

THE FELIX

Friday 31st January, 1997
issue 1077

<http://www.su.ic.ac.uk/Felix>

Student Newspaper of Imperial College



Have you entered yet?
Win a trip to Paris. See
centre pages.



Something for the
Weekend visits Pooh
on the 'net and sees
the Orb and Space
live.

Explosion shatters chemistry lab

KELLY ROBINSON

The normal routine of the Chemistry Department was disrupted last week by an incident in the RCS1 building. At 11am last Thursday the Tilden Laboratory, on the second floor of the block, was ripped apart by an explosion.

The source of the explosion was traced to a fume cupboard in use at the time by two post-graduate students conducting an ether distillation experiment. Despite being present in the room, both escaped uninjured.

According to an eyewitness, there was an initial "bang" and the fume cupboard burst into flames. A wall of fire engulfed one side of the room, blocking the main exit.

The force of the explosion caused considerable damage, though the fire, which involved approximately 1.5 litres of ether, quickly burned itself out. Several windows in the lab and in adjacent rooms were shattered and much of the ducting system leading from the fume cupboard through to the roof also suffered substantial damage. Some debris from this ducting landed on the upper working level of the BMS site, and glass from the laboratory windows landed

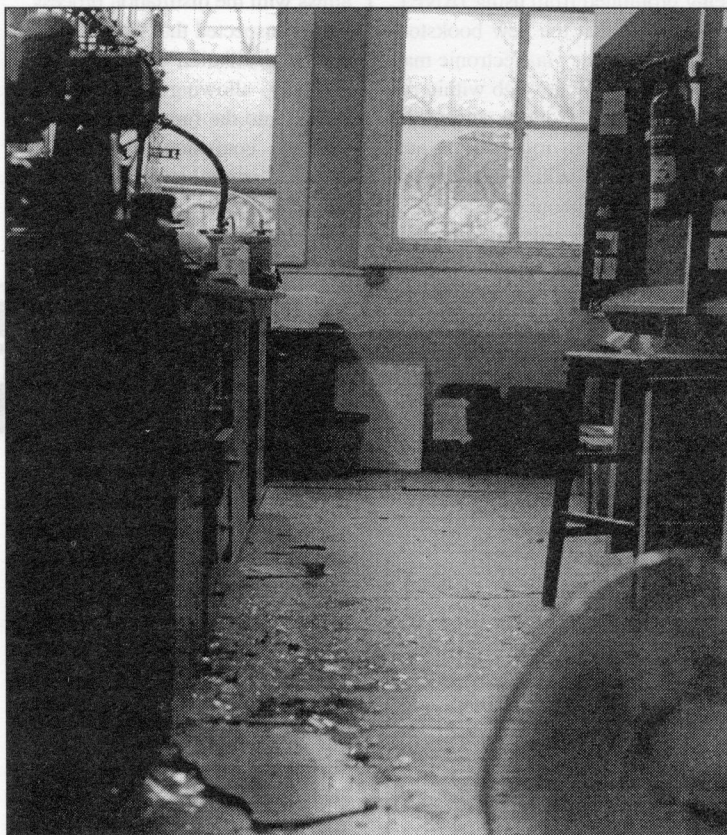


PHOTO: ROBIN RILEY

A fan disperses noxious gases inside room 206 Chemistry building following an explosion that propelled a fridge through a door.

between site huts. Some debris was found in Imperial Institute Road outside Civil Engineering.

The iron bolt on the door leading from the Tilden Lab to an adjacent office was blown apart, and a refrigerator containing toxic chemicals was propelled through the doorway. Two members of staff, wearing breathing apparatus, emptied the aforementioned fridge and later transferred its contents to another store.

There was a slight time lapse between the explosion and the arrival on the scene of the officials concerned. This was in part due to the fire-alarm system in the Tilden Lab not being connected to the alarms in the rest of the building because of an earlier failure of the temporary battery back-up system for the other alarms. This in turn had been in operation for only eight hours because of an electrical fault in the Library when the fuse box fused. The state of the fire alarms was described by one member of the Chemistry Department as "ludicrously dangerous". However, staff arrived quickly and began enquiries immediately.

continued on page two

Imperial takes University Challenge to USA

ALOK JHA

Imperial College's 1995/6 University Challenge team, winners BBC2 quiz show's coveted trophy last year, are to enter another competition, this time in America.

The Imperial College team are the only team from Britain to enter in the National Academic Quiz Tournaments' National Championship and were given a wildcard entry due to their successes last year.

The NAQT waived the entry fee to the tournament for the team and has also provided them with accommodation for its duration. This left other costs, including food and air fares, that would have had to be paid for by the members of the team themselves. Jim Totty, a member of the winning team was refused financial assistance by College, which then led him to submit a request for help to the Union on behalf of Mark Pallen,

Chris Harrison and Ian Bayley, all members of the Union. The request was granted and a total of £427 was paid to the team, on the condition that they wear Union shirts for the competition. This was agreed, provided that they could get hold of some before they departed.

The Deputy President for Finance and Services, Piers Williams, stated that although the payment was irregular since they were not a club or

society, he felt that helping them would provide "good karma" for the College.

The Imperial College team are expected to do very well in the tournament itself and Piers Williams suggested that even though College had refused them financial help, the College's newspaper, *IC Reporter*, would probably be the first to proclaim them as heroes on their return from Philadelphia.

Waterstone's on JANET?

MICHAEL ROBERTS

Another aspect of Waterstone's Bookstore tender has come under suspicion with the revelation that the company plan to use JANET for their retail plans. In their tender, Waterstone's made a big selling point of their proposed use of the internet, emphasising in particular the ability to order and buy books electronically.

The Joint Academic NETWORK is used by universities, colleges and research organisations throughout Great Britain and Northern Ireland. There are direct links to networks in Europe and the USA, through which JANET forms part of the Global Internet and Special Interest Groups.

JANET is operated and managed by the JNT Association Ltd, a 'not-for-profit' company regulated by UKERNA, the United Kingdom Education and Research Networking Association.

According to UKERNA rules, an organisation may gain entry to JANET provided it falls into one of the approved categories. It must be a degree awarding institution, an institution that teaches at tertiary level

(including sixth-form colleges) and above, an institution that conducts research where a reasonable proportion of the results are placed in the public domain, or a "learned society". Also accepted are further and higher education funding councils, research councils or organisations whose primary purpose is the support of education in a capacity other than for commercial gain.

