircheartaigh, spoke about 'the cyclical changes in



UL Alumni Award Winners (L-R) Prof Mary O'Sullivan BEd '76, Helen Concannon BSc '98, Fiona O'Driscoll BA '95 & Patrick Cassidy BSc '85

sport and education in Ireland' and added his own words of congratulations to the four recipients.

A special souvenir booklet was given to all attendees at the event outlining the achievements of the Award

Recipients as well as a history of ULAA and UL.

The University of Limerick Alumni Awards is now an established annual event and UL graduates who have made an outstanding contribution in any of the following spheres

can be nominated for awards by any member of the public: Science & Technology; Cultural/Arts; Business; Academic; Societal / Humanitarian / Community; Sport

## Sailing towards victory!

KATIE HARRINGTON

WEEK 6 saw the University of Limerick Sailing Club host an extravagant wine reception in the Student's Union at the launch of their six new 'firefly' boats, which they were able to purchase with the help of the Arts and Sports Fund and the Ulster Bank Enablement Fund. In attendance were their committee and members of the society, representatives of Ulster Bank, Clubs and Societies Development Officer Paul Lee and a variety of former members and well wishers.

Mr. Jim Ryan, who was one of the founding members of the club in 1993, gave a brief history of the club and the development of the club since then. He paid tribute to the committees over the years, claiming that the University of Limerick club was "the envy of a lot of clubs around the country". He paid particular tribute to Mr. Conor Byrne, who captained the club during 2003-04 and 2004-05. Mr. Byrne, who also spoke at the event, was highly praised for his role in encouraging and training other members, and for the general development

of the club under his leadership. Current captain, Darragh O'Connor spoke of the huge achievement this marked for the club offering thanks to Ulster Bank "who have allowed the club to perform at it's highest level nationally and internationally".

Vice-captain, Kevin Stallard spoke of what it meant for the club in terms of competitions. In the past year the club have reached finals on a number of occasions, each time missing out on first place by very little. They hope that their new 'firefly' boats will give them the edge that will mean first place in the coming years. Club secretary Sinead Doyle was presented with flowers as thanks for her administrative work in securing funding, and was also jokingly referred to by her colleagues as 'club mom' for her equally important role of "making tea and dinner after training".

The Sailing Club operates from the UL Activity Centre in Killaloe and more information on what they do can be accessed at <http://sailing.skynet.ie>



## UL's Alcohol Policy: The Facts

- Introduced in 2002 as part of a wider national framework to reduce alcohol consumption, particularly amongst young adults
- Banned alcohol sponsorship of clubs and societies and alcohol promotions on campus in an effort to reduce high-risk drinking
- A number of criteria set down in policy included agreements from the University promising:
- Free Wednesday afternoons to facilitate participation in Clubs and Societies so as to allow students to engage in non-alcohol related activities
- Alternate funding for Clubs and Societies to subsidise the revenue lost from sponsorship that could have been acquired from alcohol companies
- Provide an alcohol-free, late night venue on campus for students
- Engage in campus-wide education about alcohol and health promotion
- Referendum held last semester asked students if they wished to withdraw their support from the Policy come November 28 had the University not fulfilled the above criteria.
- The referendum was passed by almost 95 per cent in favour of withdrawing support.
- Both the SU and the University Executive have decided that the Policy has been a failure

## Defiant Don Takes on CRC

(continued from page 1)

enhancing the student experience at UL is his 'primary goal' for his term. 'I want to enhance the quality of teaching and the quality of faculty-student interaction. I want students to interact with best faculty and I want those interactions to take place in excellent facilities. I think that our students are entitled to that,' Professor Barry said at Council.

He went on to describe how he felt that the student experience is not limited solely to the 'formal education experience' but also wants, 'a university that nurtures community living on a vibrant campus of outstanding quality; a campus where there's activities going on around the clock and is not all but deserted in the evenings'.

In answering questions from members of Council, the President insisted that he was not going to give political answers that students might want to hear, but practical ones relating to the actual situation, which saw a number of blunt answers including a direct 'no' and nothing more to a student asking if there would be any plans to create scholarships for international students to ease the burden of fees placed on those students.

Similarly, the Professor Barry could offer no assurance to OPC President Fergal Dempsey that the climbing wall in the PESS Building would have a future following that building's refurbishment although he is 'regarding it as a priority'.

In addition to this, the guest speaker told Council that the Students' Union were 'going on a wild goose chase' regarding the search for free Wednesday afternoons and stated that there were two main constraints restricting such a move including the availability of a suitable room and the availability of all students regis-

tered for modules at the one time. He argued that, 'If I could fix it, I would fix it' and went on to comment that, 'If you're going to have red t-shirts saying "walkout on Wednesday" on them, then I'll have to have blue ones saying "stay in on Fridays" and maybe that would help the problem'.

The President also answered questions relating to the University's finances and in particular with regard to the Living Bridge which he stated would be 'in working order' by week 7 and commented that he thinks it is a 'wonderful structure that people working and studying on this campus will be proud of once they forget how much it costs'.

SU President St. John Ó Donnabháin asked the UL head to comment on the remark that the University had 'fulfilled the terms of the Alcohol Policy'. Professor Barry responded by stating that 'it is not accurate' to say that University has abandoned the Policy, but went on to comment that the Policy 'has completely failed'.

He continued his response with, 'I think that any policy that takes students off the campus is not in any way compliant with my ambition to turn this place into a vibrant community that doesn't empty out at 5pm every day and again at weekends. I want students to stick around here enjoying themselves all the time.' The President would like to see 'a discussion' regarding alcohol sponsorship on campus and limited promotion of low-alcohol beverages such as beers.

Despite the fact that a number of his responses during the evening were met with disagreement from the student audience, one thing that everyone in attendance agreed on is the fact that, as Professor Barry put it, the Alcohol Policy 'has completely failed'.

# Alicia Kozameh Visits UL

JANELLE EAGLETON

ON Monday October 15, UL's Spanish Section and the Research Group in Contemporary Hispanic Studies were host to Argentine author Alicia Kozameh who gave a talk about her work, followed by a short reading.

Ms Kozameh was a political prisoner in Argentina between 1975 and 1978, during the so called "Dirty War" in which up to about 30,000 Argentineans were subject to forced 'disappearance'; most of whom were probably killed. Many others were illegally detained and tortured, and some were forced into exile. This conflict happened under the rule of Jorge Videla, an army leader who had come to power as the result of a military coup and whose rule was characterised by repression and widespread human rights violations. In her own words, Ms Kozameh is lucky to be alive as there were thousands of people taken

prisoner during this time who simply disappeared and whose whereabouts remain unknown today.

After her release she published several novels; one of which, 'Steps Under Water', was a fictional work based on her experiences while in prison. It was from this novel that she read to an audience in the Common Room of the Millstream Courtyard Building.

Ms Kozameh speaks candidly about her experiences, both good and bad, while in the Villa Devoto women's prison in Buenos Aires. She was repeatedly tortured and put in solitary confinement and she faced constant uncertainty as to what would happen to her. However, in telling this side of the story, she also communicates passionately the strength she gained from the solidarity between the women in the prison; their determination not to submit to a state of hopelessness. It was this unity that, she says, made

this in some ways, one of the best times of her life.

After she was released from prison, she continued to be harassed by government agents and as a result of this, she went into exile; first in California and later in Mexico. However, when democracy was restored to Argentina in 1984, she returned to her native country. In 1987 'Steps Under Water' was published. This book, though fictional, draws heavily from real events and describes frankly the experience of being in prison at the time. She explains that as she comes to terms with what happened to her in prison, she is able to write about it and consequently, there have been later editions of 'Steps Under Water', the most recent of which was published in 2002. Indeed, when asked by a member of the audience why she did not want to publish an autobiographical work on the topic, she replies "Fiction gives you that distance that protects your health".



The release of 'Steps Under Water' in 1987 caused her once again to become the subject of serious threats and abuse from members of the Argentine political police; illustrating how in some ways the psychological weapons of war such as intimidation, last long after the battles are ended. As a result of this, she decided to return to California where she has been living ever since. Her most recent works include the novels '259 Leaps' (2001) and 'Ostrich Legs' (2003) and she continues to publish her short stories in several magazines and

anthologies.

Ms Kozameh's visit to UL, of interest to students of Spanish, History, Politics and Sociology, was part of an ongoing seminar series run by the Research Group in Contemporary Hispanic Studies; details of which can be obtained by contacting Cinta Ramblado, head of the Spanish Section. It was also thanks to the support of the Cervantes Institute, Dublin and Campus Life Services who provided a reception in the Millstream Common Room.

## UL Shorts

Governing Body Elections

THE term of office of the present University Governing Authority draws to a close on November 30. While quite a number of its members are nominated by organisations such as the Department of Science & Education and the UL Foundation, some members are elected by UL academic and non-academic staff and UL graduates. Nominations closed for graduate nominees a number of weeks ago and the list of nominees has been released.

Twelve candidates have put their names forward for election, including outgoing governors James Collins and Suzanne Bugler. Elections for graduate members will take place on Monday November 26. Postal ballot papers may be requested by graduates by contacting the Acting Secretary, Callista Bennis. Completed postal ballot papers must be received by the Acting Secretary by 5pm on November 23. Nominations have also closed for staff members of the Authority. While a number of members of staff have announced their candidacy on the internal UL email, as yet an official list of staff candidates has not been provided.

Careers Fair

ON Thursday October 18, the annual Careers Fair took place at the University Arena. Started in 1997 with 25 companies attending, the Careers Fair this year attracted 110 companies and 1800 students and is now the biggest campus careers fair in the country. Mary Sweeney, Head of Careers, told An Focal that she was very pleased with the success of this year's fair and that visiting companies found most UL students to have done significant research before approaching them at the fair. The most recent data from April 2007 (surveying graduates from 2006) revealed that the employment rate of UL graduates is 11% above the national average, with a mere 3% seeking employment at the time of the study.

Canadian Poet Reading

NEWFOUNDLAND Poet Laureate Agnes Walsh visits UL on November 6 to read from her most recent work, 'Growing Up With Bachelors'. Walsh, whose work addresses issues of memory, identity, community, language and landscape has had her poems translated into French and Portuguese. The reading will take place in the Common Room of the Millstream building at 6pm.

Library Laptop Competition

CLOSING date is fast approaching for the UL/ULster Bank Enablement Fund-sponsored laptop competition at the main library. To enter the draw for the laptops students need to attend either a scheduled or drop-in Library training class before Week 12. Check the screens at the entrance to the Library for information about the times for each class. Winners will be announced in week 12.

# Outreach : The New Charity on the Block

DARYL BUCKLEY

ESPECIALLY relevant given the ongoing talk of apathy and general loss of community spirit among students in UL, there is a new charity in operation on campus called UL Outreach. Working in the Castletroy area, UL Outreach's goal is to provide support for the more disadvantaged members of the local community. Among the activities co-ordinated by this, the only charity on campus, are Homework Clubs for children in St Mary's Park and local traveller children; a Swimming Club which gives children access to the University Arena's 50m pool; a weekly visitation to the residents of Milford Hospice, and much much more.

ULO has an enormous amount of potential in its unique position as a charity on campus. Basically, it is very easy for other clubs and societies to become involved with our work. So while we

are all aware that you can't be a member of every club or society, remember - particularly all you club/soc presidents out there! - that any activity which your club/soc could offer children of the area would be greatly appreciated, and such events are already in the pipeline. For instance, UL Skydiving Club will be demonstrating a training jump and showing kids how to correctly pack a parachute and UL Trampolining Club will be giving demonstrations and short lessons. Activities like these really help diversify the work of ULO, they cost your club/soc nothing and they are a great experience for the kids.

An annual 6-week aid-giving mission to Haiti, the poorest country in the Western hemisphere, is another major activity undertaken by the society. UL Outreach, however, is a society like any other and funding to continue our activities is always an issue, so be on the look-out for

any ULO fundraising events going on around campus.

ULO were behind the 'Get Your President Wet' event on Walkout Wednesday and are very thankful for all who

supported the event, as well as those who submitted to the barrage of sponges and full buckets of water. Assuring the campus community of bigger and better things to come,

especially during Rag Week, doubtless they will be a very welcome addition to campus life at UL.

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# Welfare in UL

JUDITH LYNCH, WELFARE OFFICER

AS the projects and essays pile up and for fourth year students the FYP looms on the horizon - many of you may find that leisure time is at a minimum. The heavy college workload can often prohibit going for a social one or two with your mates let alone participating in extra-curricular events. However, college life is not about academic work alone (this is not an excuse for torching your books in a Halloween bonfire), remember the old adage: all work and no play etc.

The President of UL, Don Barry, is a strong proponent of this reality - with a reference to an 'outstanding student experience' in every convocation, oration and address since his appointment. This is why the University is 'endeavouring' to free up our Wednesday afternoons - to give you the time to have a life. And yet the vast majority of students have lectures, labs or tutorials timetabled in on that very afternoon. The 'Walk Out' last Wednesday was a physical reminder from clubs and societies, the students' union and the students' of UL that extra-curricular time is important - nay VITAL to every person who attends this college.

So don't be so quick to prioritise your academic work over your social life. You need to balance both so as to ensure you achieve the optimum in each. Remember the clubs and societies recruitment drive in week 1? - the buzz and excitement in the arena as you discovered the activities and events and fun that is

to be had outside the classroom! Don't be so quick to turn your back on these vibrant organisations and lock yourself in the library. The time is approaching when you may have to reduce your leisure time - but don't remove it entirely! I can guarantee you that when you have left this University and started your life in the 'real world' - it won't be the lectures and labs, nor the revision and exams that you will reminisce over- but the friends you made and the good times you had. So make time for that - life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away!



## The Importance of Being Earnest - Asking for Feedback

ALAN HIGGINS,  
EDUCATION OFFICER

LEARNING is much more than the retention of information, it should be about developing yourself and identifying your strengths and overcoming your weaknesses. During this, the season of mid-terms and assignments, now is a good opportunity to gauge your performance to date. It's time to ask for feedback.

There are a number of benefits to feedback; most importantly they provide an important learning tool both in regards to the subject material and the development of your learning skills in general. Feedback is just as essential to those who have done well as those who haven't achieved what they hoped. It is important to realise that it is just as important to identify where your strengths lie as where your weaknesses are so that you can build on those techniques and abandon others. Specific to the course material, feedback allows you to engage with the lecturer to find out how you are doing and also to make preparations for the end of semester assessments.

There are a number of method and types of feedback you can get and you need to know what to do with all of it.

- Always see feedback as a positive activity, if you are getting negative or positive feedback and don't understand-ask for clarifications.
- Don't take offence, the lecturer is trying to help and be constructive. When receiving feedback, it is not the time for you to hold back as you want to maximise your learning experience and a lecturer or tutor is providing that information on a plate, so ask questions.
- Finally, its no point getting feedback and doing nothing with it-make sure you see how you can apply any feedback you get to the work, be it for that module or your study in general.

If you want to know where you went right or wrong in your assignments and develop your learning experience, regardless of whether it is offered or not, it is important to be earnest and ask for feedback.



## Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

JUDITH LYNCH

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

### What is it?

Genital herpes is a common infection caused by the herpes simplex 2 virus. Herpes Simplex 1 usually causes the cold sores around the mouth and nose and sometimes eyes and genital area.

### What are the symptoms?

- Itching or Tingling sensation in the genital or anal area.
- Small fluid-filled blisters. These burst and leave painful sores. They will dry out, scab over and heal but it could take two to four weeks to heal.
- Pain when urinating.
- A flu-like illness, backache, headache.

### How could I get it?

Herpes is very infectious. It is spread by having sex of any type - particularly oral sex with a person who has oral herpes (cold sores), by touching or sexual closeness, even kissing. Beware - from the time the sores appear to the time the scabs fall off, Herpes is at its most contagious.

