



Vikings win Shamrock bowl p17

An FOCAL

STUDENTS UNION

University of Limerick



Orientation Pull-out p7

EDITION 1 : WEEK 0

THE OFFICIAL PAPER OF THE STUDENTS' UNION

4TH SEPTEMBER 2007

From Graduation to Orientation



BY AOIFE BREEN
NEWS EDITOR

CONNECTIVITY was the buzz word in Professor Don Barry's conferring speech at the opening graduation ceremony on Monday last week at which 306 students from the College of Education ended their path at UL. Monday's ceremony was the first of nine which took place every morning and afternoon of the week seeing just over 2350 students receive their awards from the University.

The University head spoke about the controversy

concerning the Aer Lingus Shannon - Heathrow route and the potential negative impact that a decision to discontinue the route would have on the region, including the University and its graduates.

'For the University itself there are significant implications to this decision. UL attracts over 1,200 international students from 70 countries each year, many of whom transit through Heathrow airport on flights from Asia and the US. The ending of this air connection will cause cost and logistical difficulties for these students,' Professor Barry told graduates.

The Class of 2007 have now waved goodbye to the photos on their ID cards which haunted them for the duration of their time at UL while new students will now pose for their own mugshots this week.

Week 0, or Orientation Week, is the week before

regular classes begin dedicated to introducing new students to university life and, specifically, life at UL. The new members of campus will register for their classes and receive introductory talks on many aspects of university life, including an address from the sabbatical officers in the Students' Union who will represent all students for the coming academic year.

St. John Ó Donnabháin, Students' Union President, extended a warm welcome to the incoming students: 'It's always great to see new faces around the campus and I hope that all incoming students enjoy their time here at UL.'

The transition to third level education may appear daunting to many freshers but the Education Officer, Alan Higgins, has this advice to offer to students: 'Learning at university level is very self-directed which can be difficult, but it's important to

remember that the support services are there - including here at the Students' Union - and will help you if you're finding it hard'.

He went on to encourage students to become involved in extra curricular activities outside lectures and tutorials. 'College is about finding the balance. It isn't just about going to lectures or just about going to the Stables, but it's about finding the right mix of both. Try to get involved in things, whether it is a club or society or by becoming a class rep. It's important to get the full college experience while having fun too,' advised Mr Higgins.

Almost 2200 students will be brought around the campus during this week in groups of up to 15 by their designated guide who will introduce them to their new surroundings.



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Chicken with Hot Garlic Sauce	King Prawn with Sichuan Sauce
King Prawn with Hot Garlic Sauce	Chicken Curry

DELIVERY CHARGE APPLIES

Alternative Café on the Way

AN FOCAL REPORTER

UL'S Student Centre will be acquiring a new facility in the form of a café-bar in the location previously occupied by the Scholars' function room, An Phluais, due to open on the 1 October.

Students' Union representatives were involved in long negotiations over the summer months with Duncan O'Toole, owner of the former Java's Café in Limerick city, and Plassey Campus Centre to secure sufficient funding to make the venture possible. As a result of the discussions, the SU has made a substantial

investment into the project.

Mr O'Toole, a former Communications and Education Officer in the SU, will take up the role as operator of the new service beside the SU shop, of which he has been the Chair of the Board of Directors for the past two years. He has resigned from his position on this board to avoid incurring a conflict of interest with that and his new position.

The café occupies part of the venue that was formerly the Scholars' Club which was forced to close in 2005 due to financial difficulties. The location has remained vacant since the closure, despite a

tender process searching for a new tenant at the beginning of the last academic year which ended unsuccessfully.

The new café, which will serve hot and cold food and a variety of beverages until late at night is expected to open at the beginning of October. The café is expected to have an alternative atmosphere to that provided by the Stables' Club but at the same time retain high quality entertainment. Students are invited to submit suggestions of what they would like to see served in the new café online on the ULSU forum available at www.ulsu.ie.

EDITORIAL



BY SEAMUS RYAN
EDITOR

AS readers can see from the main story on page 3 of this issue of An Focal, two Students' Union officers were called before the University Discipline Committee at the beginning of the summer to face a charge under the University Code of Conduct of bringing the university into disrepute

due to their actions in painting a zebra crossing near the Groody roundabout on the night of April 11 this year.

Since it was first founded, the Students' Union has acted in the independent interests of students; where it fails to do so it fails in the very reason for its existence.

ULSU sabbatical officers do not come under the definition of students under the UL code of conduct and any reasonable examination of the code of conduct would have revealed that before the charge was brought. That isn't to say that ULSU representatives are above the law, they are obviously as subject to the law of the land as any other citizens. However, as democratically-elected and mandated representatives of a body independent of the University itself and as non-students under the code of conduct, they are as free as any other non-UL students to represent their members - who happen to be UL students.

Attempts to sanction ULSU representatives for merely carrying out their duties as officers protecting the interests and safety of their members essentially amount to attempts to restrict the autonomy of an independent statutory body defined under the Universities Act 1997, which is, frankly, a rather disappointing development. Attempts to use a front page article from this publication as the sole piece of evidence in the case could be viewed as an attempt to restrict the freedom that this publication has as an outlet for student views, which is an equally disappointing development.

Because of its intense exam regime, UL has occasionally had a reputation as an education mill where many students are churned out without time to sufficiently develop as individuals. Where independent thought is demonstrated and where non-violent methods are employed as reasonable means towards a justifiable end, it is the strong view of this editor that such actions should be applauded rather than sanctioned, especially if UL is truly aiming to foster a capacity for independent critical thinking among its students, one of the basic objects of a university.

The actions of the fourteen students and student leaders in painting the zebra crossing displays that there are still UL students who care enough about student and general public safety that they are willing to place themselves in reasonable danger to demonstrate their point. In any reasonable view, this promotion of the general interests of UL students as well as permanent residents of the local area by the actions of that group of fourteen managed to bring the university into repute rather than disrepute. Personally, I applaud and believe that those with an interest in independent thought and public safety should do likewise.

Quotes of the Summer

- **"I'd consider myself a mediator**
CSO Patrick McHugh in convincing mode, followed by explosive laughter from his fellow sabbats
- **Well, I never wanted to be Charlie Bird or... what's the name of that poor dead woman? Oh, Veronica Guerin, that's it.**
PPO Seamus Ryan explains why investigative journalism may not be his first choice as a career
- **Shhh. The Campaigns Officer is going to tell me about his balls**
PSA President Emma Murphy at the event planning meeting quits the room for a Paddy McHugh event.
- **If this going to turn into a porn movie I'm going to need to be getting paid more**
One of the extras for the SU promotional video for orientation week
- **Andrew Trimbletery... Trimblee... Trimbletree... Oh, it's Andrew Trimble scoring a try!**
Seamus gets confused when a sports reporter sends him a file called AndrewTrimbletery.jpg
- **That would be the view of the Taliban end of the campus community**
UL Vice President/Academic & Registrar Paul McCutcheon takes time out to consider the opinions of those who don't want any bars on campus
- **Have periods once a month and come back to me!**
Former Welfare Officer Sinead Hickey throws down the gauntlet before leaving the building
- **OK, I will!**
President St.John Ó Donnabháin picks up Sinead's gauntlet and throws it back with gusto

Ulster Bank
let's do things differently

Dear Ulster Bank

I've just arrived here in UL and while I'm overwhelmed at what a cracking place it is, everything costs more than I thought it would. I'm hoping to get a part-time job soon to pay for the basics and to have some element of a social life but at the moment I'm just looking to pay for the books I need, manage to eat properly and have a half-decent social life at the beginning so I don't end up like some kind of loner until my grant comes in. Help! What can I do?

Dear Student,

Welcome to UL and congratulations on getting your place. Starting college does always come as a shock - particularly when you have to pay for things yourself!

In relation to your query until you get a part-time job we have an Interest Free Overdraft facility on our student account which you can avail of immediately on opening your student account. The amount is €650 and this should be more than adequate to cover the cost of the books that you need to get you started. Another benefit, which is a new feature of the Ulster Bank Account this year for new customers, if you use the account as your main account and carry out all your lodgements and ATM withdrawals from it you will be awarded with €100, €50 by the 30th November and €50 by the 31st January.

You should also be able to feed yourself and attend a few events on campus which are very reasonably priced. As an added bonus to the Ulster Bank account package you also get a free ticket to either the Back to School Party on Monday Week 1 or the Popstars Party on Thursday Week 1. And we'll even throw in a goodie bag!

I hope this will help you avoid looking like some kind of loner!! If you need any further advice or need to talk to us drop in or call Mike / Sally / Sinead on 061 216260.

Best of luck in your new college year!

Ulster Bank.

An FOCAL EDITORIAL TEAM

Editor: Seamus Ryan
Advertising: Seamus Ryan
Layout & Design: Jackie Britton,
Topdesk

News Editor: Aoife Breen
Sports Editor: Tomás McCarthy

News reporters:
Seamus Ryan
Aoife Breen

Sports:
Tomás McCarthy
Liam Togher

Features:
St John Ó Donnabháin
Judith Lynch
Alan Higgins
Breandán Ó hÉamhaigh
Catriona McGrattan

ULSU Before Discipline Committee

AN FOCAL REPORTER

ULSU President St. John Ó Donnabháin and outgoing Campaigns & Services Officer Alannah Turner were summoned before the University Discipline Committee at the beginning of the summer to answer a charge of 'bringing the university into disrepute'. The charge concerned the painting of a zebra crossing at the Groody roundabout in April as a protest against the lack of action from Limerick County Council in providing a safe crossing for students and other pedestrians. The sole evidence presented by university authorities was the front page of the April 17 edition of An Focal, which stated that the 'SU President painted markings on the road in white paint, in the style of a pedestrian crossing'. Gardai arrived on the scene as the course of action came to a

finish and took the names of those present but no charges external to the University were taken.

Committee regulations state that when the SU President is unavailable to carry out his role as a member of the Discipline Committee, the president may nominate a replacement to act on the committee. Given his unavailability due to being one of those charged, St. John Ó Donnabháin followed common practice and nominated David Cuddihy, President of Mary Immaculate College SU to act in his stead. The initial hearing was postponed as a number of the non-student committee members contended that Mr O'Halloran acting in Mr Ó Donnabháin's place was equivalent to Mr Ó Donnabháin judging in his own case, an assertion with which the Students' Union strongly disagreed.

Following the

postponement of the hearing by the discipline committee, all six outgoing officers sent a letter to the University Executive on June 19 pointing out that the ULSU President and Campaigns & Services Officer were not students and hence were not subject to the UL Code of Conduct. Additionally the letter pointed out that the Union was a body independent of the university and responsible ultimately to its members rather than university authorities. Union officers also contended that the lack of action by the University Executive on the matter of the pedestrian crossing had brought the University into disrepute, through its base negligence of its students' interests.

On June 21, Professor Paul McCutcheon, UL Vice-President Academic & Registrar informed SU officers that the University Advocate had decided not to continue with the case.



Limerick County Council had in the aftermath of the April

protest promised to install a pedestrian crossing at the

roundabout during the summer period but has yet to do so.

ULSU attend USI training

AN FOCAL REPORTER

ULSU sabbatical officers attended the Union of Students in Ireland's annual Union Organisation Seminar in July at Waterford IT. The event, traditionally limited to member organisations of USI, has in recent years been made available to non-affiliated colleges including UL.

A combination of reasons, mainly costs and concern at the perceived Dublin-centric nature of the organisation prompted the disaffiliation of UL in 1991, followed since by NUI Maynooth, DCU, Cork IT and Mary Immaculate College. Affiliation fees remain one of the main barriers for UL re-affiliation to USI.

The five-day training seminar featured sessions on conflict resolution, presentation skills and negotiation techniques, which were intended for all officers. There were also more specialised classes on accommodation issues, sexual health, equality and dealing with the media. The

conference was attended by representatives from such diverse institutions as UCD, IT Tallaght, the University of Ulster and Galway-Mayo IT.