According to Karen Griffin of JANET Customer Services, Waterstone's have not as yet submitted any application to be allowed to use the network. Furthermore, despite their location within an academic institute, they could still end up being prohibited from using JANET.

It is clear that the new bookstore will be accessible via electronic mail and the World Wide Web within the internal Imperial College network. If it is to be visible to organisations outside College, it will effectively be using JANET without permission.

An internet book ordering service is already operated by the current bookstore and the Union's tender proposal included a commitment to continue such a service.

Chemistry explosion

continued from front page

The incident was reported to the Health and Safety Executive, in accordance with regulations, at 11.15am.

Several people present when the explosion occurred, including Dr Graham Saville of the Chemical-Engineering Department who was an expert advisor on the Piper Alpha inquiry, were involved in the initial investigation. A thorough enquiry into the circumstances of the explosion is currently under way, but as yet its exact causes are unknown. The suspect experiment had been checked thirty seconds before the incident and nothing appeared to be amiss with the distillation process.

It is suspected that the Teflon seal on the distillation flask did not fit perfectly, allowing ether vapour to escape into the fume cupboard. Due to some confusion about the two electrical control switches present in the lab, it appears that the cupboard's extraction fan was not turned on, allowing the vapour, from whatever

origin, to build up. The ignition source has not been isolated.

According to Ian Gillett, Safety Director, all those involved were extremely helpful, including Schal, the contractors working on the BMS building. He said the laboratory should "realistically be fit for use by students within about one month" but it all depends on the insurance company involved and those who will receive the contract for the extensive reconstruction work.

Elsewhere, the water leak that caused temporary power failures in the Library and Sherfield Building (as reported in last week's *Felix*) has come under scrutiny following the revelation by one electrician working on repairs that water "had been leaking for some time" into the generator room. Keith Reynolds, Head of Fire and Security, was quick to reassure *Felix* that the leakage had presented no danger.

Heavier rain over the previous few days is thought to have been responsible for the accident.

News in Brief

ACC CHAIR RESIGNS

ICU sports clubs were shocked last week by the sudden resignation of Caroline Deetjen, the Athletic Clubs Committee Chair.

Ms Deetjen, currently in the final year of her Chemical Engineering degree, explained, "I felt I was over-committing myself, and wasn't giving the ACC the time and credit it deserved. My work was falling behind, and I felt strained, unhappy and dissatisfied with my performance. Something had to give, and as I'm here to gain a degree it had to be the ACC."

Sarah Corneille, ICU Deputy President for Clubs and Societies, said of Ms Deetjen "We're sorry to see Caroline go, she has done a great job until now."

Ms Corneille will take over the post until the next ACC meeting, at which the Vice-Chair is expected to be appointed as the permanent replacement.

BICYCLE THIEF CHARGED

Charges have been brought against a man arrested in Ayrton Road shortly before the Christmas holidays for carrying equipment with the obvious purpose of stealing bicycles. The arrest was made partly based on

information from a student.

Police are continuing inquiries into the incident and Security officers are receiving extra training in dealing with such occurrences as bicycle theft.

There are many ways of combating bicycle theft. Most cyclists in London own D-locks designed to be extremely effective against attempts to cut through them, but some "professional" thieves may possess equipment to cut through even these. College security recommend that those who bring bicycles to College take the trouble to leave them at facilities provided for this purpose situated just off the main walkway next to the Royal School of Mines, which is covered by twenty-four hour CCTV surveillance.

CLAYPONDS BURGLAR SENTENCED

Last week, a burglar was sentenced to five years imprisonment after being caught breaking into Clayponds hall of residence in Ealing last term. He was captured and arrested by College Security as he was making his escape. A second burglar, who was caught at the same time, is serving a two-year prison sentence.

OUTRAGE!

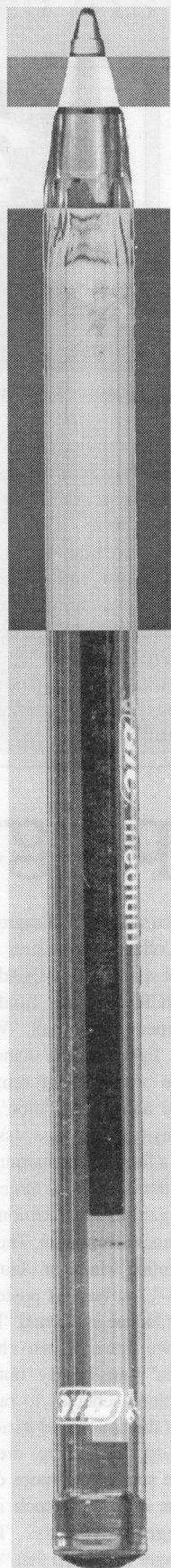
Peter Tatchell visits ULU

Is Outing Justified?

IQ: 4 Feb, 6.30 Union entrance

e-mail: ka.yates@ic.ac.uk

s.r.cook@ic.ac.uk



← Extra funding for student activities

← Improvement of trading services

← Major projects, such as dBs refurbishment

← Shop overheads

← Cost of pen

2¹/₂ 2p
per pen,

What's a pen worth?

or **£104,000** per year

back into your Union

Your Union, Your Profits

(Figures and graph based on overall 1995/6 stationery sales)

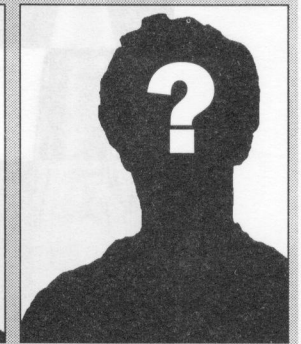
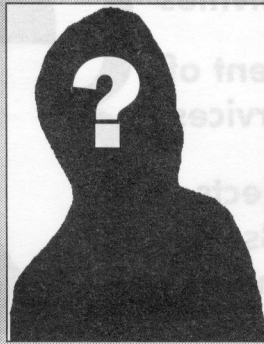
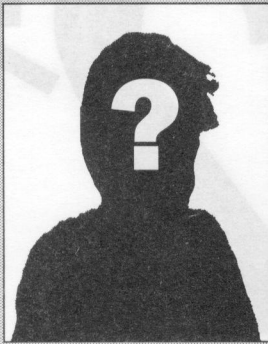


IMPERIAL COLLEGE UNION

Danger! Excitement! The sabb elections are back!

The annual round of Imperial College Union Sabbatical Elections are nearly upon us once again with papers for nominations going up on Monday. Nominees for the four sabbatical posts must sign up on the papers with a proposer and twenty seconders before they are taken down on Friday 14th February.