### How do I protect myself?

If you've got a genital sore, don't have sex - even with a condom. Wait until the sores heal. Having sex, even with a condom, may not fully protect you, it will irritate the sores, and it will take them longer to heal!

If you've got the sores then don't touch them. If you do, then wash your hands; soap and water kills the virus. Wash your hands after going to the bathroom. Wash them before rubbing your eyes or touching contact lenses and definitely don't spit on the lenses, you may spread Herpes to your eyes.

A special warning to you lasses out there - if you're pregnant, Herpes can cause a miscarriage or stillbirth. An active Herpes infection during childbirth could leave the baby with serious health problems.

### Treatment?

Herpes is treatable but not curable. A course of tablets taken early may make the sores less painful and heal quicker.

There is no known cure for Herpes but the painful blisters won't be there all the time. The first outbreak of sores is always the worst. Some people never get any more after that.

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Contact Seamus Ryan  
Editor

editor@ulsu.ie  
061-202363

# Postgraduate News



BY EMMA MURPHY  
PSA PRESIDENT

*Dear All,*

I hope you are all keeping well.  
Just a few notices and points of info for you!

## Halloween Party in Java's FASHION NIGHTMARES

Wednesday 31st in Java's!  
Tickets available from the PSA @€10, including vouchers and entry to the SinBin!  
Drop by and get your ticket!!

## Postgraduate Monthly Careers Coffee Morning

The first postgraduate careers coffee morning will take place on Wednesday October 31st from 11am-12pm in the PSA common room!!

These meetings will occur monthly and Postgraduate Careers Advisor Joanne Holland will facilitate the meetings on an informal basis over coffee and answer your questions and queries. Come along and meet Joanne! No query is too big or too small!

I hope to see you all there!

## Vacant Officer and Association Council Positions

As per the constitution :

If an Officer's position, other than the position of President, becomes vacant during the year, the position may be filled by a bye-election within twenty-one calendar days. An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be called to hold a bye-election in accordance with Schedule II to this Constitution. If no candidate comes forward to contest such an election the vacancy shall be filled by co-option by the Executive Committee.

Therefore as the PSA Executive positions of Treasurer and Mary I rep have been vacant since the AGM on Wednesday of Week 5 ( allowing for 21 calendar days) applications for candidates can be made through the office of the PSA president in writing or by e-mail to emma.murphy@ul.ie by Wednesday 31st October at 5pm.

Should there be no interested applicants then the vacancy shall be filled by co-option by the PSA executive.

The non-officer positions (College Representatives) of the PSA are available to be filled by co-option. Interested candidates can contact me at emma.murphy@ul.ie

## Postgraduates Working Group

Positions are still available for the Postgraduate Working Group. This group deals with all issues pertaining for postgraduates and promotes a student perspective within the workings of the association.

Any interested students can either pop into the office or contact me by email!

## The Common Room

Just an update on the situation with the Common Room: The room was designed for postgraduates and is funded by postgraduate capitation. As the facilities in the common room have been somewhat abused in recent weeks I have imposed restrictions for manageability sake and not to target undergraduate students. The restrictions are highly unfortunate but very necessary. The common room is a facility and I would urge you to keep the place clean and tidy and to respect the other users!

That's all from me guys!

I hope you come along to the meetings and participate!

If you have any questions, queries or comments just pop in, drop me an e-mail or give me a call!

*Beir bua,  
Emma*



## Turas Traenáil i mBaile Átha Cliath

**B**HÍOS fhéin agus Pádraig Ó Beagáin thuas i mBaile Átha Cliath an deiareadh seachtaine seo caite mar cuid den traenáil leathacht le Conradh na nGaeilge. Chuamar suas tráthnóna de hAoine le Brendáin Ó hÉamhaigh, iar úachtarán an cumann agus iar Oifigeach na Gaeilge in Aontas na Mic Léinn, a bhí mar traenálaí leis an Conradh.



le Caitliona Ní Ghallachóbhair  
(Oifigeach na Gaeilge)

Deireadh seachtaine suimúil agus lán le craic a bhí iontu. Thosaigh an oiliúint ag a 11r.n. de Sathur i Sráid Fhearchair thuas staighre in ionad Conradh na Gaeilge. Bhí coistí agus oifigí gaeilge ann ó Coláiste na Trinóide, Ollscoil cathair Baile Átha Cliath, Maigh Núid, Ollscoil na Gaillimhe agus Ollscoil cathair Corcaigh chun trácht a dhéanamh ar cúpla ceann acu.

Ar maidin, bhí orm mar oifigeach freastal ar léacht ó Brendáin Ó hÉamhaigh agus Siobhán Nic Gaoithín, oifigeach na gaeilge, Institiúid Teicneolaíochta BÁC faoin ról spéisialta a bhfuil agam san Ollscoil. D'fhreagar na léachtanna sin aon cheist a bhí agam faoi na dualgaisí éagsúla agus chur sé ag smaoineamh mé faoi na rudáí ba chóir dom a dhéanamh an téarma seo. Tar sin bhí orm go léir

éisteacht le Daithí de Faoite, iar-chathaoirleach sa cumann i UCD, Clóna Ní Mhuirí, feidhmeannach seachtain na gaeilge teo faoi seachtain na gaeilge agus eagrú laethanta gaeilge san ollscoil.

Tar éis béile iontach blasta agus soar in aisce san iar nóin, chuamar ar ais go dtí an conradh chun eolas tábhachtach a fháil faoi saol na gaeilge agus bailiú airgead don chumann ó Darren Ó Rodaigh, Jamie Ó Tuama, Sean Ó hAdhmaill - Cathaoirleach na Gaeil Óga, Marcus Mac Ruairí ó Glór na nGael agus Cóilín Ó Cearrbhaill stiúrthóir an Club Sult.

Um tráthnóna bhí cúpla pionta againn go léir thíos staighre sa Club an Conradh. Níos déanaí bualamar le chéile agus bhí oíche thar barr againn! Sílim gur deis iontach a bhí iontu aithne níos fearr a chur ar lucht na mic léinn in Éirinn a bhfuil suim mór acu sa Ghaeilge. Tuigim anois gach rud a bhfuil le déanamh agam mar oifigeach agus táim i bhfad níos suaimhnigh sa phost mar tá teagmháil nua déanta agam agus tuigim go bhfuil tacaíocht agam. Mar a dereann an seanfhocal "Ní neart go cur le chéile".



# 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,

As security in the library have informed me that "that's just the way it's done", I thought I would take the opportunity to air my grievances with them here, on the chance I might find some like minded colleagues.

Sunday's in the library are generally quiet, less students, less noise, less demand for computers; and yet this is the only day the library security choose to check ID cards. On any other day of the week Leaving Certificate students can (in uniform!) enter the library and use the already limited facilities available to UL students. The library does not publicise this policy, and as on Sundays it is mostly UL students who attempt to use the facilities anyway, it seems that the only result is to inconvenience students who do not carry their ID card with them at all times.

On another note, could the Student's Union please find out, or inform students if they already know, why the Venus Labs now close 45 minutes before the library? This facility, which has in recent years been a great help for those who choose to study late in the evening has been demoted from a 24 hour lab, to a lab with extended hours, to a lab which is now of no use to anyone who requires internet or other computer facilities from just after 10pm on. If demand is not great, could they not open the front room and lock the other two?

Is mise,

Katie Harrington

Sir,

Why do students suddenly want to be in the line of fire, putting their education and their relationships with their lecturers on the line by marching out of classrooms around campus? To make a point to the University? Surely that is what the Students Union is for, to voice the opinions of the populace to the College. If the students have to walk out of lectures to make the point then the SU has already failed the students it represents. The students doing the Walkout have lost the content of the lectures, labs or tutorials and that is what we are all here for, education. Clubs and Socs are important to campus life, but are a luxury and don't warrant walking out of what possibly vital classes in modules.

I'd love to join C&S but my workload doesn't permit it. I haven't enough time as it is to lose Wednesday afternoons just so C&S can run events earlier. Why should other students lose out so they can? What's wrong with the current C&S times? Do other colleges accommodate C&S like this? Yes there may be a small boom in activity in C&S but not what everyone expects as most students will see it as another day off, not bothering coming into college even skipping the morning. Those students who do work will see timetables on other days filling up to compensate as the hours must be made up for. The luxury of going home early on Friday will evaporate.

The SU represents the student political voice so

that walkouts and protests unnecessary especially for luxuries like free Wednesday afternoons, more appropriately pursued at a meeting table by the SU. I am all for standing up for students, the addition of cameras across campus is very welcome and due for years. One would be forgiven for thinking the apathetic University actually cares about student security/ safety. Walkouts/ protests should be reserved for important goals not to achieve a luxury such as a clear schedule on a Wednesday afternoon.

I criticise the Class Reps Council for poor priorities and the SU exec for not dissuading a motion from the beginning that encourages over eager students to walk out of labs or lectures that may not be repeatable. If you walk out of a mandatory non-repeatable lab, you fail that lab, end of story. Is it worth it?

Yours,

David Berger

Sir,

As someone who walked out of my Wednesday afternoon lab to enjoy the courtyard festivities, I was pretty impressed with what I walked out to participate in. Trampolining. American football. Kayakers (who incidentally, are all crazy) doing nutty things with water. I even bought a few cookies at the Green Fair in the next courtyard over. Unfortunately I didn't get to see the climbers doing their thing in the PE building as I didn't feel like the walk there but I hear it went well.

What impressed me most however were two things. First, the level of involvement from all participants. Organisers were engaging the crowd at every available opportunity. I saw at least three Student Union officers (president, campaigns and publicity officers) wandering about sopping wet (honestly, sopping!) after engagement with a hose, a bucket or a paddling pool. Second, the publicity - on my way home that evening I turned on the local news and there was an SU person on the radio talking about the day. The next day I picked up the Irish Independent and there was an article in there too - a national paper! Organisation and publicity are two things the Student Union appear to be getting right this year, cheers for that!

Yours,

Sinead Bourke

Sir,

Walkout Wednesday kicked ass. Why can't we do some of that stuff every Wednesday?

Yours,

Sionan O'Rourke

## El Presidente

### Walkout Wednesday

**L**AST Wednesday was Walkout Wednesday - and it was brilliant. There was great support from students, Clubs and Societies did a great job with all the events, huge media coverage, and great support from lots of staff in the University - now it's time for the UL Executive to come on board and move with the TIMES.

This is not something new to the University; Free Wednesday afternoons were in place 10 years ago, and has been gradually taken away through putting more and more classes on Wednesday afternoons - a massive underestimation of the value the value of this time, and its contribution to the University. Coming to college is about more than just sitting exams; it's about learning new things, getting involved, and becoming an active member of society. And the activities and successes of UL students contribute hugely to the standing and reputation of the University - for example, only last week the UL Archery Club broke a world record!

And it's important that the University knows that we appreciate just how important Wednesday afternoons are, and that we don't intend to let them fall off the agenda, like so many things over the last few years. Walkout Wednesday was a great success, but now is not the time to congratulate ourselves - it's time to push on from here and really give this the priority it deserves and needs.

This is going to be an ongoing campaign; as the posters said '35 days and counting - Don?'. This will be coming to Governing Authority again soon, and there are plenty of plans for pushing this further before the big Alcohol Policy deadline in November...watch this space...

St. John Ó Donnabháin, UL Students Union President  
st.john.odonnabhain@ul.ie



# This Year's Students' Union Executive

**T**HE executive of the Students' Union is composed of twelve voting officers and two non-voting positions. The voting members are: President St. John Ó Donnabháin, DP/Welfare Officer Judith Lynch, Education Officer Alan Higgins, Campaigns & Services Officer Patrick McHugh, Publicity & Publications Officer Seamus

Ryan, Postgraduate Students' Association Executive nominee Emma Murphy, Community Relations Officer Michael Bourke, Equality Officer Hama Munyikwa, Chair of Class Reps Council Aoife Finnerty, Colleges Officers' nominee Aoife Breen, Clubs Officer Aine Manley and Societies Officer Stephen Carmody.

The two non-voting

positions are Union Secretary General Tomas Costello and first year representatives Peter Shone and Keith Young (who were jointly selected by first-year Class Reps Council members to represent their interests).

The Executive is composed of a wide variety of people elected by different groups to ensure that the views of a substantial cross-

section of the UL student population are represented. The five sabbatical officers are directly elected by the entire student population, as are the positions of Community Relations Officer (CRO) and Equality Officer. The PSA Executive nominee has historically always been the PSA President, who is elected to a sabbatical term by postgraduate students to

represent their interests. Class Reps Council elects six college officers to represent each of the constituent colleges of the university who in turn select an executive Colleges officer from among themselves. Class Reps Council also elects their Chair and first year members of council elect a first year representative as a non-voting member. The positions of

Clubs officer and Societies Officer are elected by UL clubs and societies respectively.

Many students will already be familiar with the sabbatical officers but given the different roles that all members of the executive play, it can be very useful to be familiar with who the other officers are. These pages act as an informal introduction to all SU officers for this year.

**Name:** St. John Ó Donnabháin

**Position:** President

**Course studied:** History, Politics, Sociology and Social Studies.

**Why you wanted the job:** I went for re-election to finish a lot of the jobs that we worked on last year, such as the Alcohol Policy and the Boathouse. Working in the Students Union is great, and you really get a chance to make a difference to students' lives.

**Best thing about the job:** So many different things going on, lots of energy around the place, it's always changing.

**Worst thing about the job:** So many different things going on, and I can't do them all!

**The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:** Get all of the students of UL involved in a strong Union - then we'd really get things moving!

**Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?** Yes, another bar/venue open on campus, Java's. Campbell's lowered some of their prices after our campaign. Big end-of-year party organised last year, for the first time. New bus routes to Annacotty and Cappavilla are agreed, and will be rolled out soon.

**Three interesting facts about yourself:**

1. I cycled across Ireland a few years ago.
2. My favourite place in Limerick is down on the river walkway.
3. I'm a little bit obsessed with playing full songs - I hate when people change them in the middle

**Your motto:** 'Better to regret doing something than to regret not doing it'



**Name:** Alan Higgins

**Position:** Vice-President/Education Officer

**Course studied:** Public Administration-Class of 2006

**Why you wanted the job:** Because having it being doing it for a year already I thought that there were things which I wanted to see completed and ideas which I wanted to give a try. Also it was a great experience the first time round.

**Best thing about the job:** While knowing that you can't change the world and all that, that you can make the small difference to make students life better

**Worst thing about the job:** The long hours!

**The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:** Being able to split myself into two (three or four would be better). Seriously, getting students and faculty to realise and respect the role that students can play in making the University a better place.

**Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?** I've introduced mid-week training for Class Reps, which happens every odd Wednesday at 6pm in the Students' Union.

**Three interesting facts about yourself:**

1. I lived in Australia for Ten Years.
2. I was the 2004 Meath Macra Karaoke County Champion (I choked at the All-Irelands)
3. Oranges give me migraines

**Your motto:** 'Nobody/Nothing is Perfect, doesn't mean you shouldn't try!'



**Name:** Emma Murphy

**Position:** President, Postgraduate Students' Association

**Course studied:** B.A. History, Politics, Sociology and Social Studies (2006) M.A. Peace and Development Studies (2007)

**Why you wanted the job:** I thought once I'd got elected that I could evict St. John from his office and take over the Union! On a serious note, I wanted to make a difference and raise the standard of Postgrad life on Campus!

**Best thing about the job:** The Office of Isolation!... behind the blue door in the PSA Common Room!

**Worst thing about the job:** 14-15 hour days!!!!

**The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:** Find a 'Springclean Fairy' for the Common Room!!!

**Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?** All campaign promises are in progress! Some further along than others such as the re-integration campaign, standardisation for masters dissertations, the common room clean up and the question of payments to postgraduates for teaching!

**Three interesting facts about yourself:**

1. I have a season ticket for Liverpool FC
2. I ended up studying in UL as a drunken mistake!...(never make changes to your final CAO the night of your 18th Birthday!)
3. I have a 5-inch scar on my leg from a cut that I got from a chair in the Jean Monnet when I was in 2nd year!