All UL officers found the seminar useful from a training perspective, as well as networking with other officers from around the country who face similar challenges in their

daily union activities. Major topics discussed included lack of participation in union activities by the general student population and the potential for reintroduction of fees by the new government.

Attendance by the Limerick delegates at the event gave rise to renewed

queries from affiliated members about the possibility of UL re-affiliation. When asked about the possibility of USI re-affiliation, UL officers stated that the seminar was very helpful from the point of view of communication with other students' unions and that they would always seek to do

the best for students. Richie Morrisroe, current USI President stressed that it is "always good for officers to meet up and exchange ideas, affiliates or not, as we're all in the same job of serving student needs."

ULSU has begun a process to ascertain the views

of other Irish institutions, both affiliates and non-affiliates towards USI as well as those of USI itself. The process will aid UL students in the future in considering whether to re-affiliate or remain outside USI.



Your SU officers: Back Row (L-R) Education Officer: Alan Higgins, President: St. John Ó Donnabháin, Publicity & Publications Officer: Seamus Ryan Front Row (L-R) Campaigns & Services Officer: Patrick McHugh, Welfare Officer: Judith Lynch, PSA President: Emma Murphy

UL Open Air Cinema

AN FOCAL REPORTER

The Students' Union secured funding of almost 18 thousand euros from the university's strategic fund in July for an open air cinema to come into operation on the campus this September.

The venue for the outdoor cinema will be the Students' Union courtyard, fast becoming the hub of student life on campus and where most of the university's commercial development has taken place in recent years.

ULSU President St. John Ó Donnabháin expressed great pleasure at the project

being approved for funding, saying "The open air campus cinema will bring great life to the campus, between showing films in the evening and also important Irish international rugby and soccer matches. The idea has been going around for ages, after seeing how well this can work, both in Temple Bar in Dublin and also in city parks in Paris. It's great to see the work that we've been putting into this for the past few months coming to fruition".

The equipment has been ordered and the cinema is planned to be operational by week 3

STUDENT SPEAK

Last week, Seamus Ryan asked graduates what they enjoyed most about their time at UL

Colm Cross (Languages & Cultural Studies): "The campus and the Spanish department"

Rob O'Reilly (HPSS): "The carefree attitudes!"

Bronagh Murphy (PhD Applied Linguistics): "Socialising in the Stables for a few drinks"

Denis O'Connell (HPSS): "Finding something I was good at"

Avril McLoughlin: "Mighty craic & socialising" / Patrick McHugh: "Hmmm"

Neil Ryan (New Media & English): "Taco Fries in Limerick's finest chipper Superdine"

Conor McGrath (Trad Irish Music & Dance): "watching the girls go into the Stables on a Thursday night"

Aisling Tallis (HPSS): "spending five months in Argentina!"

Pádraigín Caesar (MA Ethnomusicology): "Bliain iontach sesuil, oideachaisuil áthasach agus áim bainte amach ag an bliain ar fad"

Niamh Barry (HPSS): "I wouldn't know, I spent 4 years in my room as a hermit studying"

Gillian Kingston (HPSS): "All the times I lost my dignity on the Lodge dance floor"



Postgraduate News

Hi All



BY EMMA MURPHY
PSA PRESIDENT

Welcome to the first edition of the year of An Focal!

I'm Emma and I am President of Postgraduate Students Association (PSA) for this year. First of all I'd like to take this opportunity if you are a new student here to welcome you to the University of Limerick or to welcome you back if like me you just cannot keep away from the place....It becomes fairly addictive after a while!

Well you may be asking yourself what the PSA President actually does? My role is to act as a social and academic representative for the postgraduate students on campus. I deal with all of the issues relating to postgraduates from academic related issues such as exam queries and supervision problems to

the non-academic related issues such as financial aid, childcare, sexual health, accommodation and general well being.

Hopefully along with the guys in the SU we will try and make this year as entertaining and memorable as possible for you so be on the look out for events that are coming up! From a postgraduate perspective as a postgraduate student you are automatically a member of the PSA and the easiest way of keeping in touch with is to visit the website and sign up to the mailing list at www.ul.ie/~psa I will be posting the lists of all the events coming up throughout the year on the site and through the new Postgraduate Newsletter which will be circulated to all postgrads by e-mail fortnightly! So keep an eye out!

One of the main areas which I will be promoting this year is the election of class reps...and particularly postgraduate class reps! There are positions to be filled for all taught classes as well as for the research students in every department across all of the Colleges! So come into the PSA or the SU, get a nomination and run for class rep!

My 3 points of advice for the year would be:

- Get involved in events and campaigns
- Be a class rep...or elect a class rep
- Bang on my door if you're unsure of anything!!.....That's what we're here for!

So feel free to pop into my office in the Postgraduate Centre which is located just off the Stables Courtyard, my door is always open and I'd be only delighted to help you out and point you in the right direction. The PSA Centre is in the middle of a re-vamp and will be re-launched early in the semester! But remember the common area is open and there to be used! So pop in and use the facilities! Keep an eye out for the posters with the PSA logo for the details about up and coming postgraduate events throughout the year.

I hope you have a fantastic year and I'll see you around campus!

Emma

SABBATICAL OFFICERS CONTACT LIST

St.John Ó Donnabháin: President

Uachtarán, Aontas na Mac Léinn, Ollscoil Luimnigh President, University of Limerick Students' Union

Guthán | Phone: 061-202326
Facs | Fax: 061-213476
R-phost | E-mail: president@ulsu.ie



Alan Higgins: Vice President/Education Officer

Oifigeach Oideachais Vice President/Education Officer

Guthán | Phone: 061-213491
Facs | Fax: 061-213476
R-phost | E-mail: education@ulsu.ie



Seamus Ryan: Vice President/Publicity & Publications Officer

Oifigeach Poiblíocht agus Foilseacháin Vice President/Publicity & Publications Officer

Guthán | Phone: 061-202363
Facs | Fax: 061-213476
R-phost | E-mail: editor@ulsu.ie



Judith Lynch: Deputy President/Welfare Officer

Leas-Uachtarán/Oifigeach Leasa Deputy President/Welfare Officer

Guthán | Phone: 061-202519
Facs | Fax: 061-213476
R-phost | E-mail: welfare@ulsu.ie



Patrick McHugh: Vice President/Campaigns & Services Officer

Oifigeach Feachtas agus Seirbhíis Vice President/Campaigns & Services Officer

Guthán | Phone: 061-213542
Facs | Fax: 061-213476
R-phost | E-mail: campaigns@ulsu.ie



Emma Murphy PSA President

Guthán | Phone: 061-213473
Facs | Fax: 061-213476
R-phost | E-mail: psapresident@ul.ie



Welfare in UL

JUDITH LYNCH, WELFARE OFFICER

TO all you first years, Welcome! And to all the other years - Welcome Back! I really hope you have a happy healthy and fulfilling year. However, things do not always happen as we intend them to. So if you are having any problems, mishaps or trouble of any kind - please do not hesitate to ring, email or call into the office. I'd only be delighted to see you!

In this column I will end up discussing everything from Accommodation to Zen and all that lies between. However, this edition I will focus on student parents.

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

This is why the Students Union annually provides a Childcare Bursary. All student parents are entitled to apply for financial assistance for childminding and crèche costs. However, funds

are targeted to help people cope with crisis pregnancies while students in UL. The financial aid fund is guaranteed to these students for one academic year after giving birth. Normally, however, the amount of money allotted is both situation dependent and also dependent on the number of applications and the funds available.

There is some documentation required to be submitted with application forms. For more information you can call into the Welfare Office and collect a booklet on Financial Aid and an application for the childcare bursary. To locate the Welfare Office, enter the Students Union building and turn right after the stairs. My office is the second door on the left. Postgraduate students interested in applying for this bursary can contact Emma in the PSA office in the Stables Courtyard.

For more information or for any other enquiries, contact Judith Lynch (welfare@ulsu.ie / 061-202519 / www.bebo.com/Welfare-in-UL)

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

JUDITH LYNCH

STIs are a range of infections easily passed on during sexual contact. They are caused by bacteria and viruses present in blood, semen, vaginal fluids, saliva or on the skin. If you are sexually active you are at risk of getting an STI. The more sex partners you have the higher the risk of coming into contact with someone who is infected with an STI. If infections are not diagnosed early and treated they can cause serious and permanent damage to your health, and in rare circumstances may be life threatening.

Throughout the year, this column will feature different STIs and their symptoms. Although it is important to remember that with some STIs you may not develop any symptoms at all!

This week we feature:

AIDS and HIV

What Is it?

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus which damages the body's immune system. HIV can be passed on by having sex without a condom with someone who has HIV. HIV is only passed on through bodily fluids and blood, for example through sex, injecting drugs or from mothers to their unborn children. AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) itself is a disease that usually occurs several years after getting HIV, with a whole range of different symptoms.

How can I tell if I've got it?

You can't. The only way to then tell if you have HIV is to have a blood test, which can be done confidentially. You can apply for an STI test at the Limerick Regional Hospital - 061-482382

What will clear it up?

At present there is no cure for HIV or AIDS but new combination therapies mean improved management of the illness.



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El Presidente

Developing Campus Craic: Java's and the Alcohol-Free Venue

WELCOME (back) to UL!!! During the summer, we've been working really hard to bring Javas to the Student Centre here in UL, specifically to the An Phluais space at the end of what used to be the Scholars. And after a few months of the joys of installation of services, chalk drawings on the floor and the ever-present issue of finances, things are looking good! Duncan O'Toole, who ran the much-loved Java's Café on Catherine St. in Limerick city centre, will be running the new Café-Bar, and he's looking to recreate a lot of what was good about Java's in town, and bring it here to UL.

The idea with Java's is a relaxed atmosphere, good food and drink, and a real alternative venue on campus. We'd love to see people coming up with ideas for good events/exhibitions/whatever coming in from students across the campus, including Clubs and Societies. There's always more room for more good ideas - you can add your thoughts on the Students Union website noticeboards at www.ulsu.ie/forum where there's a discussion on Java's, or just call into the Students Union. The provisional opening date is Monday 1st October.

We've also managed to secure agreement for an Alcohol-Free venue in the Student Centre from the University, as part of the campaign for the fulfilment of the UL Alcohol Policy. There's still plenty of work to be done on how exactly we're going to fit out the new place. This'll also be another venue for Clubs and Socs, and other groups. An electronica music group have already indicated interest, and we'd also like to hang photographs here for a war exhibition later in the year - again, all ideas welcome!

The wider idea is to make the Student Centre, and the whole campus, a really active, interesting place with loads of things happening throughout the week; another part of this is the Open-Air Cinema (see elsewhere in this An Focal), which'll be brilliant, lots of music and general fun and games for the coming semester - I'll see you around the Campus!

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



WELCOME NEWBIES!

THEY call it the best four years of your life and they're right! As you read this you'll probably have been through the long queues for registration, you'll have had the formal welcome from UL President Don Barry and if you're young enough to have been accompanied on your trip here, you'll have managed to give your parents the slip by now.

Orientation Week is well-named - it's all about orientation. You'll find out about the important things like lectures and languages, location of the library, labs (I think that's everything beginning with an L), places to eat, places to drink, relaxation zones and all the little titbits that your Orientation Guide should tell you. Your Guide is there to make sure you won't be lost or feel lost when term starts next week so make sure you ask any questions you can think of.

From the beginning of Orientation Week you'll have plenty of new things to deal with - everything from making new friends (or avoiding new enemies), new housemates and classmates through new freedoms and pressures to finding that elusive room you're supposed to have a meeting in. College life is all about dealing with new things and making decisions that will affect your future life so while there's always a way to change things, it's easier if you're fully informed the first time you decide something.