Last year's Sabbatical Elections developed into an exciting race between the three candidates for both the position of President, and that of Deputy President (Clubs & Societies). The other two sabbatical positions, Deputy President (Finance and Services) and Felix Editor, only had a single nominee each. Speculation as to who will put their names forward for this year's Elections has been rife, with a number of possibilities being flagged by the chattering classes around campus. However, no one has firmly said that they will stand for a post though early nominations will no doubt



The usual suspects. Who will next year's sabbatical officers be? Up for grabs are Felix Editor, Deputy President (Clubs & Societies), Deputy President (Finance & Services) and President. appear next week.

A nominee for a sabbatical post must be a full member of Imperial College Union and can be at any stage of their studies. The position entails taking a year off from study and working as one of the Union's 'executives'. The sabbaticals (other than the Felix Editor) oversee the day-to-day running of the Union, initiate and implement policy and act as the students' representatives on vari-

ous external bodies, including College committees.

Any full member of the Union may vote in the election. Ballot boxes will be located in the larger departments, the Sherfield building foyer and the Union building. An option to reopen nominations for a new election is also presented to voters on the ballot slips.

After the nomination papers come down, campaigning begins. Cand-

idates are subjected to a hustings both on the South Kensington site and again at St Mary's Medical School Union.

The Election takes place on Monday 3rd and Tuesday 4th of March in a campus-wide ballot and the results are announced on Tuesday evening.

As usual, *Felix* will be producing a special election issue to announce the result.

Student staff rally for campaign

ROBIN RILEY

Part-time student staff of Imperial College Union met in dB's on Wednesday, to hear Union executives outline their plans for the future of the organisation in the light of the loss of the bookstore.

Union Manager Mandy Hurford and Events and Marketing Manager Mark Horne addressed a large audience consisting of students employed by Union trading outlets, including the bookstore, newsagent, print unit, bars and catering as well as Union stewards and DJs.

Ms Hurford only briefly reiterated the potential problems presented by the loss of the tender, concentrating instead upon the benefits of a positive approach. If the Union's remaining trading outlets are to prosper, Ms

Hurford explained, the students that they employ must maintain a high level of service and customer care. The Union Manager pointed to the increasing success of the trading outlets, claiming that much of their efficiency arose from their low staffing costs as compared to other UK students' unions. Ms Hurford left her audience in no doubt as to the purpose of trading outlets, asserting that "We're out to make a profit. We're not ashamed of that... but we're open about those profits going to clubs, societies and other Union services."

Student staff, Ms Hurford believes, should be in the front line in promoting the Union. The loss of further trading outlets would almost certainly result in the loss of part-time jobs for Imperial College stu-

dents. Attempting to rally the troops, the Union Manager stated: "One of the things we don't do very well is sell ourselves... We've got to say loudly and extremely proudly; This is what we are, this is what we do - The IC Union."

Imperial College Union's usually flamboyant Events and Marketing Manager, Mark Horne, began his address a little more downbeat. "The Union has been as guilty as the College in retreating into its ivory tower and not communicating." He admitted, after a quick poll showed that only a tiny fraction of those present had known about the bookstore tender before the decision was announced. Mr Horne continued: "We let you down by not telling you... We don't want to be telling lies or spreading rumours, but from now on we're going to keep everyone informed."

When several student staff proposed that *Felix* be exploited to promote the Union's cause, the executive were quick to point out that although the Union funds the student newspaper, it has no editorial control. The Union can only campaign directly in *Felix* through the placing of advertisements.

Mr Horne went on to suggest that other areas of Union activity may be under threat, reporting that the Union

was currently in disagreement with the College over issues such as the use of space in Beit Quad, catering in the JCR and the funding of the Commemoration ball. "We've a few more fights on our hands yet." Mr Horne warned, but remained optimistic about the Union's continued expansion and success; "There's been a fantastic turnaround, especially in the last two or three years."

Regarding the Union's ongoing awareness campaign, The Events and Marketing Manager claimed to have plans "...far beyond posters."

Mr Horne explained "I'm not saying we burn down the Rector's offices" but briefly outlined some audacious schemes to raise the profile of the Union and its activities. Ms Hurford, meanwhile, drew attention to the success of more conservative means of protest such as letters to College governors. The Union Manager conceded that "IC's student population is hardly known for outrageous acts of militancy."

The meeting was attended by around eighty students and staff, although some sceptics later suggested that the high level of attendance may have been because it counted towards student workers' overtime. Nevertheless, all those present pledged to support to any campaign adopted by the Union executive.

FELIX
Fantasy Sabbatical League
Have you done it yet?

Medics deprived of clean undies

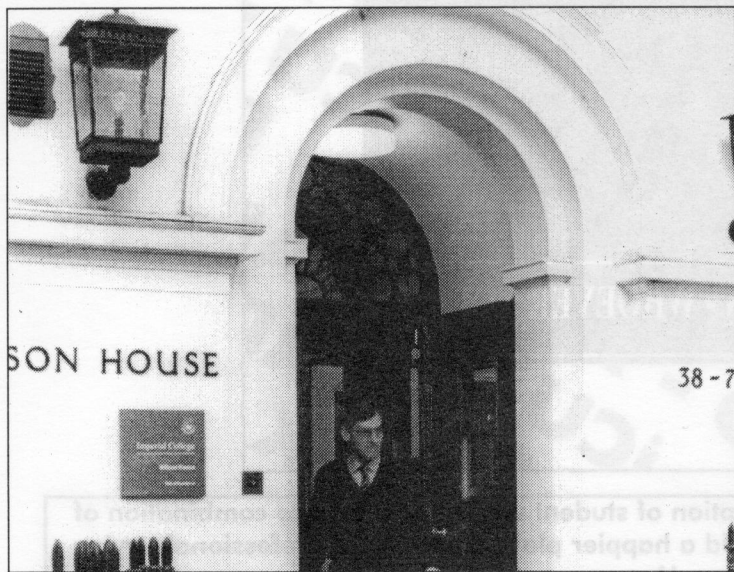
KENT YIP

Washing facilities for residents of Wilson House will be temporarily out of action, starting from 3rd February. The installation of new machines is expected to take approximately a month. Meanwhile, residents have been advised to make alternative arrangements.

The current contract was ended when the company from which the machines were hired withdrew their support and maintenance services. Due to their old age, the current machines break down frequently and have to be repaired on a regular basis. The eight new machines and tumble dryers shortly to be installed will double the capacity of the current washroom.

funding, but went on to point out that a new freezer had recently been purchased, and it would only be a matter of time before the promise was fulfilled.