**Your motto:** Dubito, Ergo, Cogito, Ergo Sum - I Doubt, therefore I Think, therefore I am ... being a Doubting Thomas is underrated!



**Name:** Patrick McHugh

**Position:** Campaigns & Services Officer

**Course studied:** B.A. in Irish Music and Dance

**Why you wanted the job:** I am a trouble maker, this is a specific skill I feel that I bring to this position, ergo suitability for post, services, well they are nice. I like a good service, especially when provided by this fabulous University in which we must survive. Name one, I dare ya.

**Best thing about the job:** I get paid to do a hobby I have had for a while and also I get to learn about stuff and sometimes they let me out of my office to throw things and stuff.

**Worst thing about the job:** The public, they really ruin it for us Students, mostly Residents, oh yea and the University Executive, they can really show their age sometimes.

**The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:** Be the University President so the policies we sign up to are actually completed with the respect to all parties such policies would deserve and not gloat like some amateur Politician when it seems insulting your constituents is a positive move for all the group.

**Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?** I did not make promises, therefore none to fulfil but you might find such agenda items I felt needed to be addressed are being done some justice par say, safety, alcohol policy, diversity, representation and respect, well at least from the SU to its constituents, if not by further a field.

**Three interesting facts about yourself:**

1. I am now a graduate of this University, at last.
2. I am a very proud godfather to the next generation of Satan, and I might just add, she is savage.
3. Cultural Geography did not agree with me, but that was a common complaint.

**Your motto:** 'Everyone feels like an Ass at some stage in their life, well I know I have !'



**Name:** Seamus Ryan

**Position:** Publicity & Publications Officer

**Course studied:** Computer Systems. And a previous spell in Law & Accounting back in the 90s

**Why you wanted the job:**

To run the student newspaper and temporarily become a press whore. Really, it's far more attractive than you might think. Everyone gets joy and satisfaction out of helping people or groups of people and for me that was always going to be the most fulfilling part of the job. I also wanted to be able to publicise student events, improve on the work that had been done before and provide a platform to students to make their views known.

**Best thing about the job:**

Being able to make a difference and work on new things, especially getting new people to write for An Focal. And compliments are great. I'm not fishing as they're useless if they're not meant but that's what keeps me going through the week and weekend.

**Worst thing about the job:**

The long hours are by choice, I'd rather spend extra time doing a better job than less doing a shoddy one. Often not being able to see good friends in the evenings and at weekends because there's a lot of work to be done that can't and shouldn't be put off. And with the world's smallest violin out, I'm never going to be happy with the amount of work I'm doing or the hours available. It's never going to be good enough for me but that's good for everyone else.

**The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:** Just like the wish of every An Focal editor in the past decade, bring out a weekly paper. Unfortunately both logistics and cost (especially the cost) means that it's pretty much impossible for the foreseeable future

**Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?** I'm working with clubs and socs to get as much of their publicity as possible into the paper, keeping my commitment to Irish content, needling people where possible to widen the scope of writers and doing my level best to publicise ULSU activities. The last one is an ongoing learning experience. UL Journalism Soc has been set up as a completely independent organisation and they will get all the help I can give. More to come.

**Three interesting facts about yourself:**

1. I always wear odd socks
2. I've got the longest gap between 2 exec memberships in ULSU history - CRO in 1994/95 and now PPO in 2007/08
3. Last year I ate my own weight in ice-cream. Seriously, it just takes time and commitment.

**Your motto:** 'Better to fail in originality than to succeed in imitation', or more likely 'It's controversial? Heck, yeah, I'll print it!'

**Name:** Judith Lynch

**Position:** Deputy President/Welfare

**Course studied:** Law and European Studies

**Why you wanted the job:** To make a difference!

**Best thing about the job:** Being able to help people out.

**Worst thing about the job:** Crazy long hours.

**The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:** Pay for every student to go through college without having to spend a bob.

**Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?** I haven't forgotten any of my promises and there is a fair bit of work required for each however, I can tick most of the boxes at this stage - I'm very proud!

**Three interesting facts about yourself:**

1. I won the Mike Sadlier award for society involvement in 2007.
2. I went to Australia once for 5 days.
3. I have an RSI on my right shoulder due to long office hours in the SU (is that interesting?)

**Your motto:** 'Things are getting worse - please send chocolate!'



**Name: Michael Bourke**

**Position: Community Relations Officer**

**Course studied:** BA in European Studies and then MA in European Integration



**Why you wanted the job:** I spent four years here enjoying everything UL had to offer and didn't have much time to get involved in the union, now I can and did. I think the position as CRO is great because I'm a full member of exec but it's a part-time position.

**Best thing about the job:** I have made Castletroy my home for the past 4 and a half years, I have lived and worked here and being CRO allows me to help to integrate students into the local community.

**Worst thing about the job:** It's unpaid.

**The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:** Open a Community centre and a late bar.

**Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?** Didn't have a campaign so yes!

**Three interesting facts about yourself:**

1. I speak fluent Dutch, German, Spanish, Irish and Javascript.
2. I shot J.R.
3. I like to lie twice in ever questionnaire I fill out.

**Your motto:** 'Buy one get one Free' or 'Carpe Diem'

**Name: Hama Munyikwa**

**Position: Equality Officer**

**Course studied:** Politics and French



**Why you wanted the job:** I felt I should be more involved in student activities in my final year and recognised that I was in a good position to raise the issues of equality on campus, and in the society in general

**Best thing about the job:** Being approached by students who would like things changed and being in a position to do something about it

**Worst thing about the job:** So far so good, but maybe not having enough time to commit to the job

**The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:** Most of what I'd want to do is achievable

**Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?** I have raised all the problems brought forward to me during the campaign to the student's union exec and started to make plans to deal with them

**Three interesting facts about yourself:**

1. I grew up in Zimbabwe
2. I speak five languages
3. I'm the only person in my course

**Your motto:** Have the courage to change the things you can, the serenity to accept the things you cannot and the wisdom to know the difference

**Name: Aine Manley**

**Position: Clubs Officer**

**Course studied:** Business studies with Japanese



**Why you wanted the job:** Interested in clubs and thought this would allow a greater understanding of how they operate.

**Best thing about the job:** Free food

**Worst thing about the job:** All the freaking meetings

**The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:** Live in a cloud

**Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?** I had no campaign and made no promises.

**Three interesting facts about yourself:**

1. My favourite colour is orange but I don't like most orange foods, such as oranges.
2. I get cranky when not fed so beware.
3. Caution towards Alva.

**Your motto:** Take the steps as they come, for the wider ones take your time.

**Name: Aoife Breen**

**Position: Colleges' Officer (also College of Humanities' Officer)**

**Course studied:** HPSS, Year 4



**Why you wanted the job:** Sometimes the University forgets that it exists because of the students. I want to make sure that students are not forgotten as the University evolves and develops its educational provisions. It has happened before, but hopefully it won't happen again this year.

**Best thing about the job:** The fame?!

**Worst thing about the job:** The fans?!

**The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:** Create immunity for students against the apathy virus. I hate apathy!

**Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?** One of the biggest things I'll be dealing with this year will be the issue of anonymous marking; it's an ongoing topic that is being ping-ponged back and forth from Class Reps' Council and the Education Officer. Hopefully I'll manage to put some sort of close on the matter. Similarly, with the academic realignment coming into force probably in the New Year, I want to make sure that student representation on faculty boards does not drop. The Education Officer and I will be becoming best buddies this year due to our close working relationship on these concerns!

**Three interesting facts about yourself:**

1. Despite his evil stare, I would really like to have the penguin inhabiting Java's. Penguins are, as Thomas 'Student Speak' Dee would say, "the balls". Fact.
2. I'm scarily addicted to orange Lucozade. I like to argue that it's better than smoking, although not cheaper when you drink up to five bottles a day...
3. I've been told many times recently by a number of different people, independently of each other, that I've really soft hair. There must be something in the water of late...

**Your motto:** Better to regret something you've done than to regret not doing it.

**Name: Aoife Finnerty**

**Position: Chair of Class Reps Council**

**Course studied:** Law and European Studies



**Why you wanted the job:** Because nobody else wanted it - ah no. I like being involved in the Union in general. I had such a good experience with class reps in my first semester that I thought 'This is something I really want to do'. As well as that I wanted to shorten the time of council.

**Best thing about the job:** The wonderful feeling of glowing satisfaction when you get a council finished in less than 45 minutes.

**Worst thing about the job:** The not-so-wonderful feeling when council lasts over 2 hours - that and all the people who give out to you!

**The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:** Stop people repeating themselves and others

**Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?** I didn't make any campaign promises - I did say that I'd try and cut council time as much as possible. I hope I did that for the most part (last week notwithstanding)

**Three interesting facts about yourself:**

1. I used to be a ballerina
2. I'm from Longford (I don't know if that actually qualifies as interesting - It's definitely different!)
3. I have 'Happy Feet' (I have to constantly bounce and shake my feet even when I'm perfectly still everywhere else)

**Your motto:** It's always good to bury the hatchet - most of the time in someone else's head.

**Name: Stephen Carmody**

**Position: Societies Officer**

**Course studied:** Pharmaceutical & Industrial Chemistry



**Why you wanted the job:** To help promote and encourage societies. To ensure they can live up to what they are capable of

**Best thing about the job:** Helping the societies in need get off their feet and helping the others with their continuing success

**Worst thing about the job:** Meetings that don't finish when they should

**The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:** Have more societies on campus

**Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?** Although I did not have to campaign I am very committed to keeping my promise to help societies that are in need of help in any way shape or form

**Three interesting facts about yourself:**

1. When I was young I wanted to be a Power Ranger when I grow up (I still do)
2. I can Play 7 Different Instruments
3. I have only ever had 3 colds and 2 flu's

**Your motto:** Don't suffer from insanity - Enjoy every minute of it.

**Name: Peter Shone**

**Position: Half of a First Year Rep**

**Course studied:** Environmental Science



**Why you wanted the job:** I figured that it would be a great opportunity to get to know a whole bunch of people, and be able to help other first years get the most out of first year.

**Best thing about the job:** At the moment..... Red t-shirts.

**Worst thing about the job:** I'm sure there will be something eventualy

**The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:** Make the moon out of cheese!

**Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?** We had campaign promises? I suppose I'll come up with a few and get them done.

**Three interesting facts about yourself:**

1. I was born in a town called Kasama, in northern Zambia.
2. I hate wearing trousers.
3. Hot chicken rolls with cheese and lettuce are the way to go

**Your motto:** Is est melior ustulo sicco quam fade absentis - It is better to burn out than fade away.

**Name: Keith Young**

**Position: 1st Year Rep**

**Course studied:** Materials and Engineering (Education)



**Why you wanted the job:** To put this nice and short, I wanted this job as I felt 1st years do need to have a voice on the executive committee, and I felt I could help accomplish this.

**Best thing about the job:** At the time of writing this, haven't been on the executive for more than a week, but I would have to say getting to know different people.

**Worst thing about the job:** I haven't been here long enough to find anything wrong. I'm sure there's nothing.....

**The one thing you would do if only it was achievable:** I'd be interested in getting staff to pay for parking. They do have more money than us after all.

**Have you fulfilled any campaign promises yet?** I didn't really have a campaign. It was a simple speech and vote at class reps council. I promised to make sure our voices are heard and to ensure issues affecting us get addressed. Again less than a week on the executive, but I'll get it done.

**Three interesting facts about yourself:**

1. I'm ginger.
2. I somehow got the name Keithy-Pie at some stage in my life.
3. I like long walks on the beach (anyone interested?!?!?!?)

**Your motto:** Do what must be done.

# Paper, Paper Everywhere

NICOLA HOGAN

**Y**OU may have noticed in various printing and photocopying locations on campus, posters of beautiful landscapes or tropical rainforests. You may also have noticed that each poster contained a message relating to carbon dioxide emissions or told of the amount of waste paper produced by the university each year. These posters are part of an ongoing paper saving campaign by a post graduate student and were designed to increase awareness of the university's annual A4 paper consumption.

It has been estimated that the University of Limerick consumes about 42 million sheets of A4 paper each year and an immeasurable amount of various types of other paper stationary including

envelopes, post its, flyers, brochures, manila folders etc. The list of paper products in circulation on campus is endless. The post graduate researcher behind the campaign is Nicola Hogan of the Centre for Environmental Research. Since starting her research position last November, Nicola has taken charge of the university's participation in the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) sponsored Local Authority Prevention Demonstration (LAPD) Programme. This programme is all about the prevention of waste as oppose to correct disposal.

Limerick County Council, a participant in the programme, invited UL to also take part and so the work began. The first step was to quantify the amount of paper the university uses in a typical

academic year, calculate its corresponding ecological footprint and then implement a programme to reduce paper consumption by 20%.

Log onto the website [www.ul.ie/~cer/paperuse](http://www.ul.ie/~cer/paperuse) for more details about other participants.

On campus, Nicola is creating awareness for the project by informing paper users of the effect our daily use of paper has on the environment. In fact you may have already received an e mail from her listing the "top 10 tips to save paper". By March of this year Nicola and the LAPD committee had determined how much A4 paper the university's consumes in a typical year, identified its pathways into the university and discovered how paper is used and disposed of. Results of several waste paper audits highlighted

the practice of single sided printing and photocopying and excessive printing and publishing. The audits also showed paper being disposed of in "mixed waste" bins as oppose to recycling bins. Furthermore the LAPD committee devised a series of paper saving techniques which were implemented in the Schumann Building during the month of July, on a trial basis.

Notification of the trial went out to all residents of the building and blue recycling bins replaced grey waste bins in all offices. Residents were asked to reduce their use of paper where possible and to dispose of all paper products into the blue bins.

A waste paper audit carried out at the end of the trial, indicated that while the blue bins worked very well in capturing waste paper, the

level of paper consumption remained high and there was little or no change in the practice of excess single sided printing or photocopying.

Phase II of the Schumann Trial was then launched to re-address the issue of excess and single printing and photocopying and is still ongoing.

Nicola is also calculating the university's Ecological Footprint of its A4 paper use. Ecological Footprinting calculates the total amount of CO2 produced by an activity and calculates how much land is required to sequester that amount of CO2.

She has estimated it to be in the region of 227 global hectares. This means that 227 hectares of various types of land are required to sequester the amount of CO2 that the university's A4 paper demand creates. She has also estimated

that university's A4 paper demand emits into the atmosphere over 1,021 tonnes of CO2 and requires more than 200 trees to be felled to create the 42 million sheets of A4 paper.

The LAPD committee is hoping to reduce the university's total consumption of paper and its ecological footprint by 20% by June 2008. That's 16,800 reams of paper and the only way of achieving this target is if everyone on campus remembers the "top 10 tips to save paper".

So please, let's all do our bit for the environment and the university and think before you print or throw away.

For more information on the project contact Nicola at (061) 213351 or at [Nicola.Hogan@ul.ie](mailto:Nicola.Hogan@ul.ie)

## The Heathrow - Shannon Controversy

### A National Issue or a Media Obsession?

NIAMH CLOWRY

**F**ROM the moment it was announced that Aer Lingus were planning to move their Heathrow flights from their Shannon base to Belfast, there has been widespread condemnation from all sides, particularly from those concerned over the implications that such actions would have in the Mid-West region. With no alternative airline prepared, as yet, to take Aer Lingus' place on the Heathrow route, there has been an increasing uneasiness that the national airlines departure from the route will have disastrous consequences for the livelihoods of many in the region.

As the deadline for the pullout from Shannon gets ever closer, the debate seems to occupy a space in almost every broadsheet and news bulletin on a near daily basis. Politicians seem to be constantly

engaged in a war of words over who knew what and whether the government acted in the interests of the airline without consideration for the people of the Mid West or whether the government itself was bypassed by Aer Lingus in making such a decision in the first place.