And that's where the SU comes in. 'We're ready to believe you', as the Ghostbusters used to say and if you've a problem during your time here in UL, we try to help you with students elected by you to represent you. St. John Ó Donnabháin is the President (again) for this year, he's a gaeilgoir and he's probably the easiest of us to spot. Judith Lynch is DP/Welfare officer and if you've a problem with accommodation, sexual health or wellbeing she's your first port of call. And she gives out free condoms! Alan Higgins is the Education guru and having been in the same job last year, he's close to an expert in University regulations and he's responsible for Class Reps so get those nomination forms in and make the

voice of your class heard in the big fortnightly Class Rep meetings. Patrick McHugh is responsible for Campaigns and Services (including Ents), he's a graduate of Irish Music & Dance so he knows how to beat a drum. He'll be looking for people to get involved in campaigns as the term goes by so if you want to get involved, give him a shout! Seamus Ryan has the joy of being editor of An Focal (the paper you're reading right now!) and

The Students' Union (through our Ents contractors) runs all the Entertainments you'll be availing of while you're here so every time you take a bus to a student night out, you're using the services provided by the SU. The SU officers are always up for hearing about how they can serve you better so if you've got ideas or suggestions, drop in and share them. A students' union is only as strong as its members make it so get involved, come to the Union general Meetings on once a term, come to other meetings organised by the Union, join clubs and socs, become a class rep and get out and meet people!

Some of you will be living at home, some in on-campus accommodation and some in houses around the Castletroy area or further afield. We don't want to pour cold water on your new adventures as independent students but while you're here, remember that you're part of a big community now and that where you're living you're surrounded by others. These people may be fellow students, older or younger, they may be permanent residents in the Castletroy area. You've the entire campus to run riot in (not literally of course but you'll probably have quite a bit of campus fun nonetheless) so remember that residents may need to get up for work in the morning and they may have small children. Or they just may not like a whole lot of noise. Do your best to get on with them as there are disciplinary penalties if you cause trouble or damage. It's not worth the hassle so keep your fellow residents in mind as you run home from the pubs or nightclubs.

Above all, don't forget that if you've a problem we're here. We're your elected representatives and you pay our (admittedly rather meagre) wages, so no matter what the issue, we're here for you.

**ULSU - Working for YOU!
(and don't you forget it!)**

Review (the glossy magazine you'll pick up once a month). He's always looking for writers, copy-editors and photographers so if you've got the urge to get creative, call him! Emma Murphy is the President of the Postgrad Students' Association and she's the first port of call for any postgrads among you with any difficulties.



Orientation Week Ents

Hey hey hey

Welcome welcome welcome

WE'RE trying to say everthing three times just so you remember what we say!!! But it just takes too long so I'll just do it for the important bits. So I was saying Welcome!!! Welcome back to those of you who have been here before, welcome to UL for those of who have just arrived.

I've been trying to figure out the best way to write this article and get the info across to you so I've decided to interview myself. We did the same last year, I don't know if anyone read it but here it goes again. I'm going to ask tough questions and I won't let myself get away with not answeringso read on!

So what's on offer in the world of UL Ents this year?

Last year we offered everything up to the veritable kitchen sink!!!! This year there's even more. I'm not sure what piece of household equipment would describe just how much is on offer, so let's just say a lot!!

No, seriously what's happening?

Well there's a kitchen sink and maybe a whole lot of other things.

Any chance of specifics?

OK here it goes. To break it down easily we can look at it like this. Lots of music both electric and acoustic. Lots of comedy, both big rooms and small rooms. A little bit of outdoor cinema. A few balls here and there. One Freshers Week. One Rag Week and a few more bits and pieces

If I was to get a little Chronological on ur ass....

It all starts Wednesday of Orientation Week with a nice and easy intro night at the Sin Bin. Downstairs it's 100% party time with the legendary Jimmy Keogh... upstairs it's the Christy Moore tribute with Liam Byrne (he looks like him, he sweats like him but more importantly he sounds like him).

Then in Week 1 we go from the annual 'Fuck School Party' (its says 'Back To School' on the posters as there'd be too many complaints otherwise) at the Sin Bin to the Blizzards and Director live in the Stables on successive nights and then finish up with our first ever Pop Stars Party at the Cornmarket. The annual and ever popular 'Fuck School Party'. One last chance to don the old uniform (well outside the privacy of your bedroom) and celebrate the fact that you're all grown up now. Tickets are 10 bucks a pop for one of the biggest nights of the year or you could just sign up with Ulster Bank and get a free ticket!

Week 2 sees the start of the Green Sessions with Fred, The Flaws, Delorentos and others lined up over the course of the semester all playing in the Stables.



Week 3 will see the start of the Monnet sessions - that's the best in acoustic music in the comfort of the Monnet theatre. Personally I always liked the Monnet, great spot to fall asleep on a slow Friday morning especially at a 9'oclock lecture. But we make it a slightly more interesting experience than the average lecture. Lined up for this year are Declan O'Rourke, the Saw Doctors and we'll have a few more acts by the next edition.

Week 4 see the start of Schnitzel Comedy Club. We'll kick off in the Monnet but then we'll move to the new home of comedy in UL at Club Java. Previous guests at Schnitzel have included Neil Delamare, Andrew Maxwell, Dave O'Doherty, Jason Byrne and a whole host of other great names and we intend to welcome them back this year.

On a weekly basis you can join us in town on Tuesday & Thursday nights. Tuesday nights we're in the Sin Bin - a great party atmosphere is guarenteed so get along there on Tuesdays. There's a free bus in from the Stables every Tuesday night and keep an eye out for some great theme nights including the first ever Father Ted Ball early in the semester. It's free in before 12 or 5 euro after 12. See you there.....

Thursday Nights we hit the Cornmarket for the Pop Star Parties. We plan to bring you the best Tribute acts every Thursday Night. We start off with U2 Tribute Mysterious Ways on Thursday Week 1 which will double up as the Freshers Ball. Ruth Scott from 2FM (a UL graduate) will also DJ on the night and there'll be plenty of goodies given away on the night. Tickets are an astonishingly cheap 5 euros so get them now...or of course you could sign up for an Ulster Bank account and get a ticket for free. Also on the way over the course of the year are Foo Fighters, Arctic Monkeys, Killers and Pussy Cat Dolls tribute acts ... something for everyone!

So that's the first few weeks, there's something there for everyone. If not then there's loads more to come! Already in our plans we have the Halloween Ball, Christmas Ball and Summer Ball.

And finally, mark March 10th in your diaries cos that's the start of Rag Week. Keep tuning into these pages to find out what's on and what's planned. We aim to make this a great year to party on campus so get involved and have a laugh! If you want to keep a closer eye on things over the course of the year then make sure to add us as a friend on BEBO we're at www.bebo.com/Ulents.

So that's it then, anything else you want to tell us, anything you feel we should know?

Well I suppose I should let you know that all tickets are for sale from the Students' Union. And if you have any sense you'll buy a Totti, that's the ticket that gets you in to virtually every gig we run over the course of the year including Freshers week and Rag Week. Its costs 100 euros but that's for about 400 euros worth of tickets...not bad!!! They go on sale on Monday Week 1 at 10am along with all our other Freshers Week Tickets.



BACK TO SCHOOL PARTY AT THE SIN BIN!

yo, your in college now
wear that school uniform one last time
any way you want....then bin it!

Tix 10 bucks a pop from ULSU..Lovely!
Buses from Stables from 10pm

Ulster Bank
Sponsored by
€100 cash - good idea, or a great one

ULSU ENTS
www.beko.com/ulents

Orientation Week & Freshers Week at a Glance

We decided to start the year with a bit of a bang.

Week 0

Wednesday

GTKY Night @ The Sin Bin

The First party of the year... don't miss it
Party Anthems on the Dance Floor
Christy Moore Tribute Upstairs in the Bar.
Free buses leave the Stables from 10pm.
Tickets on sale from ULSU

Wednesday

After Party at the Sin Bin. Free Buses from the Stables from 10.30pm

The Green Sessions # 2

Director Live at the Stables
You've survived the Blizzards, now its
Tickets 8 (you have it so good!!!)

Week 1

Tickets on Sale from Monday Week 1 @ 10am

Monday

The Back to Skool Party @ The Sin Bin

Wear the uniform for one last time...
Tickets 10 bucks a pop (or open an Ulster Bank account and get one for free)
Free Buses leave the Stables from 10pm.

Thursday

The Freshers Ball

Pop Star Party 1 at the Cornmarket
Featuring U2 tribute Mysterious Ways & Ruth Scott (2FM)
End your first week in college in style.....
Tickets 5 yoyos (or open an Ulster Bank account and get one for free)

Tuesday

The Green Sessions # 1

The Blizzards Live at the Stables
Bres and the boys show you how its done
Tickets 8 (Cheap at twice the price)
Doors at 8pm.Band on stage at 9pm.
See You There!

Friday

Do whatever it is you want to do...Personally I think I'll get up early....go for a run....eat some meusliread the Times....shag that I'm staying in bed til 3...grabbin a breakfast roll and watching the Sopranos on dvd.



Being your Classes' Mouthpiece - Life as a Class Rep

ALAN HIGGINS, EDUCATION OFFICE AND CLASS REP GURU

BEING a Class Rep has been an important part of being a student, the Union and the University for a long time. Class Reps act as the link between their class, the Union and the University. In recent years there has been a significant increase in Class Reps, through the efforts of previous Education Officers in promoting and training Class Reps and gaining recognition - all of which are stand to them throughout their time in UL.

The importance of class reps was stressed by one Sabbatical when he said that: 'A poor class reps system reflects poorly on the Union.' In a report which is to be presented to Class Reps Council in Week 2, the main objectives for class rep development for year will be outlined. This and other initiatives reflect the Union's continued commitment to the growth of class reps.

The first of the two key things that were highlighted was identifying the expectations of what a class rep should be doing by the Union, the University and most importantly their class. Another was communication and the importance of the class rep to act as communicator. Second year class rep, Paddy Rockett, identified 'Relaying to the Sabbats students issues' as the most part of being a class rep, but he also enjoyed 'Being able to throw class parties whenever you want for your class!' But it is not just representing your class to the Union, Aoife Breen, enduring member of Class Reps Council says: 'It's a great way to represent the Student Voice to the University'.

Being class rep means great training, a hoodie and a cert for your CV, but it is also helping out your class, organising parties and being the mouthpiece and making sure your class voice is heard in the Union and the University. Aoife Finnerty, outgoing Chair of Class Reps Council describes being a class rep as 'being a part of something bigger, something to help your Class out, classes of the future and sometimes even yourself too'.

St. John Ó Donnabháin, Students' Union President calls on all students to 'think seriously about being a Class Rep, as they play a really important part in student life in UL. You get so much more by getting involved and help make a difference for you class and everyone in the college'.

Every Postgraduate and Undergraduate Course has a right to at least one Class Rep. Nomination Forms are available from the Students' Union Reception and the PSA Common Room.

Lectures and Labs - Home and Away can wait!

ALAN HIGGINS, ULSU EDUCATION OFFICER

It's approaching one o'clock and you have a lecture, lab or tutorial - but then you remember if you go you're not going to find out the latest 'dramatic' fate that awaits the residents of Summer Bay.

While you may be told that Labs, Tutorial and Lectures are 'optional', in reality they are more than hour slots for filling space on your timetable, they are important. In fact they are essential for gaining the full college experience, a good degree and co-op place. They are the three main ways in which you will have contact with Lectures and Tutors in UL, depending on what course you are doing. They are where you are introduced to topics which will enable you to discuss and explore the subject matter of your course.

Lectures involve presentations being given by a lecture who studies in the subject area, they are the ones who will be marking your assignments and correcting your exams - and you'd be surprised who they remember from lectures. The lecture introduces core concepts and ideas to the topic, this is to allow you understand and apply the more complicated aspects. They take place in lecture theatres ranging from 50 to 500 people.