Residents have also expressed dissatisfaction at the lack of shower provision. When confronted with reports suggesting that in some houses up to fifteen people have to share one shower, Ms Brown recounted the difficulties involved in fitting new showers over the existing baths. "Everything has to be watertight, which means that tiles have to be secured and the bath resealed. This had been done in other halls before, and poor workmanship led to the collapse of the ceiling and water leaking badly all over the floor. There is also



Speaking to *Felix*, Head of Accommodation Sharine Brown acknowledged the enormous inconvenience to students that this change will cause. Plans to provide a limited number of in-house machines during the transition period are under consideration, and the College will offer affected students a refund to cover washing expenses. Recognising that some students might find the level of refund insufficient, Ms Brown claimed she would be prepared to discuss this matter with those concerned on an individual basis.

Another concern of Wilson House residents has been the lack of a freezer in each kitchen, contrary to the description given in the Residents' Handbook. Ms Brown admitted that it would be impossible to equip every kitchen with its own freezer by the end of this year due to a lack of

the problem of getting the mix of water right at the tap." A new shower has been installed in one house, which serves as a trial for all future developments.

Also high on the agenda for Wilson House is the need to improve security. Current suggestions include the installation of a swipe card system and closed-circuit camera surveillance. Officials are currently assessing the cost of improvements, with 24 hour security provision, by far the most expensive option, still considered a possibility. Mrs Brown refuted suggestions that provisions such as washing up liquids and kitchen towels have been withdrawn in order to fund new security equipment, explaining that these measures were taken merely to bring Wilson House in line with all other halls of residence of Imperial College.

School leavers opt for physics

PAUL SQUIRES

Imperial College's Physics department has seen an unexplained increase in the number of applicants for undergraduate degree courses. This has been reflected at a national level.

This increase has occurred despite decisions by many leading universities to axe their physics degrees. Birkbeck College, London, and East Anglia, Coventry, De Montfort, and Manchester Metropolitan Universities are all cutting back on physics courses, in accord with downward trends in the subject's popularity over recent years. The University and College Admissions Service, UCAS, reports that the nationwide numbers of physics applicants represents an increase as high as 18% compared to last year, while Dr R Burns, IC Physics Admissions Tutor, believes the increase is in the region of 10-15% at Imperial. This increase appears to be peculiar to physics, no comparable increase having been observed in any other scientific discipline with the exception of Chemistry, which has seen a slight rise.

The state of physics in Britain's Universities has recently been the subject of much pessimistic reporting by the media, which have made much of the cuts imposed by the aforementioned institutions. Prof B Morgan, Deputy Head of the Physics Department, pointed out that almost all those colleges axing physics are comparatively new institutions. None of them, Prof Morgan claims, are noted for their research in this field, and therefore they receive very little research funding. This reduces the cost-effectiveness of employing lecturers to teach physics. Their decisions should not, Prof Morgan believes, be considered indicative for

the physics departments of institutions such as Imperial, which have an excellent reputation in this field.

Head of the Physics Department, Professor D Southwood, professed his regrets that industry in general does not recognise the importance of physics in a technically advanced market. Professor Morgan agreed that physics as a discipline is comparatively remote from industrial need, as advances in pure physics take many years before they are any use in industry, by which time they are more likely to be considered engineering.

As a result, physics research tends to receive very little support from private firms. Several years ago the government introduced the ROPA award system by which departments can claim funding from the government in proportion to the amount they have received from industry. Initially the system did not favour physicists, though this has been addressed by the efforts of many professors and the Institute of Physics.

The two main forms of Higher Education funding are teaching funding and research funding. Both types of grant come from HEFCE, the Higher Education Funding Council for England, and in both categories physics has fared badly. Teaching funding is based on student intake, which is low for physics, while research funding is based on the number of teaching staff in the department. This is also low compared to other disciplines, although IC's physics department has not been seriously affected; HEFCE does not require that the money allocated per department be spent solely upon that particular faculty, and it is Imperial College policy to distribute funds equally between the various departments.

Only three days left to enter!

FELIX
Fantasy
Sabbatical
League

**ICU WELFARE WEEK
FEB 3RD - 7TH**

PREJUDICE

**NOT EVERYTHING IN BLACK
AND WHITE MAKES SENSE**

iCU YOUR UNION - WHOEVER YOU ARE

IMPERIAL COLLEGE UNION

Next week is ICU Welfare Week. A common misconception of student welfare is a bizarre combination of meetings of lily livered liberals trying to make the world a happier place and earnest professionals trying to help individuals whose lives have gone into meltdown. However, welfare is not about rampant idealism and the afflicted, it affects us all in some way or other. It covers many things, such as not having to succumb to peer pressure to have that extra beer; a ruined evening because of an obnoxious individual or group; a regretted one night fumble with a persistent stranger; drugs; harassment; work; health; exercise and education. It impacts, in one way or another, on us all.

This year's Welfare Week is based on the broad theme of prejudice and how it affects everyone. The programme of events is intended to address those prejudices which predominate at a multicultural, conservative, male-dominated institution such as Imperial.

The week starts off with a debate "Is Science more Homophobic than Art?" We have two guest speakers Andrew Hodges and Matthew Parris. This will be taking place in dBs at 12:30 on Monday. On Tuesday night the popular weekly quiz held in Da Vinci's will have a distinctly welfare theme.

At 12:30 in dBs on Thursday there will be a panel debate along the theme "When does Flirting become Harassment?" The guest speaker will be Ms Collier, author of a book on sexual harassment and now Head of Equal Opportunities at Croyden Council. All proceeds from the door on Friday night will be given to Nightline, the ULU sponsored telephone advice service. There will also be a stall in the Union foyer between 12:00 and 14:00 every day throughout the week offering, information on all sorts of welfare issues.

So come along to the events, whatever side of the fence you are on, and express your views. Your attendance and input is valuable in making these events worthwhile, rather than a stuffy fluffy pointless exercise in idealism.

ICU Welfare Committee

EASTER VACATION EMPLOYMENT

FROM SATURDAY, 22nd MARCH 1997

TO FRIDAY, 18th APRIL 1997

STUDENT CLEANERS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE A FULL HOTEL SERVICE WITHIN THE HALLS OF RESIDENCES.

- Hours of work: 9.30 a.m. - 1.30 p.m.
- 6 days per week (including Bank Holidays and Weekends)
- One day off during the week
- Total of 24 hours per week
- Hourly Rate £3.75 plus accommodation and breakfast.