However at this stage, the saga has been ongoing for nearly three months and is one that seems to have moved from a national issue of great concern to something of a media obsession. Whilst in the mid Western region, the issue is of tantamount importance, it seems that elsewhere in the country, support of what was once a national issue is waning, as the public at large grow tired of listening to the constant bickering day-in day-out. Switching on the Radio or Television every day and being subjected to the political wrangling of politicians with seemingly nothing better to do than

try and score points against each other is hardly of interest to the entire population.

As a result of the over-exposure of the issue, many people are now of the opinion that enough is enough. Significantly it is not only the rest of the country who hold this view. The supposed 20,000 turnout in Limerick city to protest against Aer Lingus' decision was in reality closer to 4,000, an indication perhaps that those within the region in question have begun to realise that at this stage there is little that can be done to stop the pullout.

Perhaps if Aer Lingus were taking the flights from Dublin more would be done, but alas it seems that the Mid-West does not matter in the mindset of most and certainly it does no matter to our national politicians half as much as it does to our national media.



UCD Michael Smurfit  
Graduate Business School



# Q&A

Thinking of furthering your studies in business? UCD Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School awaits you.

Come to our **Open Evening on Wednesday the 14<sup>th</sup> of November from 4pm** at our Blackrock Campus.

It's your chance to meet with top professors and alumni. They're ready to answer your questions on any subject in our wide range of programmes.

For further information visit [smurfitschool.ie](http://smurfitschool.ie)

# STUDENT SPEAK

This week, Undercover Dave asks the people - 'What would you do with a free Wednesday afternoon?'

Pope Benedict XI (Pope) - 'Polish my fake leg'

George W. Bush (US President) - 'Invade Iran! ... no wait I'm doing that Friday'

Don Barry (UL President) ~ 'Explore ways whereby we ... can ... avoid ... Wednesday afternoons...' Waaagh!\*

Steve Staunton (Former Ireland Manager) - 'Eat beans in my boxers and watch Home and Away, like I'm doing right now'

Tony Blair (Former British PM) - 'Repeat the same word over and over until it loses its meaning'

Oprah Winfrey (TV Presenter) - 'Interview my feet'

Amy Winehouse (Musician) - 'Jenga!'

\*see real quote by Don Barry earlier in this newspaper





Kayaker Darragh Hearne ponders the warning from UL security at the Schuman fountain before throwing caution to the wind and paddling off into the sunset in a victory pose



OPC's John Sadlier takes his turn in the Climbathon for the People in Need telethon which saw UL's climbing wall enthusiasts climb 8848 metres in 12 hours



The UL Skydivers ended up being the only UL club or society not to be allowed to do their chosen event, due to no-one in authority in UL being willing to give a yay or nay to their plan to parachute into UL. It didn't stop them putting on their gear and taking part in everything else



The UL Outreach "Get Your President Wet" charity event was enjoyed by some more than others. SU receptionist Adele O'Carroll ignores the water buckets and takes a hose to Oisín Collins before it's SU Campaigns & Services Officer Patrick McHugh's turn to feel the pain Photos Yann Ryan

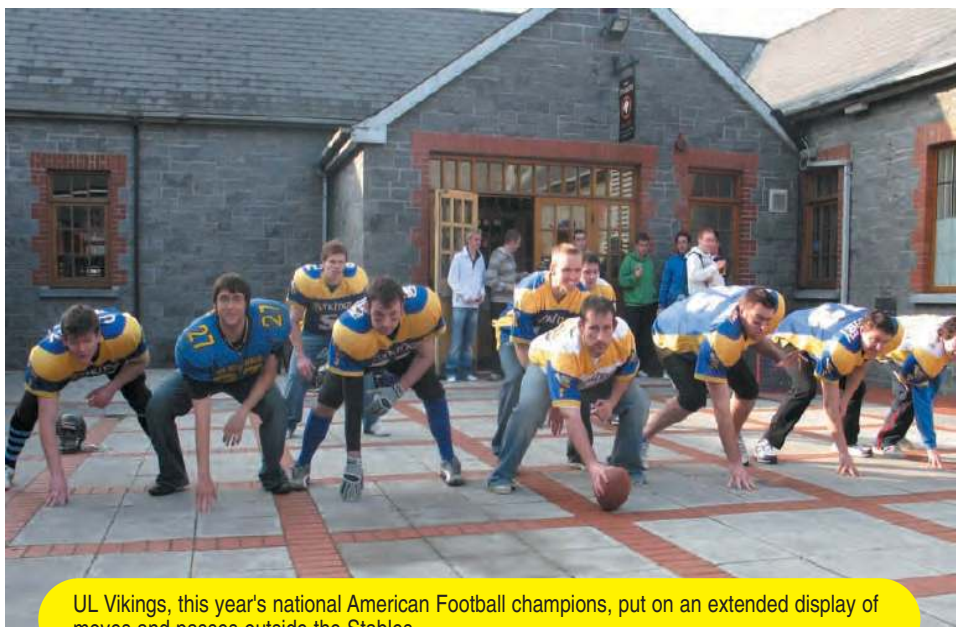




Law Soc, Drama Soc and Debating Union got together to run a series of witch trials in the courtyard, which just like in Salem in 1692 meant that almost everyone passing by was screamed at for being a witch at some point



UL Trampoline Soc got up and running early in the courtyard and kept the bounces going throughout the day



UL Vikings, this year's national American Football champions, put on an extended display of moves and passes outside the Stables

A witch! ULSU President St. John Ó Donnabháin cackles mercilessly at his Law Soc/Deb U/Drama Soc witch trial before getting doused with water for the first of two times on Wednesday



UL Christian Union members get around in their costumes from 'The Undead' Photos UL Photo Soc / Niall Brownen



The SU toyed with the idea of guerrilla campaign tactics but after sending out a call, here's what turned up



# WALKOUT WEDNESDAY



Brian McDonagh, eventual winner of the 'Five Fountain Challenge'

It descended into a water fight by the end but UL political parties came together briefly to run a 'Pisstake Dail'. L-R Eamonn Quinlan (Ogra FF), Donal O'Driscoll (Cathaoirleach for the afternoon), Eamonn Gardiner as Jackie Healy-Rae and Colm Murray (YFG) as PJ Sheehan



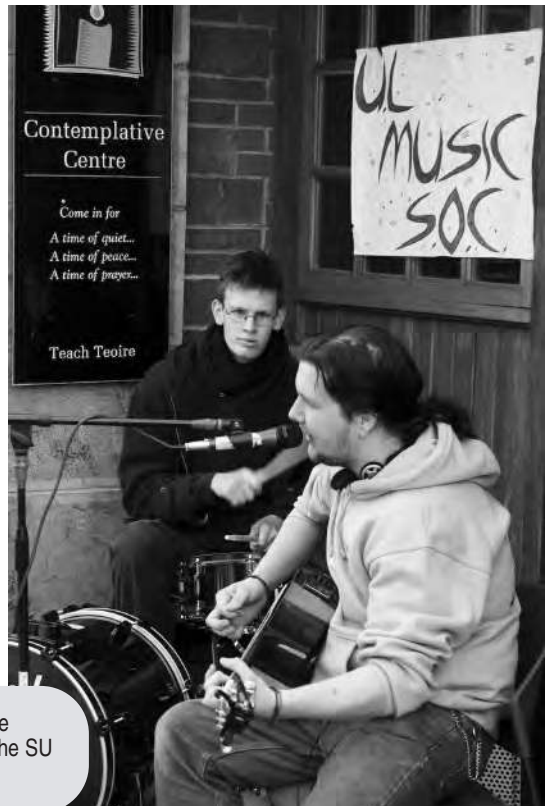
UL Enviromental Society ran a Green Fair in the Stables courtyard all day. Information stands, book sales, muffins and flapjacks were the main attractants in the now-annual event Photos UL Photo Soc / Niall Brownen



UL Kayakers get intercepted by campus security half-way across the Schuman fountain



OPC member John Sadlier raced up the climbing wall against UL Kayaker Sean McTiernan as part of the charity climbathon. The kayakers won. The An Focal editor is now in hiding for revealing that piece of information.



UL Music Soc members rocked the afternoon away in their corner of the SU courtyard



# Don Barry address - views from Class Reps

**UL President Don Barry addressed members of Class Reps Council in week 6 and participated in a questions and answered questions put to him in an extended session that lasted an hour. An Focal asked Class Reps to write their views on the speech and Q&A session. These are the two responses we received.**

## 'UNDERINFORMED'

Janelle Eagleton

**D**ON Barry's address to the Class Reps Council focused mainly on his main aims for his presidency; most of which are very student orientated and focused on improving the 'student experience' at UL. He finished with by asking the audience, 'Does this sound to you like a whole load of bulls\*\*t... or do you think that I mean it, and can achieve it?'

I attended Professor Barry's inaugural address in September. Then, as at the Class Reps Council in week 6, I was impressed by his enthusiasm and ideas. He appears to come into the office of president with the very best of intentions for improving the university in every way possible. He certainly brings a fresh vision and outlook, and after 5 months settling into his new job, seems confident that he can achieve great change in many areas, both academic and otherwise.

However, Prof Barry seemed, overall, to be somewhat out of touch with the student mentality of UL. This was illustrated by the fact that he said the words, "I was not aware that that was an issue", about 4 times during the Question and Answer session which followed his address.

He was well prepared to respond on topics such as the 'Alcohol Policy', Wednesday afternoons off and the issue of traffic congestion on campus. These are among the huge concerns over which the Student's Union have been wrangling with the University for years. But on more day-to-day matters, such as the provision of resources for Clubs & Socs, shortage of space in the library and problems facing International Students, he was sadly under-informed.

Heavily reliant on the response of 'We have no money', Prof Barry was not aware of how much the new footbridge was projected to cost, nor was he aware that it is €4million over budget. Furthermore, as the president of a university with a chronic parking-space shortage, he was not aware that the paid car-park costs €3, or that this price was raised from €2 last year; in direct response to the expense of the 'super-fancy', and terminally delayed, 'Living Bridge'.

Of course there is a chain of command in operation in the University, as with every large organisation; and we cannot expect every individual problem the student body encounters to be dealt with straight from the hallowed corridors of Plassey House. But I think we have

a right to expect a certain level of commitment from our President; not just to subjects the University considers to be important, such as their current project to reorganize the Colleges into Faculties, but also to issues that students genuinely perceive as affecting their lives.

We also have a right to expect some respect from the University. Professor Barry responded to one very topical question about fees, simply by saying, 'No'. That's not just tough love, it's not good enough.

I believe that Don Barry 'means it'. I certainly think that there is a lot that he can and will achieve as president of UL. But remember, the University of Limerick exists for its students. Without us there is no 'Governing Authority'... and certainly no 'Capital Budget'.

## 'SOME POSITIVE PARTS OUTWEIGHED BY COP-OUTS'

Aoife Finnerty

**L**AST Thursday saw history in the making as President Don Barry addressed Class Reps Council for the first time in his term as president. I must say I, personally had high hopes for the event. I had heard good things about Professor Barry and I was in a state of anticipation as I thought, finally a president who will talk to us like we are equal rather than inferior, a president willing to put the students first... you know, that group of people who form the university. I split my commentary on President Barry's address into two points; his manner and his responses to questions.

If it was the intention of President Barry's to treat us like intelligent members of society, it did not come across in his speech. I found the president condescending and a little tactless. Know your audience sir! I do not now, nor will I ever appreciate being referred to as a philistine (although not personally, it was more of a group generalisation). I do not appreciate being referred to as misguided because I chose to wear a red t-shirt supporting Walk Out Wednesday - something I believe it. I found him blasé, though polite on the technical aspects of his speech.

Aside from the insults that were dished out by the president on occasion I have to say that I found some positive parts to his address. He was straight-talking - there was no bulls\*\*t in anything that he said. He was honest, some would say to the point of tactlessness, but honest none the less. He didn't give a politician's answer to anything, which was refreshing. I found his answers to the questions posed about the Alcohol Policy disappointing and a cop-out. In response to the obligations of the University, he said the University did what it was supposed to, it endeavoured - cop-out. The money explanation was the same as always - The Enablement Fund - cop-out. I found his answer to my question (whether he was going



to pursue a strong campaign regarding the ability of UL graduates to vote in the Seanad election) weak. He said he was already campaigning strongly and loudly. It occurred to me that it might not be something which bothers him much, given that he's a UCC graduate.

To sum up I'm of the opinion that our new

president has many good points; sadly I don't feel that these particular good points shone or even really showed in his address to Class Reps Council. Sadly for Mr. President, an antagonised group of students usually means a more pro-active 'anti-establishment' group of students!

## UL Drama Poised For Success

LYDIA FOOTE & CLARE LANGFORD

**F**OLLOWING its achievements last year, notably winning 'Most Improved Society' and taking a play to the Irish Student Drama Awards in Belfast, this year UL Drama Society has a 15 member committee and almost 200 members, including mature students, postgrads and foreign students and has been able to take on more projects than ever before.

Already with one very successful production, 'The Talented Mr. Ripley', under our belt we are moving on to bigger and better things. Our next projects include two plays written by UL students.

The first is an adaptation of Lewis Carroll's 'Alice in Wonderland', but with a twist! 'Alice' (UL style) is a modern satire written by two students Nerys Garfield and Joyce Fegan, scheduled to take place on Wednesday and Thursday of week 10. The second is a play penned by Thomas Dee named 'The Cuckoo Bomb', set in Latin America. Auditions were

held this week and the bomb is set to be dropped early next semester!

Our annual variety show will take place in week 9 of term one with the added appeal of segments from the raunchy musical 'Chicago', along with some short sketches and musical numbers involving lots of our members, both onstage and backstage. A number of society trips to see plays have taken place so far this term, including a weekend trip to London. We also have members involved in music, witch trials, short films and a TG4 project.

Of course we are always open to ideas (within reason..) and we welcome people interested in any aspect of the stage or screen - directing, lighting, design, music etc. So with all that on offer we really are the society with something for everyone. For further information about what's happening or to get involved check us out at [uldramsoc.bebo.com](http://uldramsoc.bebo.com) or email us at [uldramsoc@gmail.com](mailto:uldramsoc@gmail.com).



# ULSU ENTS

[www.bebob.com/ulents](http://www.bebob.com/ulents)

Sponsored by  **Ulster Bank**

€100 cash - good idea, or a great one

**I**T'S been a pretty crazy eight weeks and we've enjoyed it immensely! We hope you have too. Week 7 was a great week! Delorentos did a magnificent Green Session on Wednesday night in the Stables courtyard. Thanks to all of you including the band who came out on a cold cold night and still rocked it up despite the nip in the air. We really enjoyed the gig, so much so that we are thinking of inviting them back for Rag Week. Let us know what you think, join us on Bebo and leave a comment, we're Ulents.

We thought that Delorentos was a great gig and it was but Declan O'Rourke topped that again. The Donegal singer songwriter had a capacity crowd in the palm of his hands all night in Java's Café Bar on Thursday night. He sang his heart out and the two hour gig was a testament to how much he enjoyed the gig. He really didn't want to leave the stage. If you have any pics of the gig then let us have them for the Bebo site, we forgot our camera.

We're thinking of doing a few more of these gigs in Java's Café Bar, we're going to call them the Penguin Sessions and anyone who's a regular will know why! If you have any singer-songwriter you'd like to see in that particular room then let us know and we'll see what we can do.

Things are going to quieten down for a bit after the Halloween Ball. We'll still be around but we'll be taking a more relaxed approach to things while you start to hit the books etc. We'll still be running the odd gig but mainly we'll be getting ready for the next big events Xmas Daze and Christmas Ball and getting Rag Week 2008 off the ground. See you at the Halloween Ball!

*keith*

## Christmas Ball

We made a brief reference to this in the last edition of An Focal. The ball is a combination of a Christmas Formal and the Co Op ball. For the last two years we have staged the event in late December prior to breaking up before Christmas. The change in academic schedule has left us in a bit of a pickle in terms of timing the event this year.