The purpose of labs and tutorials is to allow you to discuss, develop and apply the information you gained from the lectures and most likely from other material you are asked to cover for the course. Given in small groups of about 15, this gives the opportunity to clarify anything you don't understand or to practice material you can draw on for exams or assignments.

The great thing about third level is that you are in charge of your education, so take charge and attend - how else are you going to have the stories of falling asleep in the Monnet or having to stand too close to the Bunsen burner, because of the activities the night before? You may even learn something.

Anyway, Home and Away is repeated at 6:30 on RTÉ Two and there is now the excellent addition of the omnibus on the weekends!!



 Ulster Bank

...here's a better one

€100 cash* when you open and use your Ulster Bank Student Account

Talk to Mike, Sally or Sinead at Ulster Bank on Campus on 061 216260

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

Limited Only By Imagination - Clubs & Societies

PAUL LEE, CLUBS & SOCIETIES DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

WELCOME to the University of Limerick. At the time of this article you will probably have been bombarded with information to assist in your decision making over the first few weeks of college with everything from timetables, "labs", tutorials, registering, ID cards, alcohol, drugs, sex, you name it! It can be a little daunting.

After all you have just left most if not all of your 30-or-so leaving certificate classmates behind and you may not know a soul within your course when you set foot on campus. How do you begin to fit in and see what other opportunities and possibilities are on offer? What are you going to do let off steam? De-stress? Chill out? Or simply meet up with other people?

Well I may be able to put some suggestions your way, which will add to your four year university experience in a less formal and more fun way. I'm sure most of you have various hobbies or sporting interests, which you have probably participated in up until now through your former school, local sports clubs or even the local youth club. In the University of Limerick most of these activities now come in the form of the 34 clubs and 24 societies that we currently have on campus and are run from the Clubs and Societies Office, which is part of the Students Union and located within that building.

I have been employed as the Students Unions Clubs and Societies Development Officer for the last 9 years and my job is to facilitate any students who wish to set up a club or society if it does not exist on campus already and to assist those 58 entities that do exist. This aspect of your university experience

is an excellent avenue to meet new friends, to continue your hobbies or interests sporting or otherwise.

From your capitation contribution for the privilege of coming to UL approx € 61 per student goes towards the running of clubs and



societies from a students union perspective and when you take out wages and administrative costs there is almost €420,000 going directly to subsidise these activities. This is apportioned to the 58 clubs and societies every year, for the likes of buses, coaches, equipment, hostels, etc.

"My advice to you is quite simply join at least one club or society and give it a go."



I work in association with the Arts Officer (Patricia.Moriarty@ul.ie) and the Sports Administrator (Neasa.O'Donnell@ul.ie) who are independently employed by the University directly on the promotion of extra curricular activities for your benefit as well. Both of these departments have access to separate financial streams.



The best part is that all clubs and societies are voluntary and student-run, even though there may be some staff and external memberships these just add stability to the long term future of any club or society. As such you don't have to join if you don't want to but on average the clubs and societies sign up over 3000 members collectively at their recruitment drive each year. A percentage of this membership lapses throughout the year but the core membership remains a substantial figure.

Based on a study a number of years ago it has been ascertained from those respondents (870 in total), that 38% of the drop off is attributed in the main due to the Academic workload here in the University of Limerick and unfortunately for a lot of students their particular course and timetable will exclude them from their chosen activity. The other main reason would be those who have working commitments and are trying to pay their way through college (18%).

So why am I telling you this? Very simple really. Freshers, with their enthusiasm for all things new, tend to join anything up to a half a dozen clubs and societies which artificially inflates membership figures and results in freshers spending money needlessly. If you are one of those who are fortunate enough not to fall into either of the above categories the most clubs

and/or societies you could apply yourself to in any meaningful form would probably be two. BUT don't despair if you cannot take part in "organised" group activities - there are other options through Patricia Moriarty's film club which is on every Monday night in the Jswift (B1023) lecture theatre and Neasa O'Donnell is the sports administrator of the UL Sports Arena complete with gym and 50m pool, and a whole range of fitness related activities. Track both of them down and they will give you the low down on what they can offer you for the year ahead.

All 58 Clubs & Societies will be in the Sports Arena from 6pm-9pm on Wednesday 12th of September (Week 1) to sign up new members, make sure to take the time to ask them what their plans are for the year and then make an informed decision as to which clubs or

societies best sell themselves and capture your imagination. My advice to you is quite simply join at least one club or society and give it a go, you are better to have tried and failed something new in life than never to try it all. If your sole outlet to recreate is through the pub or club scene after your studies, then you really will have wasted your time on campus.

Now that you have had the reality bite as to what clubs and societies is really about and how important it is to have an extra curricular activity of some description... here is the shameless promotion of clubs and societies and what they could offer you the fresher...see pictures!

At the end of the day all clubs and society possibilities are limited only by imagination.

**Paul.lee@ul.ie
Clubs & Societies Development Officer**



A Quick, Slightly Serious And Very Useful Guide Type Thingy For First Years

BY FINN MCDUFFIE

WELCOME to University! I expect you're as apprehensive yet excited as I was when I started at UL only last year. It's a great time in your life. The freedom is going to kick in pretty soon. You've a huge amount to take in over the next month or so. With my first year in mind, here's a quick guide to being a first year and to explain what's what in UL.

Clubs and Societies

Join one club and one society! It's a great way to meet new people. It's a great way to get free stuff. It's a great way to travel. It's a great way to do what you enjoy best. It looks great on your CV. And with so many to choose from in UL - you have no excuse for not joining one!

The Students' Union

Last year I found the ULSU building to be the heart of everything that's going on. But then I'm a bit of a Union-head. The ULSU has five full time sabbatical officers to help you whenever you require help. From welfare to education to campaigns, you've a wealth of support at your fingertips.

Student Paper

An Focal and Review Magazine are the ULSU publications - keep an eye on them for all the latest news and reviews. Better still - join up. It's easy to get your stuff published and we're always on the lookout for new writers. If news is all you're after, the notice-boards are also a great way to find out what's up in UL.

Co-op

This means co-operative education. At some stage you'll spend part of your degree working in an environment which supposedly reflects aspects of your chosen course of study. First years don't really need to worry about it - but just to let you know... we have work experience!

Banks

You'll notice all the banks are out and about this orientation week. Personally, Ulster Bank is the most practical because of its location. It's right in the middle of campus and they provide an excellent, student-orientated service. There's also a Bank of Ireland nearby and an AIB on campus.

Try not to go too mad with the overdraft/loan options - you'll only have to work it off at some stage and plastic is so easy to spend.

The Campus

Thousands of students at any one time. Several fountains (fairly liquid strictly prohibited and may lead to trouble). Lots of buildings. A good library. A restaurant every corner you turn. Five villages. Two castles down by the river Shannon. One main building. A hell of a lot of parkland. And connecting all these things is a great, buzzing atmosphere.

Student Card

You've probably got it by now. Hope the photo didn't turn out too awful. They people that take your picture for the card generally try to sabotage your chances of having a card you can be proud of. If you hate the picture, losing it accidentally-on-purpose doesn't work. They've got that picture on file now and there's nothing you can do about it. Pity really. I look like a twat in mine. Apart from that - have fun with your card - it gets you discounts in Topshop, Topman, Subway, Bus Eireann, HMV and many other stores.

Laptops

It's handy to have one. Saves you queuing in the library for a PC. They're not essential. If you do get one, and you're living on campus - pay for the Internet connection because it's so so handy.

The University Arena

Cool isn't it? But lots of people spend money on the membership and then don't go throughout the year. So be wise. If you're going to go regularly, pay! If you're going to be a casual user, don't pay!

Alcohol Policy

It's an agreement between the students and the University. Basically alcohol is something of which we don't speak. Talk to Paddy McHugh (Campaigns and Services Officer) at the Student's Union for more information (if you dare).

Night Life

Limerick's great! Lots of night-clubs and bars and restaurants. It's not a massive city, but it caters well for our needs and has a great student atmosphere not unlike Galway. There are two buses which are supposed to leave every 15 minutes - but you'll really be waiting 30 minutes.

Your Course/College Choice

Within a few months, you'll probably look back on the Leaving Cert. and wonder what all the fuss was about. Naturally a lot

of first years are doubtful about their choice of course/college. If you decide you really don't like your course - give it a while. You'll notice people dropping out around week 8 but I'd suggest you leave it until you've finished semester one if you really feel the need. UL was my fifth choice but I've had a ball here. No matter where you go to college - it is what you make it. And UL has quite a low drop out rate anyway so the odds are in your favour.

Lectures

The first lecture is overwhelming. Naturally. But if you're still being overwhelmed after week four, you need to see somebody! If you miss a lecture - no problem! If you keep up to date with your reading and attend tutorials - lectures can sometimes seem pointless. But don't miss too many. It leads to drop outs. Remember: Lecturers are approachable, whether at the end of a lecture or during office hours. Emails are also a good idea if you need to contact a lecturer quickly.

Tutorials

You and several others sit in a classroom and part-take in a discussion on one particular topic which you'll have covered in lectures (the previous week generally). You'll find the majority of your companions will be very quiet for the first two or three tutorials! Tutorials are very important though, so do the reading.

Books

As a Law student, I know books really take lumps out of your bank balance. But remember you can just go to the library, borrow a textbook, go to the Students' Union (where you get the cheapest photocopying on campus) buy a photocopy card or two and photocopy until your heart's content.

Assignments

You're in first year. Because you're new and shiny, the lecturers and tutors will go easy on you. Don't fret over that first assignment like I did. It's not worth it! Put in a little work and you're flying. Oh, and very seldom do lecturers award an A1. If you're used to A1s at school - get unfamiliar with them quick because they're damn near unachievable! Unless you're in the top 2% of your class!

QCA

You'll hear a lot about this. It's basically how all your grades add up at the end of each semester. These grades determine the final grade that will appear on your degree. But hear yee this - in first year, whether you get A's or C's all year - your QCA matters little as it is not counted towards your degree. Just don't fail or you'll be back for repeats.

Hope this has been a useful guide. It's a bit tongue in cheek! Overall - strike a balance between work and play. I hope that's everything. If you find that I've missed something, please send me an angry email because they make me laugh (finnmc@gmail.com). If you can't be bothered then get ready to enjoy some of the best years of your life!



ULSU Pres St John O Donnabhain & PSA Pres Emma Murphy outside the SU



UL library

Home Sweet Home

AOIFE BREEN

To many, college is synonymous with partying and drinking, but most of all it's associated with a lack of regulations and complete freedom for the first time from the watchful eye of parent folk. Not for me. The start of college meant getting up in the morning to drive across Limerick with Daddy (who, coincidentally, works in UL as well, but, fortunately for me, with graduate students - something I certainly don't have to worry about, for another year at least anyway).

That's right. I didn't embrace the world of surviving on toasted cheese sandwiches or hot chicken rolls, nor did I inhabit a house with a bathroom that has a ceiling of flaking. I didn't endure the environment of hazardous living amongst empty beer cans and vodka bottles strewn in between a three-week-old take-away from the Pagoda and a Domino's pizza box. I never had to sniff my clothes before putting them on in the morning, unsure of whether they were clean or not, and the thought of putting out the rubbish never crossed my mind. Yes, for college, I live in my comfortable, clean, quiet family home... with a full fridge and a working washing machine.

Having moved out of home for my co-op placement back in 2nd Year - which was in Dublin - and subsequently ditching the country altogether for my Erasmus in Warsaw, it is now possible for me to safely assess the joys and irritations that come with living in the company of my most beloved parents. And there are many of both joys and irritations, I can assure you.

Initially I suppose I can harp on about the wonderfulness of having mammy to do my washing, cleaning and cooking as well as my

general maintenance. She ensures that I eat wholesomely and regularly and allows for five-a-day portions of fruit 'n' veg as well as my three dairy servings that the National Dairy Council of Ireland now advocates.