Job description and application forms available from:

Residences Office
First Floor
15 Prince's Gardens
Tel: 0171 594 9445 (external)
or 59442 (internal)

Domestic Manager
January 1997



Felix brings you an unrivalled opportunity to share the success of next year's sabbaticals with Felix's Fantasy Sabbatical League™.

Now you too can join in the cut and thrust of the sabbatical race by playing Felix's Fantasy Sabbatical League™.

Read on, and you could be a winner!
No catch, no purchase necessary.



First Prize:

Two return tickets to Paris and a bottle of Champagne

**Last chance to enter:
closing date 5.00pm
February 3rd**

The aim of the game

The object of Felix Fantasy Sabbatical League™ is to predict the outcome of the 1997 ICU Sabbatical Elections. Using your skill and judgement, you must choose which four people you think will be elected to each of the four sabbatical positions, and which four will be runners-up (ie lose and come second). First and second place positions are simply determined by who wins most votes in the eventual elections. To win, you will have to guess not only who will be elected, but also who is likely to stand for election.

Included opposite is a list of possible 'players.' These are people who currently hold positions on Council (the governing body of the Union) plus a few wildcards. They are the people closely involved with the Union whom we feel are most likely to stand for one of the four sabbatical positions. We have placed them in divisions, according to the seniority of their position within the Union, and assigned a points value to the players in each division. **THE POSITION OF INDIVIDUALS WITHIN THE LEAGUE REFLECTS ONLY THEIR CURRENT STATUS WITHIN THE UNION. IT DOES NOT REPRESENT HIS/HER LIKELIHOOD OF STANDING OR BEING ELECTED.**

There are two other 'players': you should enter 'New Election' as a second choice for a position if you think that only one candidate will stand for that post, or if you think people would rather vote for a new election than any of the candidates. If you think someone other than those included on our list will stand for a particular post, then include the 'None of the above' player in the relevant place on your team. You do not have to state who you think 'None of the above' will be. If 'New election' or 'None of the above' finishes in the place you have guessed, you score the same points as if you had guessed an actual individual's result.

Remember, you are strictly limited in the number of points you can spend on players, and so may not be able to field your first choice team... This is where the element of chance comes in. Good luck!

Sabbaticals? What Sabbaticals?

For those not in the know, each year Imperial College Union holds a campus-wide ballot to elect new sabbatical officers.

There are four sabbaticals elected by campus-wide ballot at ICU: **President, Deputy President (Finance & Services), Deputy President (Clubs & Societies)** and **Felix Editor**. They hold their position for year while taking a break (a sabbatical) from their studies. During this time, each is ultimately responsible for running the services and performing the duties under their remit. These people are your representatives in many different areas, whether attending college committees on academic affairs or being responsible for the finances of the Union and the many clubs and societies which you may belong to.

For example, the Deputy President (Clubs and Societies) in charge of the running of the many clubs and societies of the Union as well as health and safety and representing the Union (and you) on college committees, among other duties. Thus, even if you are the Caving Club chairman implementing H&S policy or just an ordinary member of the International Tamil Society, the DP (C&S) looks after your interests.

This year's sabbatical elections will take place in early March. However, the papers for nominations go up on February 3rd for two College weeks. Any full member of Imperial College Union may stand for any of the positions listed above. To be able to run for election, however, each nominee must have a proposer and twenty seconders, all of whom must also be full members of the Union. After the papers come down on February 14th, campaigning proper can start, and the 1996-97 sabbatical race can begin.

If you have any queries about the elections or wish to find out more about any of the posts, contact the President, Eric Allsop, via the Union Office, or speak to the present incumbents.

The small print

For a full list of rules, contact the Felix Office extension 58072

Name	Position	Code
Division I 9 pts each		
Sami Ansari	Mary's president	SA9
Mo Dullo	RCSU president	MD9
Omar Kheir	RSMU president	OK9
Gaurav Misra	C&G president	GM9
Sarah Thomas	Council chair	ST9
Division II 6 pts each		
Despina Crassa	OSC chair	DC6
Caroline Deetjen	ACC chair	CD6
Tom Galliford	Mary's VP (external)	TG6
Alan Geer	RCC chair	AG6
Jon Lambert	ICCAG chair	JL6
Robin Riley	Pub Board chair	RR6
John Savery	SCAB chair	JS6
Andy Southern	Rag chair	AS6
Sarah Waiman	SCC chair	SW6
Division III 4 pts each		
Mark Baker	Phoenix Co-editor	MB4
Samantha Baker	RCS AAO	SB4
Bry Bowden	RSM AAO	BB4
Paul Brown	Council Ordinary member	PB4
Cheryl Case	Silwood chair	CC4
Sarah Edwards	Council Ordinary member	SE4
Chris Ince	Council Ordinary member	CI4
Maria Ioannou	Felix news editor	MI4
John Sinner	Equal Ops. Officer	JS4
M K Keshtvar	PG group chair	MK4
Lloyd Kilford	Council Ordinary member	LK4
Pete Kirtley	Accommodation officer	PK4
W D Miles	Council Ordinary member	WM4
Oli Newman	C&G AAO	ON4
Afua Osei	Felix features editor	AO4
Hannah Pearson	Welfare officer	HP4
George Psomas	Council Ordinary member	GP4
Matt Szyndel	Council Ordinary member	MS4
Jeremy Thomson	Phoenix Co-editor	JT4
Duncan Tindall	Transport officer	DT4
Heather Whitney	Womens officer	HW4
Division IV 3 pts each		
Katie Armstrong	Mary's Dep. Rep.	KA3
Simon Baker	Voice of reason	SB3
Hooman Behinia	Physics Dep. Rep.	HB3
M S Bogui	ERE Dep. Rep.	MB3
Dee Clark	Pre-clinical Dep. Rep.	DC3
Rob Clarke	IC Radio	RC3
John Durrell	Former Council Chair	JD3
Anthony Jukes	Civ. Eng. Dep. Rep.	AJ3
D J Kieran	Chem eng Dep. Rep.	DK3
Penny Leech	Biology Dep. Rep.	PL3
Keiran McKenna	EEE Dep. Rep.	KM3
Debbie Middleton	Materials Dep. Rep.	DM3
Luke Morales	Ents. DJ	LM3
Louise Moran	Clinical Dep. Rep.	LO3
Jo Paice	Labour Club Chair	JP3
Simon Pain	Geology Dep. Rep.	SP3
Dan Plant	Mech eng Dep. Rep.	DP3
Alefina Rajkotwala	DoC Dep. Rep.	AR3
Richard Reeves	Management Dep. Rep.	RR3
David Robinson	Chem. Dep. Rep.	DR3
Abama Thiru	Biochem Dep. Rep.	AT3
Ben Tristan	ISE Dep. Rep.	BT3
Kate Weller	Aero Dep. Rep.	KW3
Division V 2 pts each		
New Election		NEW
None of the above		OTHER