Exams run up until Friday December 22nd and then we break up till late January. The Ents office would like to run the Christmas Ball on Saturday 22nd of December. We reckon that it makes sense because it gives all the co-op students one last blast before they leave UL for nine months and because it gives everyone else a chance to celebrate Christmas in style. It still allows people to get home the following day which means no one is travelling on Christmas Eve.

The other option is to stage the event in November. Because Xmas Daze is November 27, 28 and 29 it would have to be the previous week. We don't think this will work because first there won't be much of a Christmas buzz around the Christmas Ball and second there isn't much point in having a going away shindig for Co-Op Students five weeks before they actually leave, seems slightly premature to us!

So we're recommending Dec. 22 but we're kind of leaving it up to you to decide. You can email [keith@eightball.ie](mailto:keith@eightball.ie) with your opinion or go to [www.bebob.com/kbs-year3](http://www.bebob.com/kbs-year3) where 3rd year business are already conducting a poll re the date and vote for your preferred date. By that we mean day of the month and not the good lucking guy/girl from your maths tutorial!

Either way the event will go ahead before Christmas. We have some really cool décor lined up to make it very very Christmassy. It's on in the South Court and tickets are 45 Euro. Let us know your opinion and we'll set a date very very soon.

## Monday Week 9 Howard Marks Jonathan Swift Theatre 8.30pm Tickets 10 Euro

A lot of you don't know who Howard Marks is, I'm telling you now that you should make it your business to find out who he is and what better way of doing that than going to see him in the flesh. Howard comes to UL on Monday November 5th and brings with him a pretty crazy and unique story.

The world of organized crime and drugs culture has been in the news a lot lately. With comments from both the Taoiseach and the President with regard to how everyday drug use by Joe Soap is contributing to the rise in gang and organized crime. Howard Marks provides us with an interesting insight into this culture. He has lived the lifestyle. He spent the 70's and 80's running one of the most significant drug smuggling operations in the world from a flat on Catherine Street in Limerick, he spent a good portion of the 90's paying for it from a prison cell in the USA. Here's the story in a brief form.

During the mid 1980s, Howard Marks had forty-three aliases, eighty-nine phone lines, and twenty five companies trading throughout the world.

Bars, recording studios, offshore banks: all were money-laundering vehicles serving the core activity: dope dealing.

Marks began to deal during a postgraduate philosophy course at Oxford and was soon moving large quantities of hashish into Europe and America in the equipment of touring rock bands. The academic life began to lose its allure.

At the height of his career, he was smuggling consignments of up to thirty tons from Pakistan and Thailand to America and Canada and had contact with organisations as diverse as the CIA, MI6, the IRA, and the Mafia.

After many years and a world-wide operation by the Drug Enforcement Agency, he was busted and sentenced to twenty five years in prison at the United States Federal Penitentiary, Terre Haute, Indiana, the site of America's only Federal Death Row. He was released on parole in April 1995 after serving seven years of his sentence.

Since his release he has penned the international best seller of his story "Mr Nice" this story and his life experience form the basis for his "spoken word session" the other aspect of his session is his campaign for legalization of drugs.

You might not agree with him, you might not like him, you might not like what he has to say on the other hand you might view him as a living legend! Either way given the world we live in and the stuff that's going on around us he's worth a listen... see you there!



## Halloween Ball

It's here! Outside of Rag Week this is the single biggest event of the year. All four colleges come together, all of you in Fancy Dress and have a party to remember. At the time of going to print there are still tickets left so if you're reading this on Tuesday there's probably some tickets left so go down and get some, if it's Wednesday there'll be still be some left, maybe, but not for long. If it's Thursday then you're way off the pace, gig is over, we're hung over and you really should leave us alone.

The gig kicks off at 7.30pm and finishes at 3am. When we say finishes we mean the music in the main room will finish at 3am - the residents bar will still be open and if there are any stragglers looking to hang around you are more than welcome to join us....

### The Gig

The gig itself is going to be one to remember, it will look something like this

### Main Room

7.30 - 10.30 - DJ Aido  
10.30 - 12.30 - The Lollygaggers  
12.30 - 3.00 - 2fm's Ruth Scott

### Borus

7.30 - 10.30 - Ruth Scott  
10.30 - 3.00 - DJ Aido  
3.00 - Whenever - Bobby the Human Jukebox

### Getting There

There are 5 bus times, you should have a bus time on the back of your ticket. If you don't, call into the Students Union and get one. You will only be allowed on the bus that corresponds to your bus time. If you miss your bus you need to make your own way to the venue. But don't worry, you can still get the bus home. The bus home is on a first come first served basis, the buses will start to leave from 1am.



**ULSU ENTS**

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€100 cash - good idea, or a great one

The bus times out are

7.30pm / 8.15pm / 9.00pm / 9.45pm / 10.30pm

Make sure you have a bus time and make sure you get to the bus on time...

Bits and Pieces - trick or treat

Things you should know about the venue:

There are two rooms and a VIP area

They are the Main Room, Borus and the Cream Room is the VIP room.

The Main Room will have three bars.

There is a covered smoking area and that will have a bar too.

There will be beer and shot promotions on the night.

There will be a fast food operation on the night in the main room.

Rooms are available at 89 euro per room, sleeps 3.

There's loads more but you can find that out on the night!!!!

### Bebo Band Competition

If you have a favourite band from home or even Limerick then let us know. We're starting to book bands for Rag week at the moment and the plan is to have four very high profile gigs in an attempt to trump the craziness that was Rag Week 2007.

We're looking to fill the support slots that will be available on the week and we're going to give one of those slots to the band that won our Bebo Rag Week Support Poll. So if you have friends in a band and would like to see them get a gig in front of a 1000 people then vote for them.

First of all they have to be nominated to take part in the poll. Join us on Bebo and nominate your chosen band. The competition will take place through the month of November and December with the winner being announced before the end of term. Get your nominations/suggestions in now and we'll get the show on the road. Remember we're ULents on bebo.

### Coming Soon

#### Green Sessions

Week 9 - The Fewer the better

Week 10 - TBC

#### Schnitzel Comedy

Before End of Semester - Jason Byrne

Early Second Semester - Neil Delamare & Andrew Maxwell

#### Swift Sessions

Week 9 - Howard Marks

**Every Tuesday - Party night at the Sin Bin**

**Every Thursday - Pop Star party at the**

**Cornmarket**

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BALL '07**

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SOUTH COURT HOTEL

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€100 cash - good idea, or a great one

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### An evening with Class Reps

**D**ON 'Godfather' Barry's speech, the future of the Irish Office and the election of first year representatives were the only vaguely interesting things at the last meeting of Class Reps Council and to be frank, none of the three of those were all that interesting to us. The Godfather recycled bits of a speech he made earlier in the year before asking the people present if they thought he was full of bullshit but nobody really answered that question. Nobody's ever full of bullshit Don, trust us, there's always breathing room at the top. Don took a lot of questions about

things he really doesn't have much to do with, though he probably could wave his magic wand and fix them if he really wanted.

The election of first year reps took an interesting turn when both candidates got the same number of votes. We'd probably have flipped a coin or have them battle to the death but fuzziness took over and they were both deemed elected. Making a decision isn't a crime people, you could have just picked one. Given that first years are now over-represented on the union exec, we hope there are plans to balance it out by adding a few reps for all of the other years.

The one thing that came out of the extended Don Barry Class Reps Experience was

that by the time the Tolglann issue came to a vote, enough of the class reps had abandoned their posts that the gathering was no longer quorate and the issue couldn't be brought to a vote anyway. By the time it comes up at the next class reps gathering, we predict the best the Irish Officer can hope for is to have the name of the new Ents office as Gaeilge. Go n-éirí an bother leo.

### Email for the illiterate

**W**E mentioned the staff Events mailing list last year so and this is as good a time as any to bring it up again. Let's explain. UL has a number of group email lists for staff that make it easier for them to communicate with all of their peers at once (as opposed to everyone going into the canteen and getting

themselves their own megaphone to shout at each other, which might actually be interesting). These are named according to their function so that people who are in the mood for flogging a car, a cat or a child's swing can handily send it out on the For Sale list. The significant key here is that staff can unsubscribe from any given list, so that anyone who doesn't want to get spammy rubbish can elect not to. In an ideal world that would work out fine but there's the interesting case of the list called 'Events', a name that is rather self-explanatory. Or at least you'd think so.

Gordon Young (ITD head and the cheery chappie at the top of the foodchain when your profile won't log on) sent out a nice polite email a while back reminding people that the Events list is intended for actual events, as opposed to just being a convenient method of spamming

everyone. It appears to have been roundly ignored by anyone with the capacity to write but not with the ability to read, which seems to be a feature somewhat higher than you'd expect from a university with a higher proportion of people with doctorates than you'd find on the Trinity Rooms dance floor on a Saturday night.

Every time it happens there's always some white knight who sticks their head above the parapet and reminds people that the Events list is for, erm, Events and that there are other lists for other things. Like 'For Sale'. Or 'Opinions'. Seems simple, no? Last week an SU officer did the reminder thing in a comical yet blunt way. Doesn't matter which one, find out yerselves. Doubtless there was applause (we know we applauded) but we wonder how annoyed the guilty parties were at being softly accused of 'pimping'. It

certainly was the talk of staff members around our area the next morning, though they all thought it was hilarious. It's a word the MTV kids use, folks, it makes everything seem ghettofab, blingbling and erm, pimpin'. Didn't matter, we checked Friday and the events list was chocablok with opinion. Not very ghettolicious or pimpin' at all.

### SU Sabbat Elections

**B**IT early in the year but we hear the wagons are circling already. More than one of the current lot is thinking of running for a move up in the charts when the one with the long red hair leaves. One's even been courting campaign managers. In October. With early planning like that we're hoping for a pimpass year.

**Got a problem? Or spreadable dirt? Email us at [ulthroat@gmail.com](mailto:ulthroat@gmail.com)**

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Now you can UseCash to buy all your music online!

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design by [www.micromarketing.ie](http://www.micromarketing.ie)

# Should the new laws for learner drivers have been introduced?

*Seamus Ryan introduces this fortnight's An Focal head2head debate*

ON October 25, Minister for transport Noel Dempsey announced plans to withdraw the current system whereby a driver on their second provisional licence can drive unaccompanied. Scheduled to start from today (Tuesday October 30), last Sunday afternoon Minister Dempsey announced that this part of the new regulations was to be delayed until June 2008. An Focal, as a student newspaper works to rather an earlier deadline to the national dailies and hence the arguments presented below were written the day after the original announcement and two days before the reversal of the decision. However, many of the arguments on both sides are still valid, regardless of whether the introduction of the new rules comes on October 30 this year or in June of next year.

The changes are expected to affect a little over 120,000 drivers currently on Irish roads and

obviously due to their age profile the figure is likely to contain a high proportion of students and others in their late teens and early twenties. Assistant Garda Commissioner in charge of the Garda Traffic Corps, Eddie Rock, said on Thursday that the new rules would be enforced 'in a very effective manner', insisting that 'prosecutions will be taken'. As many readers will be aware, the current provisions whereby a driver on their first, or third or subsequent licences must be accompanied by a full-licence holder are largely unenforced. Gay Byrne, former broadcaster and latterly chair of the Road Safety Authority, insisted last Thursday that young drivers, particularly young males, 'suffer from a disease which can only be described as '17 to 26' - that is the disease in itself'. The aim of this head2head debate is to open a discussion on if the new regulations are fair and if they'll make a significant difference.

## Yes!

WITH the announcement by the Government and the Road Safety Authority (RSA) last week the issue of the provisional drivers license is ready to undergo a major revamp. Always an area which seemed weak it looks like the government have finally decided enough was enough and made significant alterations under the new Road Safety Strategy. Changes in the law pertaining to the license and education provided to people starting out as drivers have been outlined in the new 5 year plan of the RSA and looks to improve road safety and close some of the loopholes which exist under the current system.

Changes in the law mean that the worst of the current legal measures which states that a holder of a 2nd provisional license can drive totally unaccompanied by a licensed driver will be changed. The new system which will come into effect from this week will mean that all provisional license holders will be required by law to have a fully licensed driver in the car at all times. This means that the classic story you hear of the person failing their test and then driving home on their own can no longer happen. Fines of €1000 can be imposed on drivers caught flaunting this new rule. Given that the status quo is just a warning in many cases the hefty fine imposed on rule-breakers should help the enforcement of this new law.

Another change in the law which will be brought in is about blood alcohol level tolerated for all drivers, including those on provisional licenses. Alcohol has been proven to reduce awareness, increase reaction time and generally make people poorer drivers. In particular, when you are new to driving is the time when you need to be the most focused and cannot afford to have your skills, which you're still developing, affected badly. By ensuring that new drivers on our roads have a more stringent alcohol limit placed upon them the government and the RSA is making it safer for them and decreasing their chances of being involved in a bad road accident.

One of the most visible changes is that the provisional license will be renamed to a learner permit which carries a much stricter set of rules. You cannot take your driving test unless

you have had the learner permit for 6 months and you must have had lessons during that time. It will also be compulsory for drivers to keep a log book of all lessons which is required to sit the driving test. The whole point of this plan is to make sure that people are more ready to drive before they are given a license and that makes perfect sense in my opinion. It's too often the case that people can just learn to pass the test and not how to actually drive properly. At least with this system you have to have clocked up some hours in a car before you're given free reign on the roads.

People against these new changes will say that the government has no right to be so strict and to discriminate against new drivers but I think we all know that's rubbish. It's the government's job to protect its citizens, to act almost as a parent and ensure that people don't put themselves in risk of injury or death. In that way the government is perfectly entitled to bring in all of these new laws and more if they think it would help! If these alterations don't make a difference we could see limits on engine size for drivers with the new learner permit, bans on these drivers between 11pm and 8am or a number of other more severe restrictions.

All these rule changes are being brought in with an education strategy which will run from primary school right up to 3rd level education. This means that it's not just about slapping fines on people and about law after law that no-one really understands. It is just another part of a national strategy to improve safety on our roads for new drivers who are at greater risk than experienced drivers. I say bring in the changes, let's try and get the numbers of young people and new drivers dying on our roads down and making Ireland's roads a safer place.



OISIN COLLINS

## No!

THERE have been 268 deaths on Irish roads to date this year, each one of them an individual tragic case that have been shouted at us by the media in an effort to emphasise the need to slow down and to take care on the roads. The Road Safety Authority has just released its own latest mediocre attempt to curb the fatalities that make the national headlines after every bank holiday weekend. No fewer than 126 safety recommendations are outlined in the Road Safety Strategy 2007 - 2012 which the RSA hopes to implement over the coming months in a crackdown on road deaths.

Some decisions are coming in sooner than others; such as those relating to learner drivers. In fact, they come into force just five days after the strategy was announced. Just five days after Gay Byrne et al announced this plan, learner drivers in Ireland are facing severe consequences. Second provisional licence holders as of October 30 may no longer drive unaccompanied but must have with them at all times a fully-licensed passenger.

With just five days' notice, learners cannot do anything but accept the new regulations or face the enormous fines that accompany any breach. They cannot be tested immediately - due to the fact that test waiting times hold a national average of 23 weeks - but yet the plan comes into force straight away. Of course there are measures to reduce test waiting times as well; but these objectives aren't to be in place until the end of March next year. Simply put, learner drivers are being penalised for the RSA's own inefficiencies. Why hasn't Gaybo offered a driving test to everyone in the audience who's currently waiting for one?

As well as this, the RSA seems to have decided that the main problem behind Ireland's current tragic situation lies with those drivers between the ages of 17 and 26. It seems to have neglected the fact that once someone acquires their full licence they can drive on Irish roads indefinitely, never again having to have their competencies rechecked. Mr Byrne and his colleagues have chosen to ignore the fact that fully licensed drivers go unregulated once they pass the one and only test that faces them before being released indefinitely onto Irish roads.