Meanwhile my living-in-college counterparts must live in a dizzy whirl that forbids them from knowing where their next meal will come from (although it could be narrowed down to the SU shop, the Stables, Superdine or the Pagoda). Vegetables become a treasure of home (usually a very far bus journey away) and a diet established on chips or rice is accompanied by all varieties of chicken. Curried chicken, chicken goujons, roast chicken, southern fried chicken, chicken in breadcrumbs, McChicken Sandwich, chicken nuggets, chicken bites, barbecue chicken, and for the very exotic, stir-fried chicken.

But, let us not forget the staple food of the chicken-orientated student - the Hot Chicken Roll. Sitting in a freshly (or not so freshly) cooked baguette, any student in existence far from his hometown can easily convince his mammy that he ate well: "Yeah, I had chicken and lettuce and sweet corn today." It almost sounds nutritious, and as if a lot of thought went into the preparation of the meal. Cunning, eh?

My chicken-loving friends living on campus must also be without the TLC that only a mother can bring. You know, when you're feeling sorry for yourself and you want someone to bring you tea and toast in bread. Yes, living at home has its perks. I can get all the loving attention that only a mammy can provide. She'll bring my tea, nicely sweetened, and dote on me, fuelling my self-pitying sorrow. Yes, when you're feeling blue, there is nothing like living at home to ensure a speedy recovery.

However, this also has its downsides.

Sometimes mummies can take it too far. Sometimes they can be a bit over-concerned, shall we say. It's only a cold, I'm fine thanks. No, I am going out. But mammy won't take no for an answer.

Another disadvantage that I suffer is that not living on campus means I've been sometimes tucked up in bed for over an hour, due to a lack of things other to do, when friends in Castletroy have decided to drop into the Lodge in pursuit of entertainment. Similarly, they can enjoy the company of many at a moment's notice should they so desire to engage in an evening of frolics and partying. I, however, must wait until the folks leave the country, or the county at least.

On consideration of the many ups and downs of living at home, it is difficult to assess which is more advantageous to the life of a college student. In a way, however, I have the best of both worlds. And any incoming student who will remain in the abode of his parents will too if you follow my humble advice: befriend those who live on campus. That way you don't have to become malnourished, nor do you have to worry about light bulbs or electricity bills, but yet you can still turn up for the party. And because you live at home, you know that when you return to your bed, you won't find a mysterious couple engaging in romantic acts, nor will you have to deal with the unsightly vision of a broken glass and beer-can-ridden kitchen reeking of stale alcohol the morning after, just before you discover someone's eaten your hot chicken roll that was in the fridge. Yes, indeed, living at home has its bonuses. But it's good to know that I've only one year left; after that it's the real world.

Getting Support from those Services

Alan Higgins, SU Education Officer, introduces the many academic support services offered at the UL

One of the great things about college life is that you get to have independence, you get to decide who much, or how little work you do. But independent learning does not mean learning alone. If you are having difficulty with elements of coursework and subject matter or just finding college in general a bit challenging there are a variety of services provided to give you that extra bit of help.

Support Services range from the specific to the broad. There are four learning centres on campus for Maths, Science, Information & Communications Technology (ICT) and Languages. Some of these centres such as the ICT Learning Centre and Language Support Unit provide support or information to all students in the University. If your subject area doesn't have a learning centre contact your department office on learning supports available or your Class Rep to see if a campaign for supports can get started. In the meantime the Students' Union operates a grinds list service, which allows postgrads to offer grinds to undergraduate students in a central location. For more information or to register for grinds, e-mail grinds@ulsu.ie

There are also other supports to deal with more general aspects of academic life. The Centre for Teaching & Learning offers Study Skills Seminars on such things as note-taking and exam techniques. They also provide assessment services on learning styles and personal development. The Library is the heart of academic life; however it can at times feel like a jungle. Don't fear the Library staff and services as they are always willing to help. The Library services also provide seminars and publications on using the library resources and reference material. There is also a wide variety of supports which will help you in all your subject areas.

Unfortunately things also get tough when you are in college and it is important to firstly to recognise when you are in trouble or need a break. A good way to a mix is to join a Club or Society. There are also other student supports designed to help students, including Counselling, Disability Services and a wide variety of other programmes run by both the Students' Union and the University.

No matter what challenges or difficulties you may face know that you're not alone. Ask your Class Rep or drop into the Students' Union. You most defiantly won't be the first to face your particular problem and there is someone who will be able to help you - just ask!!

USEFUL SITES-EDUCATION

Students' Union (for Grinds List and Education Information): www.ulsu.ie

Library: www.ul.ie/~library

Student Affairs Division
(For a variety of Student Support and Services) www.ul.ie/studentaffairs

Student Academic Administration
(For info on Student Records and Regulations) www.ul.ie/studentacademicadmin

Careers and Co-op Website
www.ul.ie/careers

Centre for Teaching and Learning:
www.ul.ie/tandl/

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Learning Centre:
www1.csis.ul.ie/prospest/ictcentre

The Mathematics Learning Centre:
www.ul.ie/~mlc

Language Resource Area:
www.ul.ie/~lcs/languageresourcearea

Science Learning Centre:
www.ul.ie/~slc



Fanta Fuelled

CAITRÍONA MCGRATTAN

UNLIKE most students, I can count on one hand the number of times I've been drunk in my three years in college...NONE!

I haven't had a drink at all in those three years and no before you ask it's not because I'm playing a match tomorrow, or on anti-biotics or driving; I just don't want to!

I made the decision on coming into college back in September 2004 (when we had three pubs, I mean clubs, on campus) not to drink during my college years. I've managed to stick to it, but to be honest I have never really found it difficult, although that could be because I've been accused on several occasions of being the inspiration for Tommy Tieran's 'Fanta fuelled F*ckers' sketch.

The usual reaction from people when they find out I don't drink is "Fair play to you!" I don't think of it like that, it's my decision not to drink as much as it is anyone's decision to drink. College life is so diverse, in your next four, five, six years in college you will get to meet some truly unique people, each with their own quirky habits, best get used to it!

With a doubt I have had some amazing nights out in the Stables, at balls and in the Lodge (contrary to popular belief you don't have to be drunk to get in!) all of which without a drop of drink in me.

Alcohol isn't for me. Some people like it a little, some people a lot, some more than they probably should but each to their own. I will never take issue with someone else's drinking habits so long as they don't do so with mine.

I suppose what I'm trying to say is that yes you can have a brilliant time with drink, but you can have an equally good time without it! So don't be afraid to order a blackcurrant and vodka, hold the vodka any-time soon.

SabbatStalking - what have the SU types been up to lately?

Over the three months of the summer, the sabbats have been working on various things. They've all helped with each other's workloads and this is a list of some of the things they've been doing:

St. John Ó Donnabháin (President) has been working on getting Java's open, the open-air cinema (starting soon!), getting the boathouse open, ongoing Campbell's Catering negotiations, Alcohol Policy negotiations and preparations for the ULSU bicycle scheme.

Judith Lynch (Welfare) organised the recent accommodation campaign including a room of requirement for for accommodation-seekers and got Threshold on board with the campaign, working on the Student Safety campaign including dealing with a recommended taxi company, the upcoming Peer Education Outreach programme and is setting up peer mentoring in conjunction with the Counselling department.

Alan Higgins (Education) has been examining feedback we got last year, consulting with follow officers from around the country and meeting with fellow Sabbats in UL to see how Class Reps can be improved and do the best job for you. He's been developing an Education Policy, which will focus on Transparency in Education. This will be presented to Class Reps Council in the coming weeks and subject to their approval will form his 'programme of work' for the coming year.

Patrick McHugh (Campaigns & Services) has been working on the recent accommodation campaign, refurbishment of the Union reception (Paddy organised it, a company came in to do it!), the ongoing Campbell's Catering negotiations, developments on Java's café and doing work on the alcohol policy strategy.

Seamus Ryan (Publicity & Publications) has been working on getting companies to pay for advertising in SU publications and for on-campus promotions, trying to get the Student Handbook out on time, organised the Freshers bags first years are picking up in Orientation week and getting extra stuff packed into them, the SU orientation video and working on advertising strategy for the SU.

Emma Murphy (PSA President) has organised the refurbishment of the PSA common room (still in progress), sorting problems with the postgrad reading room, organising a PSA e-newsletter and working on the campaign for re-integration between the PSA and the SU.

SabbatStalking

International Education Division



The International Education Division at the University of Limerick extends a warm welcome to all new and returning students, especially international students.

Please feel free to call by to meet the staff in the International Education Office
Location - E00-30

Opening hours 9.00am -5.00pm (closed for lunch 1.00pm-2.15pm)

What do we offer?

The International Education Division (IED) team provide full support to all international students. This support ranges from advice on immigration, working in Ireland, travel, and information on Irish culture, to local customs and social behaviour. International students are invited to meet regularly with IED staff to discuss any issues/queries they may encounter while living and studying in Ireland.

Various Field trips organised throughout the academic year for all international students (i.e. Study Abroad, Exchange, Erasmus, full-time non-EU undergraduate and taught postgraduate students)

Full information on an academic semester abroad for all Irish and international undergraduate students (funded placements!)

Information and assistance on North American Financial Aid applications

Full international student orientation programme

The international Education division has appointed a cultural assistant to assist in the integration of students from the Peoples Republic of China into the local community.

A friendly face and ear all year around.

Contact us:

Room E-0030 (Main Building, E Block, O level, Room number 30)

Phone 061 202414 Fax 061 213062

Web: www.ul.ie/internationaleducation

Email: int.ed@ul.ie

Is there a "You" in USI?

APPARENTLY with the SUnionites rolling down to Waterford for UOS training with USI, one of the hot hot topics at the seminar was whether UL would take the plunge and rejoin the fold that they left a decade and a half ago. Well, what would you expect really. USI and UL didn't even talk to each other for around ten years and suddenly we're going to their parties, sorry, training weeks and getting all palsy walsy with them so it's not too odd for them to wonder if we're going to do more than give them the odd affectionate shoulder rub. Last year's exec was pretty USI friendly and it's hard to tell with this year's crop as some of them are remaining pretty tight-lipped on the whole prospective affair. Still, at best guess, El Presidente St.John appears pretty in favour of rejoining the collective, as does Alan Educator, and that's what you'd expect from the returning incumbents from last year. Emma Autonomous Postgrad seems pretty vehemently and viciously against the idea, as one would expect from the head of the cash-poor PSA while Seamus Propaganda looks as though he's a wee bit against the idea, which is hardly surprising from the only one to remember why UL left in the first place. It seems USI Fuhrer Richie Morrisoe advised the Autonomous Postgrad not to rejoin the SU (more on that later) but we can't tell whether he hoped to keep a stern "no" out of the collective when the USI discussion comes up or if hwas actually looking out for postgrad interests. Meanwhile Patrick Drumbeater and Judith Welfarist don't appear to be giving away snippets of their views too publically at all, though Paddy must have some view as an ex-Tralee IT student. Who knows what way the cookie will crumble on this one but it's sure to come up at Class Reps Council again this year. If it does, and we're predicting it will, we hope the USI case will be put a little slicker than the "ah go on, go on, go on" we got last year from the USI rep, understandably followed by "no, shag off" from most of the smattering of class reps who were pushed enough to give an opinion. Mark our words, it'll be brought up again so prospective class reps, have an opinion one way



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

or the other ready.

Big Badass Screen!