How to play

- You have 35 points to spend on 8 'players' from the five divisions listed opposite; 2 players for each of the 4 sabbatical positions.
- You DO NOT have to spend all 35 points, but you MUST field 8 players.
- You cannot use any player more than once, with the exception of 'None of the above' and 'New election.' These two may not be used twice (i.e. as both first and second) for the same sabbatical position.
- When you have chosen your team, enter your choices in BLOCK CAPITALS in the correct boxes on the form provided. Add up the total value of your team (not to exceed 35) and enter this in the correct box.
- Fill in your Felix Fantasy Sabbatical League team name, and the rest of your details and hand your form in to the Felix office (Ground floor, North west corner of Beit Quad), or pop it in the internal mail addressed to "Felix".

Scoring

Your final score depends on how well your team matches with the eventual first and second place candidates, scoring as follows:

- 10 Pts** If your first choice player for any of the 4 positions wins first place in that position.
- 8 Pts** If your second choice player for any of the 4 positions wins second place in that position.
- 5 pts** If your first choice player for any of the 4 positions wins second place in that position
- OR:** If your second choice player for any of the 4 positions wins first place in that position.
- 2 pts** If your first OR second choice player for one position wins first OR second place in a DIFFERENT position. This does NOT apply to 'None of the above' or 'New election' players.

Your name:
 Dept / Year:
 E-mail:

Code Value

President:

Second:

Deputy President (F&S)

Second:

Deputy President (C&S)

Second:

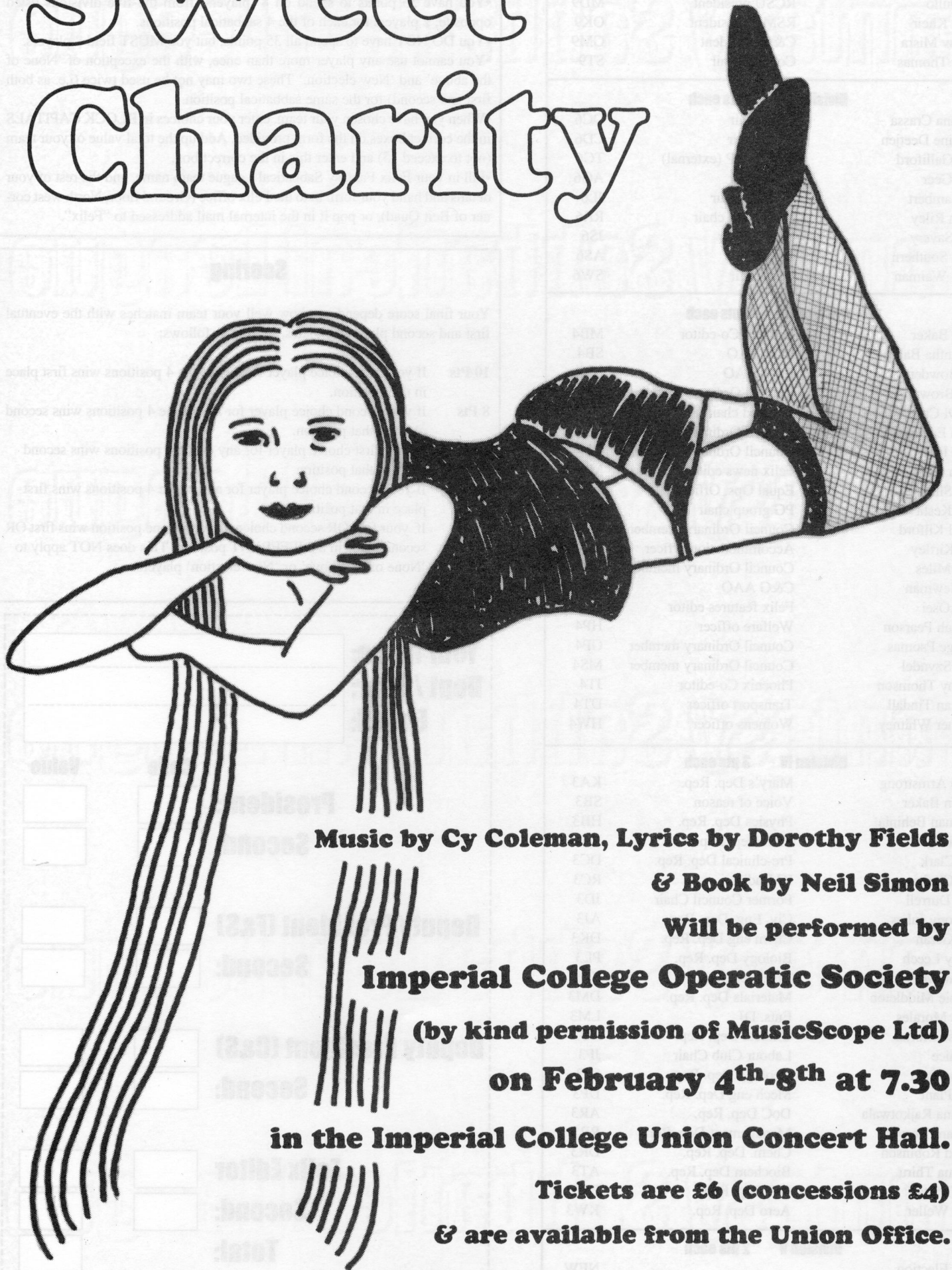
Felix Editor

Second:

Total:

Team name:

Sweet Charity



Music by Cy Coleman, Lyrics by Dorothy Fields

& Book by Neil Simon

Will be performed by

Imperial College Operatic Society

(by kind permission of MusicScope Ltd)

on February 4th-8th at 7.30

in the Imperial College Union Concert Hall.

Tickets are £6 (concessions £4)

& are available from the Union Office.

People these days are obsessed with money. Not exactly a startling revelation and a bit rich coming from you, I hear you cry. But the interesting thing about the current nature of this obsession is that it does not encompass care of money. The public will happily waste, or see wasted, enormous sums on pointless activities (such as the lottery), yet apparently play merry hell when relatively trifling projects are proposed.