And what of those lucky people who man-

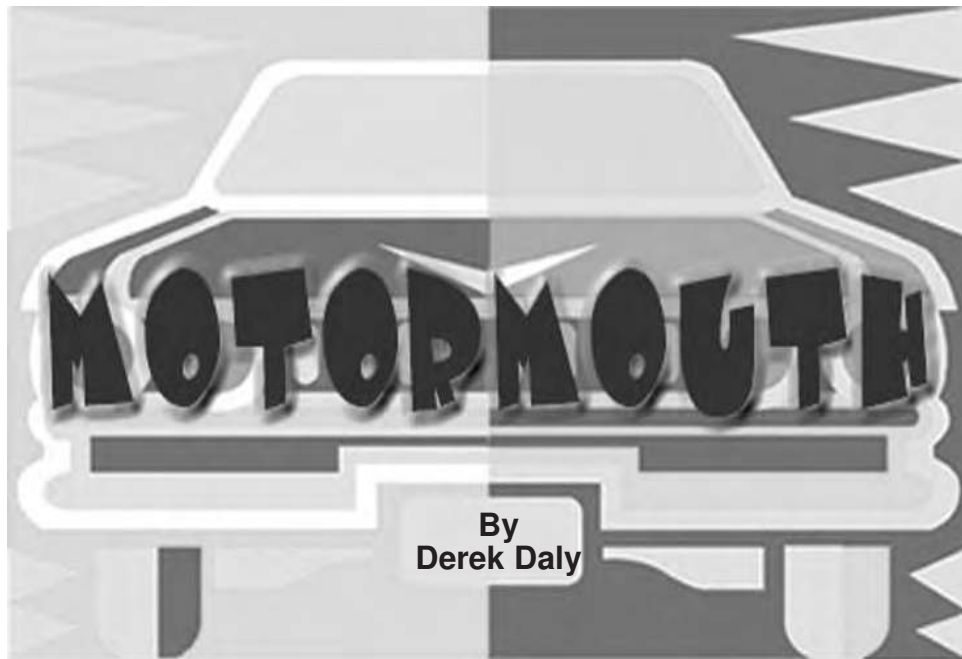
aged to acquire full licences without passing any test at all a few decades ago? Those people are on our roads too, Gay, and have never met any standards required to drive unaccompanied. Will they be forced to have someone to sit alongside them from the 30 October? No, in fact, they can be the person who sits beside a provisional licence holder.

The Irish state has decided that it will reduce the number of road deaths to 60 per million of population by 2012. That's still 240 deaths or so per year and placing the blame of such fatalities on all young drivers; casting them as the murderers on Irish roads; without addressing the other causes - the real issues on Irish roads causing death - such as drivers who have had their licence for a number of years but are no longer competent; driver fatigue; alcohol tolerance; there are other very significant factors other than young learner drivers, the main one being the enforcement of the current rules of the road.

The root of the problem has simply been left unaddressed: all Irish drivers have somewhat of a disregard for the laws in place at present. Before introducing new, fanciful strategies like the one launched last week, perhaps the RSA should concentrate on actually trying to enforce the current system, and enforcing it thoroughly. How about making sure that drivers on their first, third and subsequent licences actually are accompanied by full-licence holders, or making sure that L-plates are displayed at all times? How about increasing the number of Garda checkpoints and the resources available to enhance the traffic corps? Or what about actually implementing the penalty points system to such a level that it could be accused of being pedantic? The current set of laws is not properly enforced; who's to say that the new lot will be either? It might well be a new, sparkling system, but will the same problems just be as inherent and as fatal as they are now? Gaybo and the Minister have just offered a superficial makeover that doesn't address any of the real issues, but instead merely scapegoats learner drivers.



BY AOIFE BREEN  
NEWS EDITOR



## How to Park a Vehicle

Rant number 3 and I'm really starting to get into this. I must bitch this week about the absolutely deplorable standard of parking in general on campus. It's not that there aren't enough spaces or that there are TWICE as many staff permits as designated staff car parking spaces, or even that we're being screwed over by the lovely people at the university who have refused, as was originally agreed to remove the charge on the car park near the student centre long after the charges have repaid the cost; it's that some people just don't know how to park. It stands to reason that if you don't have

any formal driving instruction you can't drive properly, it would also seem you can't park your car from the various displays of cars strewn here, there and everywhere on campus any given day.

### So down to business!!

Parking spaces should be reversed into and NOT out of. It makes sense to reverse into something you can see as opposed to out onto a road that isn't clearly visible.

Parallel parking cannot be done properly 99.99% of the time unless you reverse into the space. This can be done by pulling up next to the vehicle front of your space. Line the boot of your vehicle up with the back of the other car. Turn the wheel and start to

reverse, then straighten up and turn the other way. Soon you'll be parallel parked. Try it...there are loads of these spaces available around campus and people seem afraid of them.

PEOPLE, PEOPLE, PEOPLE!!! You don't need to leave 6 feet between your vehicle and the one in front and behind. 8-10 inches (20-25 cm) is perfectly sufficient and if practiced correctly could probably see 100-150 extra cars parked non-illegally on campus every day.

For further guidance if you can't do any of the above, Treaty School of Motoring comes highly recommended by Motormouth (they taught me). The can be found in the phone book

## Just your average sex column

ALEXANDRA GAVIGAN

### Positions!

**T**HIS week ladies and gents I thought I'd take a look at positions, obviously of the sexual nature as opposed to sports or otherwise. I'm a traditional girl really so all this swinging from the ceiling at a 94.5 degree angle while doing a scissor kick really doesn't appeal to me at all, give me the Missionary any day. Actually I've always wondered about that - why is a sexual position named after the missionaries? Weren't they the religious people who went around trying to feed and educate and convert those in poorer countries? What did that have to do with sex? Well I had a look on the net and it told me - isn't the net great... so informative! Look it up and find out... Me explaining it takes valuable column space and also, it's not that interesting.

Anyway that aside, I don't see what's so wrong with enjoying yourself in relatively



'normal' positions... also positions that are called the 'Reverse Cowgirl' and 'Doggy' send me into fits of giggles. I also think that if I was turned away from my partner I'd get distracted by bright shiny things on the opposite wall. I'm easily distracted. All in all I don't think it's for me really.

As for the Lotus - it sounds pretty, I think of cars and pretty flowers but a position for mind-blowing sex? I don't think so. It reminds me of when I used to do ballet and we all had to sit cross-legged and breathe deeply and stretch in weird places. Even aside from reminding me of dancing there is something very odd

about the angles there. It works, with some bodily manipulation but is it really worth the bother? I say no, feel free to correct me though!

Upright - now there's something I can identify with. Simple, I know but effective none the less. That's what I mean about me - I'm a simple girl and I'm easily kept happy. There's a lot to be said for it, particularly if your venue is a shower.

I suppose what I'm trying to say is don't underestimate the value of simplicity. Don't assume that in order for something to be great it has to be complicated and difficult and likely to cause injury. I don't, and I do just fine!

## Mé fhéin agus the Fray - cinnúinnt!!

LE CAITLÍONA NÍ  
GHALLACHÓBHAIR

**A**N chéad uair riamh sa téarma ní raibh mé I lathair ag mo cuid léachtanna mar bhí rudaí níos tábhachtachtaí le déanamh agam, is iad sin dul chuid mo chontae cónaithe aláinn Maigh Eo chun freastal ar cheolchoirm I gCaisleáin an Bharraigh. Bhí an ghrúpa pop agus indie 'The Fray' ó Denver Colorado ag seinm sa Royal Theatre i gCaisleáin an Bharraigh agus bhí mé ar bís ar feadh seachtain roimhe!!

D'fhág mé an Ollscoil thart ar haon a chlog agus chuaigh mé chuig mo theach i gCathair na Mart, chun mo chuid éadaigh a ní agus airgead a fháil ó mo thuismitheoirí, mac léinn tipiciúil mé tá fhios agam!!

Shroich mé an cheolchoirm ag a 8 i.n. agus bhí an scuaime ag dul beagnach trasna an bhóthair. Thosaigh an ghrúpa tacaíocht

Terra Naomi ag seinm ag 8.30i.n. ar feadh uair a chloig agus taithin siad go mór le gach éinne d'ainneoin go riabh siad ag fanacht do na lads ó 'the Fray' chun teacht ar na stáitse.

Tháinig siad faoi dheireadh agus bhí gach aon duine sa halla ag béicil agus ag canadh leo ar feadh dhá uair a chloig. Bhí thart ar sé chéad duine ann lena ceamairí agus camcorders chun a chuid físeanna a chur ar youtube.com díreach tar éis a seó.

Ach ní dheachaigh mé abhaile chomh luath is a bhí siad croicnaithe. Is die hard fan amach is amach mé agus bhí mé ag fanacht go dtí gur bualfaidh mé leo. Tar éis dhá uair den a bheith ag áitiú ar an security mé a ligint asteach sa seomra VIP, a bheith caite amach dhá uair agus a bheith ag préachtadh leis an bhfuacht bhí mé réidh chun codladh. Ach díreach ansin tharla míorúilt! Amuigh sa chlós,

leathuair tar éis a haon ar maidin agus beagnach préachta tagann an ghrúpa chugam.- is beag nár thit mé le hionadh. Is ansin a chonaic siad árasán mic léinn díreach trasna an bhóthair ina raibh 'the fray concert' agus 'we love the fray' scríofa ar gan aon fuinneog. Léim siad thar na mballaí chun griangrafanna a thógáil - ansin glaoigh siad orm teacht leo. Shiúil siad isteach go neamhfhoirmiúil san arásán chun bualadh le na mic léinn sin, a bhí ag cóisír , bhí gach duine ag béicil nuair a chonaic siad cé a bhí ag an doras! Bhí mé ag caint le Isaac Slade, a bean chéile Anna agus Joe King chomh maith. Bhí craic iontach againn agus sílim ag deireadh an lae nach mór an trua é go raibh mé caite amach as an seomra VIP. Is daoine an dea bhéasach iad agus gan dabht ar bith beidh mé ag a chéad cheolchoirm eile in Éireann!!

mise agus Isaac Slade on The Fray

## UL BIKE SCHEME: BUY OR SELL A BIKE!!!



UL Students Union want to sell you a bike,  
or buy one from you!!!

**Bike Sale:**  
**Students Union, Thursday**  
**Week9 @1pm**

Supported by ERASMUS UL

# Campus Sport

## UL Hurlers Hammer Lacklustre LIT



BY TOMÁS MCCARTHY  
SPORTS EDITOR

Tomás McCarthy on a comprehensive win for the senior A hurlers.

UL 4-17  
LIT 1-12

UL opened their league campaign with a comfortable fourteen point victory over LIT on pitch 1. It was a local derby that failed to live up to expectations mainly due to LIT naming an under-strength team.

A big crowd turned up for the game on a fine day for hurling. UL started strongly, dominating the early

exchanges. A hat trick of frees from Kilkenny man Brian Dowling and a point from Martin Walsh set UL on their way. Although Bernard Gaffney replied with a free UL had a goal in the 8th minute. Alan Egan set up Brian Carroll who blasted the ball to the net. UL were completely on top with Kieran Joyce clearing an amount of ball. Niall Healy and Gaffney had scores for LIT but it was all one way traffic. Dowling was the star of the show striking seven first half points. Further points from Carroll, Michael Gleeson and Jody Ryan gave the home side a 1-11 to 0-5 lead at the break.

The procession continued into the second period. A Niall Green point was followed by a goal from sub Eoin Egan in the 38th minute. It was one of the soft variety - Egan pulling in the square and the ball dribbled into the net. The UL backs were hurling well as a unit. Joyce was immense in the corner with Matt Whelan

and Tom Stapleton outstanding in the half back line. Egan struck for a second goal in the 49th minute again pulling low the net. This killed the game as a contest.

The hard working Michael Gleeson blazed home a fourth goal two minutes later as UL ran riot. They piled on the misery with Dowling, Walsh and Egan firing over glorious points from play. The gap was now an astonishing twenty points 4-16 to 0-8. LIT did provide one final rally. Full forward Gaffney slammed home a late goal and a point but it was too little too late. Dowling notched another point, his ninth of the day to finish the job.

This was a disappointing contest but nonetheless a stirring start to the season for UL. The home team put in a real team effort and were best served by Kieran Joyce, Matt Whelan, Tom Stapleton, Martin Walsh, Michael Gleeson, Brian Dowling and Eoin Egan. Eamonn Kelly and co



Photo UL Photo Soc/William Lyons

won't read too much into this game. Davy Fitzgerald's LIT didn't take this game seriously lining out minus a number of county stars like Joe Canning. One feels if these two sides meet again later in the year the

score line will be a lot closer.

UL: T Flynn, A Murphy, J Heffernan, K Joyce, M Whelan, T Stapleton, M Bermingham, B Bugler, M Walsh (0-2), B Dowling (0-9 5f), J Ryan (0-1), M Gleeson (1-2), A Egan, N Green (0-1), B Carroll (1-1).

Subs E Egan (2-1), L Quigley, S O'Brien, K Dineen, P Cronin, A Kennedy, J Campion, J Norris.

## UL Footballers Off To A Winning Start

Tomás McCarthy reports from pitch 1.

UL 1-14  
Tralee IT 1-9

UL got their senior football league campaign up and running with a well-deserved win over Tralee IT on 17 October. UL always held the upper hand in what was an enjoyable game of football.

It was the home side that made the better start. Early frees from David Murphy and David Geaney settled any early nerves. Indeed the whole forward line was moving nicely in the opening minutes. Christy McGowan and Carthach Keane made the most of the early dominance with points from play. McGowan in particular was giving his marker a torrid time and landed his second to give UL a 0-5 to 0-2 lead after 10 minutes. But Tralee with Kerry underage star Paddy Curran in their ranks were never likely to go away. The

Kerry men missed a glorious goal chance in the 16th minute when they were only two points behind. UL were working incredibly hard though and held on to their three point advantage until half time. A Geaney free and another point from Keane left the score 0-7 to 0-4 at the break. With Paddy Burke impressing at midfield it was no more than UL deserved and the lead could have greater were it not for six first half wides.

Tralee narrowed the gap on the turnover with a Curran free but UL responded with a fine goal. Carthach Keane was the creator bursting through the centre before laying off for Enda Varley to rattle the roof of the net. Varley, with his confidence sky high, curled over a 35 metre free to extend UL's lead to six. UL were cruising but back came Tralee.

In the 38th minute good interplay between the Tralee forwards ended up with the wing back smashing a rasper into the top corner of the net. Minutes later Paddy Curran

should have added a second dragging his shot wide of the goal. It proved to be the turning point. With Gary Brennan commanding the middle UL fired four points in as many minutes. Two of these were glorious points from play by Enda Varley who was clinical in his finishing. UL were now 1-12 to 1-5 ahead with ten minutes left. Tralee did threaten a comeback with three frees from Curran but UL closed the deal. A Geaney free and a late effort from sub Barry Moran sealed a five point victory.

UL will be pleased with this win but some of their shooting and the way they left Tralee back into the game will concern the management. On the other hand the commitment and desire shown by the players is an encouraging sign. Best for UL on the day was Paddy Burke, Gary Brennan, Colm Conneally, Carthach Keane and man of the match Enda Varley. So, a good early victory for UL as Cian O'Neill and co continue

to build for tougher challenges ahead.

UL: K O'Malley, C O'Mahony, C Conneally, P Carroll, F Coffey, K Harrington, A Fen-

ney, P Burke (0-1), G Brennan, D Murphy (0-1f), D Geaney (0-3f), C Keane (0-2), E Varley (1-4 2f), C McGowan (0-2), M Brennan.

Subs: D Moran for D Murphy, B Moran (0-1) for C McGowan, J Falvey for M Brennan, S O'Se for G Brennan, S Twomey, D Dineen, P Larkin.