Given the propensity of the weather in Ireland to piddle down upon you when you least expect it, opening an open-air cinema here might seem like the craziest idea since some Madison Avenue guru reckoned selling snow to Eskimos was viable. Now it's not something we're used to doing as people who take joy in poking fun at misfortune but after the SU managed to sell El Presidente's idea to the Strategic Fund we're willing to put our hands up to say well done. Ailish Moneybags Quinlan (UL's VP/Finance for the uninitiated) isn't accustomed to handing out money to pyramid schemes

and the like (just the odd Living bridge). Hence we're happy that the SU managed to convince her that handing 18 grand over to the great unwashed to buy a big screen so they could watch old movies while sitting on the floor was a good idea. Nice and all it is to spend the evening in the local local and emerge at midnight getting sick all over the pavement, UL needs a few alternatives in the line of entertainment if Don Godfather Barry's idea of a fluffy campus community is going to be more than hot air. We do demand first play rights if they figure out that having a big dirty schreen in the SU courtyard should really be used for better things like Nintendo Wii play though. While we're being all happy and complimentary (don't get

used to it), it's good to see a bit of effort going on to get some extra cash in from the college to fulfil a few election desires. The SU's educationalist Alan Higgins is looking for uni moolah for researchers to find out what students want (and let's face it, uni authorities have spent money on far worse like extra fountains) while propaganda editor Seamus Ryan wants college cash for some sort of limited radio station on campus. Both are manifesto aims so hopefully the cash will be provided. Nailing our colours hard to the mast, stuff that actually helps students and helps students stay sane is money that the college should stump up for and if they can spend 70 grand (no we're not kidding) on an antivirus solution for the college, they

can surely spend a few quid on a bit of research and a bit of daytime activity and entertainment for the kids. It's that 'community campus' again Don & Ailish, make it happen or we won't believe you!

PSA -autonomous, you know

Another year rolls round and yet again the PSA question comes up. They're in the Su but they're outside the SU and they get their own budget directly from head office (ie the White House) and they pay for themselves and because of that they have no money. And very little accountability for the pittance of pennies they do have. The

Great Schism between the SU and the PSA happened out of a personality conflict between people long-gone and the feeling that the SU just didn't care enough about postgrads. Of course, with 90 votes in the last PSA election it seems that postgrads don't care very much about postgrads either and the biggest hurdle the PSA will have if they choose to advocate rejoining the fuzzy happy SU collective is actually getting 30 postgrads in a room at once to discuss it before voting one way or another. It doesn't involve the far more important issue of the common room running low on milk the odd time so the older types may well not be up to turning up with a view. Time will tell.

Contact us!

Hoping as we were for one of those nice new shiny @ulsu.ie email addresses, it's back to gmail for us at Ivory Throat Towers for verifiable anonymity so if you've got a hot scoop for us or just feel like chewing the crud, drop us a line at ulthroat@gmail.com. Unlikely as you are to change the world by telling us about that night you snogged a sabbat or what part the Illuminati play in running our esteemed zone of learning and research, we'd like to hear from you anyway just to know you're tuning in. And yup, that goes for UL high-ups too, we know you all read us on Sunday mornings when you're supposed to be at Mass so drop us a line and say "whoopee"!



SO, WHAT DO YOU DO IN COLLEGE?



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

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

CLASS REPS COUNCIL- A STUDENT LIFE LESS ORDINARY

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

An Gaeilgeoir!

BREANDÁN Ó HÉAMHAIGH

DIA dhiabh go léir agus fáilte go hOllscoil Luimnigh! Tá sibh ag léamh an píosa seo ar bhur gcéad seachtain ar an Ollscoil. Seo tús thuras iontach, agus beidh an-chuid craic agaibh idir seo agus deireadh do thréimhse Ollscoille.

Is mise Breandán Ó hÉamhaigh, Oifigeach na Gaeilge 2006/2007. Obraíom anseo chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn I measc na Mic Léinn agus foireann an Aontais, agus ag suigh ar choistí ghaeilge na hOllcoille chun taobh na Mic Léinn a chur chun chinn.

I rith na Bliaina eagraíonn an Aontas imeachtaí ghaeilge I gomhpairt leis an gCumann Gaelach san Ollscoil, agus Aonad na Gaeilge. Rud mhór atá againn na Tolglann na Gaeilge in Aontas na mac Léinn. Tá an Tolglann ann chun deis a thabhairt do mhic léinn teacht le chéile agus gaeilge a labhairt. Bíonn tae agus café ann, agus is féidir leat teacht isteach agus cupán tae a ól is tú ag labhairt le do

chairde.

Tá bunreacht agus polsáithe an Aontais aistriúithe go Gaeilge, agus is féidir leat do ghnó a dhéanamh leis an Aontas trí mheán na Gaeilge. Bíonn eolas ag an Oifigeach Ghaeilge faoi gach rud atá ag tarlú I saol na Gaeilge timpeall na tíre, so má tá suim agat in aon rud atá ag tarlú chuir scairt ar an Oifigeach Ghaeilge: gaeilge@ulsu.ie

Tá Paisean Faisean ag lorg daoine don sraith nua. Má tá suim agat, seol r-phost c h u i g paiseanfaisan@hotmail.com. Tá siad ag lorg daoine chun dul ar chlár Aerach a bhéidh á thaifeadh I mBaile Átha Cliath ag deireadh Mhí Meán Fomhair.

Sin é an nuacht, agus an scéal.

Bhain sult as bhur chuid bliainta in Ollscoil Luimnigh, agus tá súil agam go feicfidh mé timpeall na háite sibh!

Beir Bua is beannacht, Breandán Ó hÉamhaigh, Oifigeach na Gaeilge, 2006/07 Uachtarán an Cumann Gaelach, 2005/07

Is féidir leis a theanga féin a úsáid.
An féidir leat?



Bain úsáid as do theanga féin!
Labhair an Ghaeilge

Just your average sex column

ALEXANDRA GAVIGAN

FOR my first column I thought I'd do something original and write about firsts - yes please enjoy the wonderful irony of my first column relating to firsts... I already have.

A first date, a first kiss, a first sexual encounter. Any Relationships is filled with firsts, some so good and some so bad. But what is it about firsts that make them exciting? Why after the first do things start to fade? And why after all that build-up can some firsts be such a let down?

Why do we get such a buzz from our first time with someone new? You catch his eye and smile, you get a smile back and you know you're in. All you have to do is wait for him to come over and offer to buy you a drink (or if he's a tight arse, make the move to tongue you there and then). There's this glow from someone new, this sense of excitement. Why? That's pretty simple - in any girl's (or boy's head) this newbie is perfect. There isn't a single thing that you can say is wrong with them.. therein lies the problem. You don't know them. I know that in my head I decide (and mostly invent) who this guy is without knowing him properly. That's why he's so wonderful and why I can't seem to get enough of him. For some strange reason he always tends to be a cross between Johnny Depp as Jack Sparrow (for the quirkiness and humour rather than the latent homosexuality) and Ryan Philippe as Sebastian Valmont (for the ridiculous charm and intelligence rather than the shagging everything that walks) but that aside... he's the perfect figment of my imagination. Then I figure out that the newbie is normal with a kind of dense immaturity and an annoying laugh. Oh well.

Something that I've been thinking about a lot recently is the big first. Why was my first time having sex with someone such a letdown? There was all this anticipation - I mean I'd been seeing the guy for months, I was crazy about him, I was in love and I'd waited for years. So here I was waiting for fireworks and I got embers. Why? Well to be perfectly honest I blame TV, Chic Lit and me, all at the same time. Here's why.

Expectations. We all have them and that's fair enough but when your expectations come from fallacy and exaggeration you're in for a major fall. Your first time will rarely be anything like the first times enjoyed by your favourite heroes and heroines - it will be more like the Seth/Summer version - awkward, a bit sore and not much fun. Like I said I blame TV and Chic Lit for giving these false images of the first time and I blame me for believing them!

I also blame me for not knowing myself well enough to help the guy out. Men aren't miracle workers. If you don't know what you want how the hell are they meant to? Spare a thought for these poor guys who, coupled with wanting to enjoy what's about to happen have this incredibly complex job ahead of them to make sure you enjoy it too! He's not going to know just by looking at you. It's a trial and error thing and I say try, try, and try some more till you get it right!

Shannon decision a fatal mistake for Mannion's career

DEREK DALY

THE unfortunate decision taken by Aer Lingus management in ceasing the Shannon-Heathrow route from January 2008 could yet be the most unfortunate decision that Dermot Mannion has overseen in his career at Aer Lingus. TD from all over the west coast, Seanadóiri, Councillors, MEP and the flying public are amongst those to brand the decision a disaster for the region, an out and out disgrace and against the national interest. With increasing pressure on the government, both from within and outside to abstain from any vote; Mannion's position as Aer Lingus CEO is under threat of extinction. So as opposed to looking to the future flying Belfast to London Heathrow; this Fianna Fáiler recons the board of Aer Lingus' time would be much better spent looking for a new CEO.

With the college year starting this week, I can't help but wonder how many international and ERASMUS students might have used this service on their journey to UL. This is why UL Ógra Fianna Fáil will be holding a discussion on the issue in the Students' Union (Room 3) on Tuesday

September 18 at 6pm. We expect to discuss a way forward with ideas coming from all present. A number of public reps will be invited to attend.

The Con Colbert Cumann of Ógra Fianna Fáil would like to take this opportunity to welcome all new students to UL and of course everyone returning too!!

As an aside; Brian Crowley MEP will be attending a meeting at the Castletroy Park Hotel on Monday week 1 (September 10) at 7pm for anyone interested in coming along, please email ul@ogra.ie so that refreshments can be organised for sufficient numbers.



Out in UL LGBT Society

NIALL JORDAN

OUT in UL LGBT Society is a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender society on UL campus. We seek to provide a safe and friendly environment for gay and questioning students and faculty. We offer a safe place for students who are in and out of the closet, questioning or just wanting to offer support, to come along and relax. We also organise fundraising events for organisations in Limerick that help the community.

In the past we've organised bowling nights, trips to meet with the LGBT Society in UCC, and first-ever Christmas event 'Santa's Big Gay Snowballs' and lots more besides. Last year we attended the first ever UCC Students Gay Ball and went to 'Freakscene's' 13th birthday. We have lots more planned for this year including more trips to our fellow societies and to Baby Blue Training - a fun packed weekend, with

workshops and social events, organised for all LGBT societies not in the USI.

Our annual event, 'Queerbash' will be celebrating its 5th birthday this year and so we hope to see as many of you there as possible! It is a charity event, which raises funds for organisations in Limerick. This year we hope to have it even bigger than ever and double the fun! Planning is well underway and the more opinions heard the better we can make it! So whether you are gay or just gay friendly come and join us at our weekly meetings!

Out in UL LGBT representatives also marched in Limerick's recently resurrected Pride Parade last Saturday September 1. This saw people from all over marching with Pride and it is hoped that we can arrange for an even bigger showing next year.

We hold weekly meetings where you can meet others for a laugh and to find out what's happening in the society. These meetings offer us all the chance to help make the society a more friendly and fun place to be. To get in touch e-mail the society at outinul@yahoo.ie or visit our website <http://heaven.skynet.ie>. With that from all of us here in Out in UL we hope that you all have a brilliant time here at UL.

Campus Sport

Vikings Win Shamrock Bowl

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

UL Vikings defeated the Cork Admirals 22-14 on July 29 in front of a home crowd at UL Sports Grounds to claim the Shamrock Bowl, the championship game of the Irish American Football League.

The Admirals got off to the better start. The Vikings defense had prevented a couple of previous attempts but they couldn't stop Keith O'Callaghan getting the opening touchdown on a 3 yard run to the left of the Admirals offensive line. Pezeron converted for a 8-0 early lead. Vikings responded though with a touchdown from Seamus Hogan on a 5 yard run up the middle. Quarterback Chris Bassitt got the conversion to level affairs. The second quarter was one where defenses dominated.

O'Sullivan, O'Donnell, Laffan and O'Carroll were impressive for the Vikings. The sides were level 8-8 at the half time interval.

A turnover won by the Admirals resulted in a touchdown after the break. Receiver Dominic McHale was the scorer to give the Rebel outfit a 14-8 advantage. Once again the Vikings fought back. Hogan grabbed his second touchdown running up the middle on a draw play. The single point conversion gave UL a slender lead. The Vikings defense held firm as the man of the moment Hogan struck again. He completed his hat trick following a 5 yard sweep to the right. A single point conversion stretched the Limerick lead to 22-14. With minutes to go the Limerick defensive line withstood an extended attack from the Cork forwards to give the UL Vikings the national title for

the first time.