As you probably realised, dear reader, I am referring to the replacement for Britannia. At £60 million, this represents about 75 minutes government spending. It is not, as some have suggested, a private plaything for the Royal Family, but a means for the Queen to discharge her duties as head of state, in much the same way as Bill Clinton uses Air Force One. Given our strong maritime heritage, a prestigious British-built yacht seems the perfect solution.

All talk that this money should be spent on education looks pretty flimsy in the light of the £2.5 billion to be spent on the cattle cull to satisfy a German food minister who constantly moves the goalposts of lifting the ban.

It also looks weak following the publication of results that show that in

some London boroughs, at the age of seven, the reading age gap between the best and the worst is up to three years. Spend, spend spend is the mantra of both the opposition parties, but this is shown to be ridiculous when one also reads that the country with the highest standards of English in the world is apparently Barbados, where the average government spend per pupil is half that of the UK.

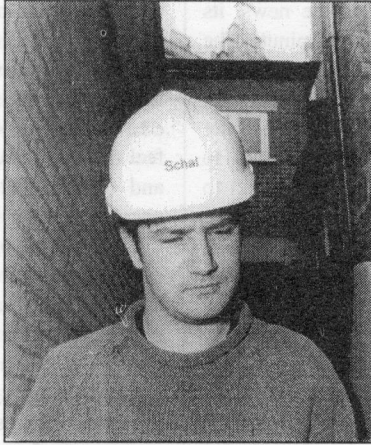
Pathetic basic literacy and numeracy is directly attributable to 'progressive' teaching methods, not socio-economic factors; Kensington and Chelsea, for instance, came out below the national average for basic standards of pupil ability.

Reading can be taught in a bus shelter with a copy of yesterday's newspaper. Since a significant proportion of the teaching 'profession'

are incapable of realising the damage of their actions, it is about time that strict guidelines on primary education were introduced. In other words, turn the clock back thirty years.

I try to avoid writing about my own department so as not to ignore huge

Simon Baker



Voice of Reason

swathes of you, my readers, and also to prevent streams of abuse from my elders and betters. Last week's explosion in Old Chemistry deserves a mention. It is a miracle that no one was killed during the incident, which, without going to details, generated enough force to blow a fridge through a closed door.

You would naturally assume that an incident of this nature would warrant a least a phone call to London Fire Brigade to explain what had happened. Not so, my friends. Now as you know by now, I have no truck with cynicism,

so I won't suggest, as some are saying, that this was to prevent the Health and Safety Executive getting wind of it. The apparatus that caused the fire is in wide use in the department and has long been seen as an accident waiting to happen.

The lab in question only had one exit. It now, of course, has two, courtesy of the fridge. An earlier request for more fire extinguishers for this lab was denied - 'we don't want any have-a-go heroes.' In which case why bother with them at all. I could go on for several pages about College safety policy, which is more about eliminating liability than eliminating risk, but it would send all but a few chemists and Sherfield bigwigs to sleep. Suffice to say, it does not work.

Finally, regular readers will have wondered if I have gone cold on Southside Bar. I have gone cold in it, when the heating was on the blink, but the beer remains at the usual exceptional standard.

Recommendations here are fairly pointless - every pint should be tried (though not necessarily at once). If you thought real ale was synonymous with amorous activities in a canoe, then forsake Australian lager for something a little creamier.

The Weekly Poem

(supplied by PoetiC)

All his nails were gone
he couldn't hang the picture
he couldn't eat the cracker,
he forgot his name.

He hid in the cloakroom
where he wandered for hours
with a clock as his sole companion

Oh, his personality was impossibly inflated
and with a bang!
he tiled the walls with his thoughts
his emotions, photographs of his life
but he could only focus on one.

The milk was overflowing
frothy and bubbly
Not like his days!

In a cartoon he once read
a page number was missing.
That was so clear.

It was perhaps more important
than the train he missed the other day
and even more useful.

A range of different colours
were his banner
he wore for everyone to see

he hated fish but liked looking at their bones
he liked looking at the sea.
absorbing everything
or almost everything
deep and superficially empty.

He admired the sea
cause he could understand it
and although he knew
he could become part of it forever if he wished
he wasn't exactly happy with the idea.

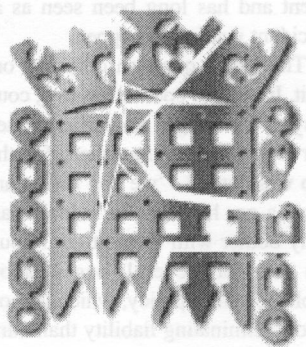
When he stopped dreaming
and we don't know when exactly this happened
he clasped his hands together and prayed
He dimmed the light and saw his eyes trembling

By Stelios

PoetiC is the creative writing society of Imperial College, and we are always happy to greet new members. If you would like to find out more about PoetiC, or are interested in attending our weekly meetings, contact Keith McNulty on ext 58610 or via k.mculty@ic.ac.uk

Westminster Eye

Hamish Common



"Infotainment" is one of those vogue words that, along with "information superhighway" and "cyberspace" have always made me cringe. Whereas the latter are not within the scope of this column, "infotainment" is already hitting our television screens and newspapers, with an array of spin-doctors and PR men to shore it up. In the last few days, our newspapers were filled with stories such as Branson's balloon trip and 'Superwoman' Nicola Horlick's sacking from Morgan Grenfell. Branson is the master of PR: we were enthralled by pictures of balloons and desert, fed with statistics about the balloon's dimensions, and shown maps of the intended route. The actual voyage lasted a day or two, around the same time as the other two contenders, indeed Branson's team had forgotten to bring any loo roll with them. Nicola Horlick's sacking had received little press coverage until she hired the services of Anthony Cardew, the City's top spin doctor. She then stormed into her old office where a group of hacks just happened to be waiting and jetted off to the head office at Frankfurt. It certainly had the desired effect: Weekend papers were delighted to show a pretty woman being mistreated by a big nasty organisation, devoting little time to discussing the reasons why the million-pound-a-year fund manager had been suspended.