Photo UL Photo Soc/William Lyons

# Hickey Named Young Hurler Of The Year

**TOMÁS MCCARTHY**

**U**L student Seamus Hickey was honoured with the young hurler of the year award at the Vodafone Allstars banquet on October 19.

The Murroe Boher man deservedly picked up the accolade after a number of splendid displays for Limerick this summer. First day out against Tipperary in the Gaelic Grounds Hickey faced a huge challenge. After Damien Reale's sending off Hickey had the unenviable task of marking Eoin Kelly. The young defender bravely played Kelly from the front

and it paid off. Hickey emerged from defence with inspirational clearances spurring on his team mates. This performance marked Hickey out as one of the tightest corner backs in the game. He was an integral part of a solid full back line which also included Damien Reale and Stephen Lucey. The trio really gelled in their Munster campaign which finished up with a defeat to Waterford in the final.

Next up was Clare in the quarter final and Hickey played his part in a comprehensive beating of the Banner. He made a number of dashing runs out of defence

lifting the Limerick crowd. It was an impressive first outing in Croke Park. The highlight of Hickey's season though was his 70 minutes against Waterford in the All Ireland semi final. Like the rest of his colleagues Hickey raised his game for the big occasion. He cleared ball after ball frustrating the talented Deise forwards. His marker John Mullane wasn't given an inch with the De La Salle man eventually being substituted. Unfortunately the young star endured a nightmare of an All Ireland final. Hickey seemed to appear in too many newspapers leading up to the game which may have

affected him. Eddie Brennan skinned him for a total of 1-5. This almost certainly cost Hickey an all star.

Seamus Hickey is a graduate from the famous hurling school of St Flannans in Co Clare. He was part of Harty Cup winning sides under the guidance of the great Jamsie O'Connor. Currently he is in second year in UL studying Bio Medical Science.

With this award under his belt Hickey will surely play a crucial part for UL and Limerick in the months and years ahead.



Hickey had a season to remember

## O'Neill Happy With The Win

**Tomás McCarthy got some post match reaction**

**A**FTER the Tralee IT game UL manager Cian O'Neill spoke exclusively to An Focal about his side's display.

O'Neill seemed pleased with the win but not totally satisfied with the performance. "I wasn't overly impressed with the performance it was an industrious performance, a workmanlike performance. It was typical of an early season match." He put this down to the fact that the team has only been together two weeks with four training sessions under their belt. "We worked on two or three specific things in training and if we can get them right we can build on another two or three the next day. We're improving all the time and that's the critical thing." One thing that O'Neill

mentioned on numerous occasions is the team ethic that he's trying to instil into the players. "We don't have and we don't want huge stars that are known all over the country. We are a team. Everyone wants to work hard for each other."

O'Neill wants to bury the memories of the last couple of years. "The club hasn't enjoyed success in the last few years. It's gone down significantly to be honest. We haven't won a first round game for nine years now. So we have our targets set and the players have bought into that." The amount of handling errors and wides were a cause of concern for the new UL boss. He said there was lots of balls "bouncing off the chest and flicking off the fingers. That's typical of a team that's new together." O'Neill looked ahead to the upcoming games in a positive frame of mind. "It's still early

days. If we focus on the performance and not the victory the winning will take care of itself."

On the injury front Christy McGowan had to be taken off at half time as a precaution after feeling a twinge in his hamstring. Stephen Lonergan also has hamstring trouble with Paul Larkin suffering from a groin strain.

Cian O'Neill and his management team have certainly brought a sharper edge to UL football this year. Watching O'Neill pacing the line you could see he is a highly motivated and driven individual. This year there seems to be a new level of organisation within the club. Hopefully this will all translate into more good results on the field.

## UL Handball Wins at 60x30 intervarsities

**LISA FALVEY**

**A**NOTHER fantastic weekend for UL handball club saw three all-Ireland gold medals coming to the club after an entertaining weekend at the 60x30 intervarsity's in Dublin. The men's A team comprising of Donnacha Maguire, Ollie Cassidy, Ger Coonan, Charlie Nolan and Cathal Hannon, took the spoils defeating a very strong DIT side on a score line of 56-24. This is a first in the history of the club and a lot more of the same is expected of this talented team in future competitions. To add to this great achievement, fresher handballer Joan McNulty took the Ladies B singles title defeating Sarah Loughnane (NUIG) on a very impressive score line of 15-9, 15-

2. Despite being a newcomer to the handball college's scene, Joan made a lasting impression at the weekend defeating a multiple all-Ireland champion. To complete the triumvirate, another fresher handballer Cathal Hannon took the men's B Plate title defeating Cathal Walsh of DCU on a score line of 15-8 15-7. Cathal has made a comeback after a break from the game but is expected to return to his very best which he once showed in competitions down the years.

In the ladies open Karen Lawlor and Deirdre Donohue had hard luck bowing out at the semi final stages of the competition. Karen then went on to play in the plate final against Pauline Gallagher (Castlebar IT) where she was defeated on a close

margin of 18-15. Our representatives in the men's open also had hard luck with Donnacha Maguire and Ger Coonan being defeated in the quarter final stages, while former Kerry handball coach, Ollie Cassidy was knocked out at the semi final stage by the eventual champion Rikki O'Gara of NUIG. The players will now take a five week break from Intersvarsity handball to prepare themselves for the All-Ireland 20x20 Team Intersvarsity's which will be held in Galway on the last weekend of November. Favourites for the men's open are the victorious A team while the UL lady handballers will also be having a big say in the open competition.

## UL Ladies Make Short Work of the Guards

**RICHAEL O'BRIEN**

**T**HE UL women's soccer team began their WSCAI league campaign with a convincing 4-1 win over the Garda College on Wednesday of week 6. The conditions of this home fixture were ideal for the UL side's short passing style, and it only took 8 minutes for newcomer Lindsey McKey to open UL's scoring account for the season, as she finished off an impressive series of passes. The Garda opposition managed to compose themselves shortly after, but their attacks were effectively cut out by a strong central defence, led by the sublime Sarah Stack. Playing an attacking 4-3-3 formation, the central midfield controlled the possession, allowing pacey wingers Aoife Herbert and

Jenny Critchley taunt the Garda defence. It wasn't long before Critchley added a second goal, and at this stage UL were cruising.

The beginning of the second half was quite a different affair as Garda, led by skilful midfielder Marta Carter, launched a series of attacks on the UL goal. Stand-in goalie Steph Anketell performed admirably, in denying Garda a route back into the game. UL, who had been slow to restart, began to take control of the game once more, and Critchley grabbed her second as she got the crucial touch to Aoife Herbert's long range effort. The introduction of substitute Jackie Mulligan (in for Lindsey McKey) added some more energy to the UL in attack, and coach Stephen Griffen showed just how much depth this UL side have

by further adding Sarah Kiely, Richael O'Brien, and Natalie Bromell to the fold. The new additions settled in quickly, and caused problems for the now tired Garda legs.

Quite against the run of play UL conceded a consolation goal from Garda's Carrie O'Connor, but this did little to upset the game's dynamic. The three points were only going one way, and it was Aoife Herbert who capped off a fine display, by making it 4-1 10 minutes from the conclusion.

This was an impressive opening game for a side with League title ambitions, and there has been no sign of the goal drought which dogged the girls last season. The side has scored nine goals in two games, Lindsey McKey netting four in a 5-0 win away to Athlone IT early in October, and one in this league opener.





# Clinical Colaiste Conquer UL

## UL 1-3 Colaiste Stiofan Naofa

UL senior soccer team suffered their second defeat in the Umbro South Division League losing to a classy Colaiste Stiofan Naofa outfit. The Cork side's ability to finish their chances was the major difference in a game where UL dominated the possession stakes.

In the early stages UL created plenty of opportunities. Only ten seconds in Paul Cummins rattled the crossbar. With Daniel Goggins commanding at the back in the opening minutes UL had a solid foundation. Cummins spurned another good chance on 13 minutes as his effort was saved after a glorious cross from Darren Harrington. Against the run of play the away side hit the front on 19 minutes. A harmless low cross

from the right was allowed to go right across the goalmouth where Rory Kiely pounced at the back post to open the scoring. It was a soft goal to give away as it should have been cleared by the UL defence. Despite this UL continued to attack the Colaiste goal. The best chance fell to Harrington whose fine strike from the edge of the box was tipped over the bar. Chimka Manjor and Cummins were trying their best up front but found it hard to break down a stubborn Naofa defence. UL on the other hand were having some flaky moments at the back with goalkeeper Declan Rix taking a few unnecessary risks and causing a few hearts to skip a beat. Cummins had another shot on goal but the score line remained 0-1 at the break.

In the second half the Cork team upped the ante.

They put the UL defence under huge pressure and although Brian Cleary was coping admirably eventually Naofa got what they deserved. On the hour mark a cross from the left into the near post was deflected into the net by a combination of Cleary and the Colaiste winger. Five minutes things got worse for UL as a diving header from another cross made it three nil. Substitute John Hayes who was lively after coming on at half time immediately responded. A sweet curling cross from Paul Cummins found Hayes at the back post to head home. Unfortunately the UL challenge petered out after that. Hayes, Cummins and Greaney all had chances but the Cork defence held firm to seal a deserved victory.

This was a spirited display from UL but ultimately they just lacked that bit of class in



James Hayes on the attack, Photo by Sean Reidy

the final third. Also two of the Naofa goals were down to sloppy defending which will be punished at this level. Daniel Goggins, Brian Cleary, Darren Harrington and James Hayes were the most impres-

sive UL players on view. Colaiste Stiofan Naofa who are essentially a Cork academy side currently top the table with UL struggling with one win from three.

UL D Rix, E Greaney, D Goggins, B Cleary, C O'Shea, A Dower, D Harrington, L Barrett, J Mulligan, C Manjor, P Cummins.

Subs J Hayes for A Dower, R Dempsey for C Manjor, T Reynolds for D Harrington.

## Severe Beating for Senior B team

LIAM TOGHER

LIT 1-21  
UL 0-9

UL'S Senior B hurling team made an inauspicious start to their league campaign on Thursday 18 October at home to cross-town rivals LIT.

On a blustery, overcast afternoon, the early exchanges were quiet, prompting observers to believe that the game would fail to sparkle. UL began a little rusty but they kept their opponents scoreless until the 10th minute, having earlier taken the lead with a Stephen Delaney point. That was when the onslaught began. LIT tapped over four unanswered points in as many minutes before an exchange of scores left the match nicely poised as the half-time interval was nearing. However, the LIT forwards were on top of their game as most of UL's half-back line struggled. LIT again hit a scoring streak just before half-time to assume a commanding six-point lead at the break.

The game was certainly

not over as a contest as the second half began, but while LIT cruised up and down the gears like a brand new Audi, UL clonked through them in the manner of a 1990 Nissan with a faulty clutch. A goal for the visitors four minutes after half-time stretched the gap to nine points and another glut of casually-taken points followed. With 20 minutes still remaining, the game was up for UL, whose fighting spirit diminished as LIT added scores at their leisure. One moment in particular to highlight the visiting team's comfort zone was the introduction of their substitute goalie ten minutes from time. A game that promised plenty failed to deliver as both teams' interest tailed considerably for a finish. Among the relatively few UL players to impress were goalkeeper Pat Kelly, who did his best to frustrate the LIT forwards, full-back Damien Boland and substitute Denis Stapleton. Hopefully UL's Senior B side will extract some lessons from this setback and give a better account of themselves in games to come.

## UL Water Polo

DAVID BURKE

THE weekend of October 11 to 15 saw the UL Men's and Women's head to Bath to compete in the annual Somerset International Water Polo Tournament, the first time the club had left the shores of Ireland to compete. After winning a two training matches against University of Bath training team's spirits were high in both camps before Saturdays competition. Saturday saw us travel to Bristol to take part in the competition which was hosted by the University of West England. The tournament was made up of a team from University of West England, Bath University and UL.

The ladies saw action first and had a comprehensive victory of the University of West England, winning 8 - 2. Next up were the guys playing against UWE. Thanks to an inspired goalkeeping performance from Shane Corcoran and some excellent defending from Pa Egan, Niall O Farrell and Peter Shone, UL won 9 - 4 with goals coming from Darren McHugh (4), David Burke(2), Niall O Farrell, Cian O Suilleabhain and James O Connell (1 Each). It was the girls turn again, this

time against University of Bath. Having played them and won the night before the girls were hoping to perform well. However the Bath first team just had too much firepower for them and won 7 - 5 after a thrilling game of water polo that was level going into the last minute. Following the girls disappointment it was once again the men's turn to play, also pitted against University of Bath. Winning this game would guarantee a tournament win. In the match of the tournament UL scored a thrilling victory over Bath University, winning 8 - 6. This was a fast paced and action packed match that had the two teams level going into the final quarter, but the UL team were just able to sneak it. Sterling performances by Darren McHugh and Jon MacCall in front of goals and Cian O Suilleabhain and David Burke in defence helped the lads cause. The goals came from Darren Mchugh (3), Cian O Suilleabhain (2), Jon MacCall, Colin Macnameara, Eoin O Suilleabhain (1 each).

Training continues in the Arena Mondays, 9:45 - 10:45, Wednesdays 9 - 10 and Thursdays 9:45 - 10:45, with focus towards the National and Munster Leagues.

## Intervarsity Archers Break Guinness World Record

PHILIP MURPHY

AT 2:30pm on Friday October 19th, something extraordinary happened which will long be remembered by all those who took part. A group of archers from GMIT, DIT, DCU and UL set themselves the task of setting a new Guinness World Record for a continuous archery shoot. This was a charity event with all money raised going to the People in Need Telethon.

The record attempt was hosted by GMIT Archery Club, who came up with the original idea and mobilised the intervarsity scene to participate in what was a truly memorable occasion. When asked why this specific event was decided on, GMIT Archer, Vachn Gill, said 'We have the room. We have the means. Why not do something for a good cause?'

The task set before them was formidable as the previous record was 26 hours. In order for the 13 archers who took part to break the record, 28 hours of continuous shooting had to take place, with 5 minute breaks every hour. This would equal 1,680 arrows shot over 30.5 hours in total. That's 28 intervarsity competitions... a gruelling ordeal indeed!

Among the archers who took part were UL's Thomas Sheppard and Cian O'Sullivan. Of the 13 archers who began on Friday, two pulled out having achieved their

personal goals for the shoot, two retired due to exhaustion, two were forced to stop due to injury and, unfortunately, Thomas Sheppard was forced to withdraw after 22 hours when he suffered equipment failure.

At around 9pm on Saturday evening, six shooters including UL's Cian O'Sullivan broke the record by two hours, having shot continuously for 28 hours. It is a major achievement and one that we are all very proud to have helped bring about. When asked what he thought of the whole event, Pdraig Kelly from GMIT declared

'Sheer genius - for amateur archers to try something of this scale - it's unbelievable!'

More significantly, at latest count, over €4,000 has been raised by the four university clubs from collection baskets, shooters' sponsorship and donations from local businesses for the People in Need Telethon, which raises money for local causes nationwide.

The six archers who broke the Guinness World Record were:

Thomas Breen (GMIT)  
Pdraig Kelly (GMIT)  
Dale Burke (Galway Archers and Honorary GMIT)  
Cian O' Sullivan (UL)  
Brian O'Moore (DCU)  
Harry Lyster (DIT)

# Competition Success for UL Taekwondo

OLIVER TAHENY

UL Taekwondo Club members went training to one of the association's affiliated clubs in Scotland from October 12 to October 14. Mr John Kirkwood, a 5th Degree Black Belt hosted a 3 hour training session on the Saturday which involved traditional techniques, fighting and sparring techniques as well as a unique kind of basketball. An enjoyable weekend, the club hopes to repeat it in the future

Following the training trip, the club hosted the first ever AIMAA Munster Open on October 20. This competition was open to people of all ages and all belts, with competitions in sparring, breaking and the highest kick, a new addition to the competitive nature of TKD. UL students represented very well, with trophies brought home in almost all levels of the competition. Shane,

Rumhann, Norah and Darragh all brought home trophies, while Ollie Taheny narrowly lost out in the highest kick competition, just missing the

target at a height of 8.5 feet. It was a thoroughly enjoyable competition with great feedback from all those who took part. We would also like

to thank the Photo Soc. for their coverage of the event on the day. Pictures of the event are available on [www.photo.ul.ie](http://www.photo.ul.ie)



Photo UL Photo Soc

# Skydive UL blown away by Bodyflight Windtunnel

MAIRTIN LALLY

SKYDIVE UL made their first foreign trip on week 6 during the open days to the Bodyflight Windtunnel in Bedford, just north of London. The aim of the trip was to enhance the skydivers' flying abilities and for some members to make the transition from beginners level to intermediate level skydiving.