The UL Vikings team has been existence since 1999 and is one of only two university teams in the Irish American Football League. The Limerick side had the best record of any team in the league this year, winning seven of their eight group games. After beating the Belfast Bulls in their semi-final, the final game against the Cork Admirals was something of a grudge match as their only league loss this year was a 30-0 defeat to the Admirals in the group stages in April.

This was a well deserved victory and a fantastic achievement for a club which only three years ago lost every game in the league with a weakened side. Seamus Hogan won the MVP as the Vikings claimed their first national title.



Vikings Hogan was the star of the show

UL Hurling Club In Disciplinary Controversy

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

THIS summer UL hurling club hit the headlines for all the wrong reasons. The club became embroiled in lengthy disciplinary proceedings arising out of the participation of Kieran Joyce in the All-Ireland Intermediate hurling final in March.

As this is such a complex case it is necessary to go back to the start. On 27th February and 9th March Kieran Joyce lined out at corner back for UL in the Fitzgibbon Cup (for Senior hurlers). They were knocked out at the semi final stage. After this UL hurling club received clearance from Croke Park to play the Kilkenny man in the All-Ireland Intermediate final. Croke Park were not informed though that Joyce played in the Fitzgibbon Cup. On 29th March

Joyce played at centre half back for the victorious UL team overcoming LIT in Kilmallock. GAA followers will know that once you play senior for your club it immediately rules out playing intermediate in the same year. His participation in this final raised a few eyebrows especially among keen UL GAA observers. Subsequently An Focal published an article on 17th April questioning Joyce's involvement in the game.

The saga took a further twist during the summer months. On 29th May the GAA confirmed that Joyce had played illegally and handed down 12 week suspensions not only to Joyce but also club chairman Peter Tiernan and club secretary Brendan Bugler. This brought a new element to the case. Bugler, last year's UL senior captain, had been a major part of Clare's championship team all summer.

This ban would rule him out of the All-Ireland series. Of the suspended trio Bugler had the most to lose. The club was informed that they had the right to appeal to the CHC which they chose to exercise. This hearing was originally scheduled for 29th June but with some

officials out of the country UL requested an adjournment. The meeting was re-scheduled for July 3. This was where the courts came in.

Tiernan claimed the club were not given a fair chance to present their case so they went to the High Court. On July 3 UL hurling club won a temporary injunction restraining the CHC holding disciplinary proceedings. This allowed Bugler to line out for the Banner. In an affidavit Peter Tiernan claimed that the club through inadvertence had discovered that they had not relayed the full details to Croke Park. Also he said they no choice but to go to the High Court. The club wanted to have the meeting put off until September. In the following days the GAA went to the courts and had the decision reversed. The CHC meeting was set for a date in late July. UL hurling club paid for all court costs.

Details after this are sketchy as there has been no concrete press release from Croke Park. The latest unconfirmed reports suggest that Bugler had his suspension overturned. The word from Kilkenny is that Joyce has served his suspension and is available to play for his club Rower Instioige in September. What the GAA have said is that the matter is ongoing and a statement will be issued in due course. An Focal will have more on this story in the coming weeks.

UL Sports Roundup

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

Kennedy Cup

UL hosted the Kennedy Cup in June. The Kennedy Cup is a soccer tournament involving schoolboy teams from all across the country. The Dublin District Schoolboy League won the title defeating the Cork League 2-0 in the final.

Irish Rugby

The Irish rugby team in preparation for the World Cup trained in the UL bowl during the summer. The squad attracted big crowds for a week in July as they went through their paces ahead of the tournament which begins this month.

UL Bohs

UL Bohs don't start their season until 27th October. They begin with a home tie against UCD and will be hoping to replicate the form of last term.

Email

Any comments, questions or queries? Don't be afraid to email your views to mossy.mccarthy@gmail.com Also we are always on the look out for new sportswriters.

Silver at World University Games

AN FOCAL REPORTER

NIAMH Kitching, who graduated last week from UL with a degree in PE, won a silver team medal in golf on August 17 at the World University games in Bangkok. The Irish team, made up of Kitching, Danielle McVeigh (Texas A&M University) and Gillian O'Leary (UCC) went into the fourth round eight shots clear of Great Britain in second place but over the course of the final eighteen holes, the Irish and British dropped shots while the Mexicans, Americans and Japanese all made significant gains. The Irish team finished second, one shot behind gold-winners Mexico and a single shot ahead of the USA in third place. Kitching holed a four-foot putt on the final hole to keep the Irish in medal contention. She also came 18th in the individual competition while teammate McVeigh took the individual gold medal, the first Irish athlete to win gold at the University Games since Sonia O'Sullivan in 1991. UL was also represented by David Coombes as part of the soccer squad and David McCarthy in



OPC Visit Croagh Patrick

THERE are some experiences in life which people will not forget in a hurry. Since its founding the outdoor pursuits club has seen many of these experiences ever year. One experience which will never be forgotten occurred on the last Sunday of July when the Outdoor pursuits club traveled to Croagh Patrick for the annual pilgrimage. An Focal talked to Cillian Burke from the OPC to discover the adventures shared on the trip.

For those readers who are not aware, Croagh Patrick is a holy pilgrimage which takes place every year in July. Thousands of people flock from all parts of the country to climb to the top of this mountain for the prayer services. With the constant stream of people climbing this mountain, there is a great need for first aid and ambulance services to be on alert. This year saw the OPC team up with the Irish Cave Rescue Organisation (ICRO) at the first aid HQ at the foot of the mountain.

For the OPC it was an exciting time. Cillian told An Focal that the team was buzzing upon arrival. 'It was brilliant to see the looks a bunch of Students like us got when we pulled into the Car park with 'Moby Dick' the great white van it was a real eye catcher'. We left it parked amongst all the Rescue response vehicles and ambulances overnight' Cillian also went onto tell An Focal about their experience of late night arrival. The Joy of pitching a tent at half twelve at night can never be underestimated.

Rising very early in the morning is something which the members of the OPC are used to at this stage. However there was something different about waking at a very early hour up at the foot of this beautiful mountain. 'There is something magical about waking up at five thirty in the morning looking out of your tent and seeing the first Rays of Sunlight hitting 'the Reek' and a steady column of Pilgrims making their way to the Top'.

After packing the Club tents and gear the OPC were greeted by the Air Corps who decided to land one of the soon to be retired Alouette III Helicopters in the field just across from them. 'What an

alarm call' told Cillian, as the team were organising their First aid Equipment they were lucky to get some of our heavier items airlifted up to the Order of Malta field hospital. When the helicopter returned the OPC members were given a fully guided tour of it by Red the pilot who seemed to love giving all the Specifications and information as much as the team enjoyed listening to it. Those members who were volunteering with ICRO got their briefing after a hearty breakfast provided by the lovely ladies from Sligo Civil Defence.

The ICRO group were placed on standby and as we were organising our First aid Equipment we were lucky to get some of our heavier items airlifted up to the Order of Malta field hospital. When the helicopter returned we were given a fully guided tour of it by Red the pilot who seemed to love giving us all the Specifications and information as much as we enjoyed listening to it.

The team then hiked up to the field hospital and collected the rest of their gear before taking up their position on the mountain after being assigned to do so by MMRT, joining the Tramore cliff and Sea Rescue team while hiking up the mountain.

'What a strange experience it is to be on a mountain that is black with people climbing up and down', Cillian told us. 'We saw it all- men women and children wearing everything under the sun. The variety was endless and we saw: the lads who left the night club under the influence of the 'Mountain dew' wearing their going out shirts stumbling and sobering up, a 12-year-old girl from Wexford climbing barefoot as tradition dictates, local farmers decked out in their wellies and tweed jackets, Women in summer dress short skirts and stilettos to mention but a few'. Cillian then went on to say 'As was expected Lots of people were carrying sticks and the range was great, ash plants, sweeping brush handles, walking poles and walking sticks were all on display'. Many people were overheard discussing the advantage of their model over that being carried by another pilgrim.

All members of the OPC were busy dispensing first aid and helping anyone who needed a hand. Their duties included Walking and supporting those who were finding journey tough off the mountain. Some stretchering naturally was also carried out during the course of the day. A small number of pilgrims had to be airlifted off the mountain. Luckily there were no injuries which were too serious to heal.

The OPC are delighted and proud to have worked with the ICRO as Cillian told us.

'Our day of volunteering on Croagh Patrick or 'the Reek' was an experience like no other and with the help of God we will be back next year helping out in whatever way we can'.

The OPC is one of the most active and social clubs on Irelands Sporting campus. Hill Walking, Rockclimbing, Caving and Orienteering are all offered by the club. On campus the indoor climbing wall in the



Old sports Building is where you can meet up with us and get club information. The Wall is open every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from seven to ten for all club members. We also cater for younger members of the climbing community on

Wednesdays when we hold our Kiddies night from six to nine. Every weekend the club holds a trip giving all club members the chance to see many of Irelands most beautiful unspoilt spots. We travel to counties Cork, Clare, Kerry, Waterford, Galway and

many others exploring, climbing and above all having fun.

Look up our club message board and website on www.uopc.com for all details about what is going on and to view club photos.

RWC 2007 Preview - New Zealand Won't Have It All Their Own Way

CONOR MCGRATH looks at the contenders for this year's tournament.

FINALLY the Rugby World Cup 2007 is upon us. After the intense build up to the World Cup stretching back to the 2005 Autumn Internationals, we are finally being treated to the pinnacle event of world rugby. This World Cup has the makings of a great one. New Zealand are the supreme favourites as their form since the Lions tour has been awesome. They will not have it their own way though. Nations such as South Africa, Australia, England and Wales will surely put it up to the All Blacks. The French are the hosts and have home advantage which will be a crucial factor should they reach the latter stages. The Irish also have a reasonable chance of lifting the Web Ellis trophy but they will have to get out of a very tough pool first, before there can be any talk of a World Cup triumph.

The Southern Hemisphere nations such as New Zealand, South Africa and Australia, usually dominate this event. This trend does not look like stopping anytime soon. New Zealand will be incredibly hard to stop but this is a position which is all too familiar to them. They have a tendency to peak before the World Cup and not during it. This time players like Richie McCaw, Dan Carter and Aaron Mauger will be determined to insure that New Zealand will be the defending champions in 2011. Australia are the only team to have beaten the All Blacks this year and they also knocked them out in the semi-finals in 2003. They have an ageing squad though which could become a thorn in their side. Their pool match against Wales in Cardiff will tell us a lot about their chances. The South Africans have been building nicely towards this World Cup. They are the dark horses as they have a successful and highly experienced squad. They have the ability to score tries with the pacy Bryan Habana and their forwards include incredibly talented players such as Schalk Burger and John Smit. They have an easy pool which means that

a semi final spot is practically guaranteed. Argentina are also dangerous, especially from an Irish perspective. However, a quarter final spot should prove to be too great a challenge for them.

The Northern Hemisphere teams have a great chance of keeping the Web Ellis trophy in Europe for another 4 years. The French are the most likely team to do this. They have home advantage which is just so crucial in these events. Their recent form has been worrying for everyone else. Their scrum and lineout just looks unstoppable at the moment. They will easily reach the semi finals if they beat us in St Denis which looks highly likely. England are the defending champions but they just do not possess the quality or the squad to trouble any of the top teams. They should be content with an unlucky quarter final knockout. Wales are a good team but events may have conspired against them. One feels that this World Cup has come 2 years late for them considering their grand slam in the 2005 Six Nations. Their form looks to have evaporated from them and they have looked vulnerable in recent games against France and Australia. Now we come to the Irish. In usual fashion, our hopes rest on key players such as Brian O'Driscoll, Gordon D'Arcy, David Wallace and Ronan O'Gara. The Irish have an extremely tough group and face an uphill task against the extreme physicality of the Argentinians and the fearsome flair of the French. We need to beat the French if we are to have any hopes of winning the event. This is because the losers of the group will probably play the All Blacks while the winners will most likely face the Scottish. I hate to say it but there is no chance of us beating a full strength New Zealand team in this period of time. We should beat Argentina and earn a quarter final place despite the negative vibes in recent weeks. We desperately need to beat the French if our audacious dream is to be lived. New Zealand are the outright favourites but the smart money is on South Africa.

Full Force Ahead for UL Cho's Tae Kwon Do

NORAH PATTEN

EXCITING times ahead as always for the UL Tae Kwon Do Club this semester and there really has never been a better time to get involved. We would like to say welcome back to everyone and for those of you who are just beginning, the very best of luck. Tae Kwon Do is a martial art, which combines physical training with personal discipline, unifying body and mind. Training sessions include mastering the art of the traditional techniques as well as sparring, kicking, punching and conditioning. Beginners are always welcome to join, with the club

hosting a range of abilities from white belts (beginners) to black belts. The range of abilities and expertise at each training session is the key to the success of the club, and we would encourage anybody with an interest to come and join in. The rewards of practising Tae Kwon Do are not just the improvements in physical fitness and wellbeing, but also a sense of personal achievement. Personally, I find the training sessions very enjoyable, with various aspects of the sport taught at each class, you are sure to learn new techniques or improve existing ones. With two gradings per academic year, with hard work and motivation (and of course a lot

of fun along the way), it's not long before a few belts are achieved.

This semester, the UL Tae Kwon Do Club will host a range of activities and social events, making it an excellent opportunity to get to know others. Events include a training weekend in Glasgow, Scotland in early October (12th - 14th), where a number of club members will travel for a specially arranged training camp (we would encourage new members to attend this camp). UL Tae Kwon Do will host the Munster Championships, also in October (20th), when various clubs from around Munster will travel to the University of Limerick for the weekend.

Participants at the championships will have the ability to compete in various events including sparring, patterns and team events. This will hopefully prove to be an exciting weekend for everybody, both participants and spectators. UL Tae Kwon Do will also host a table quiz on Wednesday week 6, with lots of prizes and a superheroes theme, it will no doubt be a fun filled night for all, as well as raising valuable funds for the club. Everyone is welcome. In mid-November, a club member, Mr Mike Johnson, will travel to the AIMAA Instructors Boot Camp in Hawaii, to grade for his 2nd degree black belt. With club grading in December, it really



looks to be an exciting and fun filled time for the UL Tae Kwon Do Club. We would love to see new members joining this semester and would encourage anyone with an interest to come and join in or watch a training session to get an overview of what Tae Kwon Do is all about. With a 4th degree black belt instructing the class and several other black belt members, there is a

range of knowledge and expertise at hand.

Training takes place in the old sports hall (behind the Lonsdale) and times are as follows: Monday 18.45 - 20.15, Wednesday 21.00 - 22.00 and Thursday 18.30 - 20.00. You can also look up our BEBO site at: <http://www.bebo.com/ULTKD>

Kayak Club: Calling All Freshers!

UL Kayak Club is one of the most prominent and active clubs within the university. Newcomers can expect to head to all corners of the country over the year, on trips to improve their skills. The club runs several annual trips. The first (and often the most scandalous!) trip is in week 3, when we all head off to Lahinch, for some surfing...and LOTS of craic in ridiculous costumes! This trip sees thousands of paddlers (well, maybe not thousands, but still a good crowd!) descend on the beach and style it up on the waves. Then later we shall all get to know each other, in fancy dress, over a few civilised beverages!

Then in November, it's down to Killarney for the first river running trip of the year on the Caragh river. The Caragh is a great river to learn on and has something to offer everyone so no need to worry that you're not quite Olympic standard yet! (There are still some diehards who are training for the 1984 Olympics...keep on truckin guys!) And then it's time to get your gladrags on, and off with you into Mustang Sallys for some crazed dancing and possibly some more civilised beverages!

Christmas time means one thing...Wicklow! And everyone gone mental! And lots of layers of fleecy clothes! But

the cold is soon forgotten as you settle into the Annemoe river, which ends with Jackson Falls. Jacksons is a pushy drop ending in a nice meaty hole...lovely...but it will leave you so pumped that you won't be able to blink! Seriously! Night time guest appearances from Elvis (the real one), and gender confused Vikings, not to mention unorthodox birthday celebrations were just a few of the tales from last year's Wicklow trip!

A trip to Wales during the holidays sees a massive improvement in everyone's paddling abilities. ULKC descends upon the Tweryn slalom course and styles it up! Carlsberg don't do paddling trips, but if they did...

Then in Semester 2, Sligo falls prey of the kayak club! Another surfing trip, and also another brilliant trip! At this stage in the year people's confidence levels are up, and so there's no holding back. Whether it's the party wave in Tuam, where we stop en route to Sligo, or surfing on the beaches of Iniscroin, tag rugby on the sand, or just a good time your after, this is one trip you don't want to miss!

Then before you know it, it's time for THE BIG ONE! Every year ULKC runs an international summer trip. France, Italy, Slovenia, Austria, Switzerland, Uganda, Norway! You name it, we've

been there! Big water. Big rivers. Big time craic! This trip will leave you on such a high, that you'll spend the rest of your summer reminiscing and dying to jump back into a boat! It's one trip that you

won't soon forget!

So if you're a fresher, or you're returning to UL, make sure to drop into us at the Clubs and Socs sign-up night! And check out our website kayak.csn.ul.ie

Give It A Lash Quiz

Liam Togher (aka Jimmy Magee) tests your sporting knowledge.

- Who scored Liverpool's goal in the Champions League final in May?
- Name the four teams that have won the Premiership since it started in 1992.
- When did Clare last reach the All-Ireland hurling final?
- At which English ground was the 2003 UEFA Champions League final played?
- Who won golf's US Open in April?
- Who knocked UL out of last year's Fitzgibbon Cup?
- Who is the only man to captain and manage World Cup-winning teams?
- What Spanish club did Liverpool beat in the 2001 UEFA Cup final?
- In which year did Dublin last win Sam Maguire?
- How long did it take Bernard Dunne to lose his recent fight to Spanish boxer Kiko Martinez?
- Who was Ireland manager before Steve Staunton?
- Do the Toronto Maple Leafs play baseball or ice hockey?
- Juventus are based in which Italian city?
- Who did Brazil beat in the 2002 World Cup final?
- At what stadium did Munster win the Heineken Cup?

There's Only One Eamon Dunphy

TOMÁS MCCARTHY

On Kevin Kilbane:

'Kilbane's head is better than his feet. If only he had three heads, one on the end of each leg.'

On Mick McCarthy:

'He's one of the biggest whingers in world football...he's a bloody eejit.'

On John Giles:

'Usually it takes a bottle of Bacardi and a gallon of Coke to get John out of his seat.'

On Niall Quinn:

'Niall Quinn is a creep, the man is an idiot.'

On Roy Keane:

'I don't have to listen to you callin Roy Keane a thug, he's the greatest Irish player ever these fellas weren't even in the same class (pointing at Giles and Brady).'

On Luis Garcia:

'They should put Garcia where he belongs- in the dustbin.'

On Djibril Cisse

'Here we have Cisse right wing, attempts to put in a cross, BANG...hits the full back, again BANG hits the full back, BANG.. off the full back again, and once more, BANG... smacks the full back again...millions of euro and he can't clear the first man, I mean what's he trying to do to the full back here, kill him??'

On Harry Kewell:

'Fat and a clown. A fat clown for all I see.'

On Rod Liddel:

'I tell ye who said it, it was Rod Liddel, let me tell ye something about him Bill, he left his wife and ran off with a

ANSWERS TO SPORTS QUIZ
 Dirk Kuyt, Man United, Arsenal, Chelsea, Blackburn, 2002, Old Trafford, Zach Johnson, LIT, Franz Beckenbauer, Alves, 1995, 86 seconds, Brian Kerr, Ice hockey, Turin, Germany, Millennium Stadium, Cardiff

Great Music, Great Image, Great Band

The Blizzards' Lead Vocalist Niall Breslin Talks To An Focal

BY FINN MCDUFFIE

Rain. All bloody summer! It's no wonder Irish bands are naming themselves after Ireland's plight. Bands like, say, The Blizzards. While talking last week to Niall Breslin (Nicknamed Bressie), The Blizzards' lead vocalist and guitarist, I learned the band is so named because 'a lot of snow' was stopping them from loading their equipment into a venue once. Now you're possibly wondering how The Killers decided their name? Me too.

The Blizzards have released one album to date (A Public Display of Affection). I've listened to the album over and over and the music's really catchy! When I asked Bressie about this he remarked, 'I think songs are meant to be catchy or touching... [Our] songs tend to be catchy 'cos they're the kind of influences we have.' Bressie admits he's a follower of The Clash, Frank Sinatra and a UK band called The Cribs, whose album is 'fantastic'. Bressie describes The Blizzards' music as, 'quirky, high octane power-

pop [that] anyone can like.' 'Kids can be a great judge of catchiness,' he adds, explaining that his toddler son sometimes sings along.

Friends for 20 odd years, The Blizzards decided to 'kick off' three years ago. 'We wouldn't have taken it so seriously if we hadn't stirred so many people,' says Bressie. The attention the Mullingar band received sparked daily practice sessions. The band 'started "gigging" very early too.' Their big break came when the Universal Music Ireland boss was invited to a showcase by the band. 'He signed us that day but he'd done his homework on us,' says Bressie. Since then The Blizzards have been gaining notoriety. As you might know, the band played Oxegen this year. Describing the gig, Bressie remarks, 'It was a turning point in our career... I was very proud of the band. It was daunting... there were 30,000 people watching us, but despite the nerves, we played well.' I asked Bressie about The Blizzards' newfound popularity. 'Fame in Ireland is a myth,' he jokes, 'we're more recognisable now

than we were three years ago but we don't want to be famous. It's quite flattering but we're still doing our job.' And what a job! The Blizzards have watched two tracks from their debut album enter the Irish top ten. 'It's quite easy to promote a song to the top ten - but you have to keep it there. It has to keep selling.' Perhaps this was the economist coming out in Breslin?

A UCD economics graduate, Bressie admits he never enjoyed his course, but he 'took to it and got [his] degree.' I asked him had he any advice for the UL freshers. 'The first week is very long. Pace yourself regarding the pulling of beer.' Also 'you might not like your course at the start but it grows on you.' He recounted a memorable college moment. 'It was a student bar gig. I got on a friend's shoulders. Security came to get me down and instead, I climbed up to the pub's rafters. Security pulled me down and I broke my ankle.' He adds, laughing, 'then I had to try and get home.' He talked about the band's gig last year, at UL's RAG week. 'It was what any



RAG week should be. We love playing in Limerick... My first college experience was in UL. It has a nice, unpoisoned atmosphere.' He advised us to 'make sure [we're] ready for September 11th.' This is of course the date they play in Limerick - one of a few short gigs they plan to do before heading to London where they'll be doing recordings with Napster. 'We'll be doing a full tour of England too,' he

adds.

I asked Bressie about The Blizzards' new album. 'It'll be out next year. We hope to start recording this October.' I asked if there'd be any change in the music on the new album. 'Song-writing has progressed a lot since three years ago' he remarks, 'so we're moving with the times. The songs are a next step up.'

Talking with Bressie, it was plain that the Blizzards

are really taking things seriously and keeping a level head. Things are looking good, with another album on the horizon, a UK tour and so much talent, drive and potential. My last words? Get some wet weather gear - there are plenty more Blizzards afoot!

The Blizzards play The Stables on Tuesday, Week 1, doors open at 8.00pm.

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