After a briefing session and tour of the centre the tunnel was switched on and the first of 11 Skydive UL members were put into flight. As the fan in the tunnel was extremely loud handsignals were the only form of communication. Each member had at least 30 minutes in the tunnel and all 3 of the instructors that flew over from Skydive Ireland were extremely impressed with the progress that was made in such a short time. The group had learned how to maneuver while in freefall primarily on their own and then how to maneuver safely while in freefall with other skydivers. The trip proved to be a huge success with the club clocking up a total of 6 hours

"tunnel-time" and everyone had such a fantastic time that another trip to the tunnel is being planned for the club in March during the University's mid-term break.

Upon the groups return the Ireland they were greeted by a brand new plane to jump out of!

The airvan was a demo to the dropzone for the weekend. With 6 skydivers getting to jump in just 18 minutes it is almost sure that the airvan will be a permanent fixture available to Skydive UL in the new year.

1st jump courses are still

being held every week and any student in UL can still sign up by contacting [info@skydiveul.org](mailto:info@skydiveul.org). Pictures from the Windtunnel and Airvan Weekend can be seen on [skydiveul.org](http://skydiveul.org).



# Poor Tournament Spells Bleak Future For Rugby

MARK CONNOLLY

THESE last couple of months have been a sorry period for Irish rugby. A disappointing World Cup and a costly failure to dramatically extend the popularity of the oval ball game here is a sad story that the IRFU will be all too aware of. In fact, it strongly resembles the 2005 rugby season when Irish Grand Slam expectations were dashed and a Lions expedition to New Zealand returned humiliated. But at very least that humiliation marked a high point for the game globally as the gloriously sweet handling skills of the All Blacks completely overran the pedestrian Lions. No such silver lining exists now however.

In terms of quality rugby and entertainment value, the 2007 Rugby World Cup was THE biggest disappointment of recent sporting history. I don't think I have ever seen a series of matches with as much kicking and the intentions of the players and coaches were obvious. They played for territory and to avoid mistakes and turnovers. Whilst this is an entirely legitimate approach, especially for teams like England and South Africa who quite rightly have no confidence in the creative abilities of their backs, it kills rugby as the great spectacle it once was. Anybody can kick long as well as run and tackle hard if they have been physically and psychologically conditioned correctly. However it is the organic and natural skills the All Blacks displayed in 2005 that makes rugby attractive and unique. They were marked sadly absent at this World Cup.

In this light France were the biggest disappointment. To see a team of such gifted talents, from a country that has contributed so much to rugby, try to barrel their way to glory was frankly disgusting. Bernhard Laporte is the man to be held responsible for this depressing change in French rugby culture. His selection of the long kicking Damien Traille at full back ahead

of the superb Clement Poitrenaud was typical of his conservative approach and consistent with the spirit of tournament. The French have clearly forgotten their magnificent rugby traditions and I was glad to see them pay the price against

England.

Even New Zealand proved vulnerable to the contagious disease of conservative rugby. Trailing the French by two in the last 10 minutes, the All Blacks repeatedly tried to smash the opposition within a 15 metre wide zone as one of the greatest backlines in rugby history stood idly by. It was a sight that proved almost too much to take and truly marked rugby's descent from the stunning steamrolling of the Lions in 2005.

The pairing of England and South Africa in the final supplied the inevitable argument that boring rugby is indeed the most effective. But one would have to examine triumphant South Africa's passage to glory. Their toughest test by far was against quarter-final opponents Fiji, the one side that consistently played with style and panache and who also exceeded everybody's expectations of them.

But the very fact that South Africa were triumphant is a simple reflection of the quality of the tournament. In the crucial positions of 10 and 12, they had Butch James and Francois Steyn respectively. Butch James rarely kicks, doesn't pass and can't run. The only time he is ever seen is when he steps into the defensive line to make big tackles. Not exactly your classic out half. Francois Steyn has never played at inside centre in his life before this tournament and it showed. South Africa struggled badly in their distribution out wide and it is a mark of just how good Bryan Habana is that he managed eight tries. They won this tournament purely on defence and line-out. That wouldn't be good enough in a decent tournament and let's be brutally honest, young kids won't be inspired to play rugby by watching South Africa.

And that's the big problem facing the IRB now. If they are ever to succeed in making rugby a truly global game, they must ensure that this rubbish is never repeated on our TV screens. Otherwise the future for the sport is very bleak indeed.



# The State of Irish Soccer

ALAN KEANE

**H**OW has it come to this? Our international manager stands dejected talking to Tony O'Donoghue, trying to reason out another abysmal Irish performance for an irate nation of passionate, frustrated soccer fans. He stumbles, fumbles and bumbles his way through yet another interview and once again we are left wondering whether what he says has any relevance to the match just passed. There is no doubt that the majority of soccer people have a certain amount of sympathy for Steve Staunton... he was a consummate professional in his playing career for Liverpool, Aston Villa, and of course for Ireland. It is just 5 years ago that he made his 100th appearance in the green of Ireland, ironically against Germany. He was the first (and at this rate the only) Irish player to play in 3 World Cups, having made his debut vs Tunisia in 1988. The glory days of the early 90's must seem far away now however, as he faces the wrath of the media.

It was only a matter of time before the FAI bowed to public pressure and gave him his P45. They should give him a damn good pay-off as well seeing as it was them that have forever tainted his image. He will be best remembered now for his dismal management career rather than for his leading role in the days of Jack's Army. Actually there's an idea... get Jack to leave down his fishing rod and return to the management scene. In fairness though he probably gets more bites in a day of fishing than the F.A.I will get applications for the soon to be vacant international manager post. Who'd want the job at the moment? Jose Mourinho? Paul Jewell? It'll be interesting to see how the buffoons at the F.A.I will go about approaching a prospective manager. If they'd concentrated more on getting an experienced manager in the first place instead of worrying about developing Lansdowne Rd. and squatting in Croke Park we might be packing for Austria/Switzerland right now. (Nothing against the Croke Park move it made for so much enjoy-

ment this year, especially in the in rugby against a certain team from across the water...)

John Delaney and the rest of the F.A.I bigwigs must take much of the blame for these last few barren years. Did Brian Kerr ever really get the chance he justly deserved? Our problem at the moment is that we expect instant miracles. We have lost some talismanic figures since we last were in a World Cup. One of these is now a Premiership manager with Sunderland, and the other...oh wait he's managing the international team. My point is that it takes time to blood new talent and though we have 2 contenders for a new Irish icon, (McShane and Hunt) it will be a while before they will be able to command a game like Keane did. That's another reason the more experienced players should stand up and be counted. Robbie Keane spends most of the time arguing with the ref. I support Spurs (!) and he is the most infuriating player to watch. From moments of brilliance to moments of indifference, to moments of absolute "How



the hell did he miss that one!" He probably isn't the best choice for captain. Richard Dunne is someone who really has the potential to be a great captain. He has matured so much as a leader during this doomed qualifying campaign. He was one of few positives; Steven Hunt, Shane Long and

the resurgent Andy Reid being the others in my opinion.

We need to get a new manager and soon. He will need time to establish a team before we're thrown into World Cup Qualification next year...probably as third or fourth seed.

## I'm the boss, I'm the gaffer, get me out of here

LIAM TOGHER

**W**HEN Steve Staunton was named as Ireland manager on 13 January 2006, he was very much in the L-plate stage of his coaching career. With a record 102 caps for his country, he had the theory test very much passed. However, when it came to the real thing, he was let down by his failure to really hit top gear with the Irish team and his refusal to let off the handbrake a bit more in the games against Wales and Slovakia.

The transition from Paul Merson's lackey at Walsall to manager of a senior national team (and hardly a minnow nation at that either) proved too much for Staunton. His lack of tactical expertise was exposed in the disastrous draw against Slovakia when he inexplicably left Stephen Hunt on the bench. Instead he brought on more defence-minded players in a vain bid to guard our 2-1 lead, even if he was hardly accountable for John O'Shea's cowardly 'attempt' to keep out the Slo-

vaks' last-minute equaliser. His team selection was baffling to Rafa Benitez proportions and the decision to hand the over-rated Robbie Keane the captain's armband was more misguided than a Fabien Barthez clearance. It would be wrong though to question Staunton's dedication to the cause. He tried and tried hard but it was inexperience more than anything that proved his downfall. Some of the criticism thrown at him crossed the line between genuine football matters and unacceptable personal abuse. Eamon Dunphy, in particular, never gave him a chance. He ridiculously called for Staunton to be sacked as early as August 2006 after a 4-0 friendly drubbing by Netherlands.

Staunton may now be gone, but unfortunately he didn't take the con artist formerly known as John Delaney (currently known as that feckin eejit Delaney) with him. The FAI head honcho has been with the organisation at a senior level through all of its recent embarrassments - the Genesis Report, searing pain



Saipan, the loss of TV rights to Sky Sports, the lack of an international-class stadium to call its own. Making him the chief executive is like giving a 16-year-old the keys to a luxury new BMW, to resurrect the driving theme again. Then again, the FAI only does

things one way - the wrong way. Our national team is a mess and the Eircom League, with utmost respect, is 40th in the UEFA ranking of its 53 national leagues. Delaney's performances on the RTE news after two particularly humiliating Ireland matches

showed him up as a man incapable of organising a nun search in a convent, not to mind the hunt for a "world-class manager". Irish football has not hit rock bottom yet, but if Delaney continues in his current vein, it will get there sooner rather than later.

## The Score

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

### You Are My Fantasy

Unfortunately my fantasy league adventure is going from bad to worse. Week 10 was a disaster with my team scoring a miserable 34 points. My current position is 1,247,885. Hopefully my strike-force of Fernando Torres and David Healy can conjure up a few badly needed goals to save some pride. All support is welcome!

Goal Of The Season Contenders  
Alex Chelsea v Middlesbrough  
Kolo Toure Arsenal v Bolton

### Number 99 Please

Squad numbers are just getting ridiculous. In the recent Euro qualifier against Scotland the Georgian centre forward wore the number 99. Maybe he has a passion for ice cream cones I don't know! A few years ago Inter Milan striker Zamorano had 1+8 on his jersey to show that he really wanted the number 9 jersey. His efforts were in vain as a certain Brazilian called Ronaldo claimed the much sought after squad number.

### Party Time

The lack of quality celebrations is worrying feature of the modern game. The flips from Martins and others have been the only highlights. With the new rules penalising players for going over the top celebrations have become more muted. Here's a few classic celebrations from down the years. Fabrizio Ravenelli lifting his shirt over his head.  
Alan Shearer's one armed salute.  
Robbie Fowler sniffing the sideline.  
Lee Sharpe using the corner flag as a microphone.

### Chants

"Keano, Keano what's the score!"  
"Can u hear the scousers sing  
noo noo  
can u hear the scousers sing  
noo noo  
can u hear the scousers sing i cant  
hear a f\*cking thing  
noooooooooooooooooooooo"

### Stan For England

With all his international management experience surely Steve Staunton will be a candidate when the England job comes around again. Put a fiver on a 500-1 with Paddy Power. You know it makes sense.

### Flukey Goal Of The Season Contenders

Ryan Giggs Man United v Aston Villa

### Bottom Of The Barrel

An Focal Sport would like all football supporters to get behind poor old Northwich who find themselves currently bottom of the Blue Square Conference table. They have lost 14 of their first 17 games and stand with a pitiful total of 3 points. Everyone should get behind this worthy cause as Northwich battle to survive in the murky waters of the Conference.

# 'The CIA? I Was Never In Their Good Books'

## The Notorious Howard Marks Talks To An Focal

BY FINN MCDUFFIE

**W**HY would I be nervous at the prospect of interviewing this guy? The guy who had forty-three aliases, eighty-nine phone lines, and twenty five companies trading throughout the world at the height of his drug dealing career. The guy who had bars, recording studios and offshore banks laundering his drug money night and day. The guy who had contact with organisations as diverse as the CIA, MI6, the IRA, and the Mafia. The guy who, after many years and a world-wide operation by the Drug Enforcement Agency, was arrested and sentenced to twenty five years at the United States Federal Penitentiary. The guy who still gets asked for Hemp seeds on the street from time to time. May I introduce Howard Marks, a legend in his own right, however dodgy his past might seem to some.

I suppose I was expecting an interview more sinister

than those I'm used to, but Howard came across as a very normal, down to earth guy with quite a blunt, dry wit and a reservations-free attitude towards his past. Howard first got involved in drug dealing in Oxford University, where he studied physics. 'To begin with, I didn't like [Oxford] 'cos they were all upper class farts,' he laughs, 'I started off smoking dope and discovered it was more fun than my degree'. He eventually chose what he describes as the 'unusual career path' of drug dealing. Things got really big for his business when he was 25. 'I was quite young,' he comments, 'after some time I got familiar with the trade - it happens in most professions.'

So why would someone choose such a lifestyle? The illegality of his career never seemed to worry him. 'If it was illegal, I could get caught. That worried me. It didn't worry my conscience.' Obviously there's no regret then! He did what he did 'partly for the money, partly for the thrill' but at the end of

the day, he'd 'prefer the thrill' factor. The biggest crime he ever got away with was 'bringing 15 tons of dope into Scotland. I think it was the biggest load of dope brought into Western Europe.'

Howard also had a link with Limerick. This is where a contact from the IRA (but-not-really) came into play. 'We had an office in Limerick. We used Shannon to import from Afghanistan. We dealt with a guy who said he was from the IRA. But later, another IRA contact disowned him.' So the IRA were an elusive bunch, but what about the others? Surely it was difficult keeping various organisations such as the IRA, MI6, the CIA and the Mafia happy, all at once. 'The Mafia were easy enough. MI6 were easy to begin with but got difficult later. They sent an agent out once... The CIA? I was never in their good books - I dealt with a couple of cowboys once, but that's all.'

With Howard's organisations making 'a f\*\*k of a lot... millions' each day, surely there'd be a need for a

series of different disguises. 'I was a fugitive all the time,' says Howard matter-of-factly, 'you'd just change when you found they'd found out your identity.' He 'got busted' three times too, adding 'I suppose you'd call that some near misses.' Eventually he ended up in prison. He spoke of prison as boring and 'a lot like you see in the films'. 'Have you ever seen Shawshank?' he asks, 'It's like that.' He talked of the positive aspects too. 'You make good friends in prison... I did yoga. It was a means of escapism.'

After seven years, Howard was released from prison. However, with such a high profile he couldn't go back to his old ways. Instead, he published a book - 'Mr. Nice', which tells his life story. The title was chosen because one of his aliases, Donald Nice had the right 'connotations'. Commenting on the new lifestyle, Howard said 'it's safer, but the money's not as good.' I asked if he found he was respected by youth for his campaigning for



the legalisation of cannabis. He replied simply, 'I find respect puts distance between people. I like the lack of respect more.'

An immensely interesting and unusual interview, Howard Marks has a shrewd mind and an answer for everything, and certainly isn't afraid to answer it - whether through a terse story or just a

single word. This is displayed most adequately through his answer to what he does when he's asked on the street for those hemp seeds. 'I just sell them!'

Howard Marks is in the Jonathan Swift Theatre on Monday of week 9. Tickets are €10 and available from the SU



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