So what has all this to do with politics? With increasing commercialisation and competition within the media industry, ratings are the ultimate arbiter of success, and the truth will rarely get in the way of a good headline. By targeting the lowest common denominator among its audience, tabloid-style stations and papers can reap rich financial rewards, attracting the envy of those with more substantial budgets for legitimate news-gathering. News departments have moved from loss-makers to profit centres, with the

emphasis on images and audiences over prestige, with television news in particular never able to substitute for a good newspaper: whilst it is unbeaten in its ability to present the people and places in the news, its actual volume of news is minute. The number of words spoken in a half hour broadcast would barely fill two-thirds of a broadsheet page. Facts are compressed, arguments clipped to size and explanation reduced, all to fit within television's restrictive time-frame. Sitting in the public gallery during Prime Minister's Question Time I would occasionally hear Tony Blair suddenly rant away on a completely different issue from whatever was being discussed at the time. This confused me at first, until I saw him on the 6 o'clock news that evening, with 5 seconds of him ranting away. He was shown on every channel and every news broadcast that night, each with the identical 5 second clip. He had never really been addressing the House that afternoon, and the publicity his comments received did him no harm at all.

Soundbite journalism is unable to present the electorate with any realistic view of events. The public become used to flashy headlines and, for the most part, have no wish to look too far beyond them. When, last Wednesday the Guardian correctly reported that Labour intended to strip governors' powers, it was headlined as "BBC faces upheaval in Labour plan". The spin masters threw tantrums because they didn't like the word "upheaval" in a headline (it would not give the appropriate Labour image) and set about rubbishing the story. It is disturbing to see such an palava over one word in a broadsheet headline, but this is the image-over-substance reality that is unfortunately seeping across the Atlantic.

I do hope that television networks and newspaper magnates make their big money from entertainment, keeping the lure of simple profit away from the newsroom, as any shallowness here will tempt people to form their opinions purely upon the headlines and front stories, upon the politician's personalities or upon polished images. They will be fair game for the spin doctors, with their opinions on the significant issues of the day decided for them behind closed doors, in advance, with a handshake.

LETTERS TO FELIX

replied to by David Roberts

The many-splendoured joys of College planning

To whom this may concern,

I am writing to complain about the planned closure of the library in the mornings in two weeks in February. As this fortnight coincides directly with the week of the second year Biology and Biochemistry exams and it also covers the week that the final year Biologists have been granted a reading week, I am beginning to feel that the reliance of the Biology and Biochemistry students have upon the library is not appreciated.

The students of the Life Sciences are often required to spend long hours in the library as lectures and practicals frequently need to be supported by journal articles, not to mention the background reading that is required for essays, dissertations, projects etc. I am sure that you will understand that to photocopy all of these articles is extremely expensive. I feel that a closure of the library is particularly unfair on the Life Sciences students: we do not have a departmental library and many of us find that the current opening hours are restrictive - it is a little ridiculous that we are allowed to work within our own department until 11 pm, but we are only allowed to consult textbooks until 9pm.

We have been continually disrupted with closures of the library occurring at short notice, plus the noise and even the workmen themselves can be an annoying distraction. I doubt that my degree will be compensated for by the lack of facilities available. Perhaps the library could compensate for the time lost during the building work by either staying open later during the next few weeks or by transferring journals from the library to a room within the Biology department whereupon they would be accessible to all students?

I understand that the library is being run for all students and that the building work will improve the situation for future students. However, with less than two months to go before the final exams, I doubt that altruistic behaviour will be found being exhibited freely amongst the students. Many of us are working extremely hard at least twelve hours a day to try and ensure the results that we need. It would be a shame if some students were not allowed to achieve their aims if they were denied the facilities that have been offered to students of previous years and will be offered to students of

future years.

Yours Faithfully,

The letter is signed by 72 members of the Biology Department, and a copy has also been sent to the library.

The wisdom of College's decision to halve the library's opening would certainly seem a little suspect, though I imagine that almost every week is important to at least one department. Certainly it would seem common sense to move some of the more important publications to a more readily accessible site for the duration. However, the shut-down will no doubt be worth the sacrifice (assuming that this time the building work doesn't result in falling masonry, a leaky roof, power failures....)

A matter of faith

Dear Felix,

In response to Karen Yates' article A Bunch Of Poofsters that appeared in *Felix 1076*, I'd like to make a few points about her statement that "The Bible condemns same sex relations" is a common argument "against gays, lesbians and bisexuals" that "...can be easily countered".

Firstly, I do not think that this constitutes an argument at all against homo/bi-sexuality unless the person in question is someone who would call him/herself a Christian. Otherwise why would someone who does not believe that God has revealed Himself to us through the history recorded in the Bible care what this book, believed by Christians to be the "Word of God", has to say?

As for the issue of whether the Bible really does condemn same sex relations, I believe that in the Bible, GOD condemns same sex relations in no uncertain terms from the opening pages when He creates Adam and Eve to the end when the body of believers are referred to as the "Bride of Christ". Moreover I believe that, contrary to what Karen wrote, the whole Bible, "original Hebrew Scriptures" included, is self-consistent with the view that all sexual relations (homosexual or heterosexual) outside marriage are wrong in God's eyes.

With regard to the New Testament condemnation of homosexuality by St Paul, Karen wrote that "the writings of St. Paul are believed to be mainly personal opinion..." Even if a Christian chose to believe this how

could they possibly have the divine discretion to know whether in these instances Paul was not actually speaking the Word of God? Christians who choose to ignore half of the New Testament would have a very difficult time convincing people that they were actually Christians, no matter what they called themselves! I also disagree with her justification for her statement about St Paul ("... as he (St Paul) also condemned women even speaking in church") because this mentions an important issue out of context. There is not space for a full discussion now but I believe that the whole Bible including St Paul's writings when put in their appropriate historical and Christian context are consistent with the self-evidence that men and women are equal but different.

Finally, Karen says that "many churches teach that people should love the homosexual but hate homosexuality..." Surely, the reason they do this is because they have examined the Bible and come to the conclusion that God DOES condemn same sex relations but that He also urges Christians to love EVERYONE as He loves them. As Karen rightly pointed out, it is this latter command that many Christians forget.

Vikrant Bansal

As an atheist, I whole-heartedly agree that what the Bible might or might not say has no relevance to the right to choose your own sexuality. Anyone of any religion has the right to their own system of values or beliefs - so why should a non-Christian view the Bible with any more or less reverence than the Koran or Torah?

A time for change?

Dear Alex,

Much has been written about the nature of the Union in the last few weeks; understandably as the loss of the ICU Bookstore has given us all something to think about. However with so many issues being discussed, such as including 'Union' in the name of all clubs, it appears to me that something is missing.

Nobody seems to be thinking of the Union as a representative body: something to voice not only our academic worries but general concerns about life at IC. I'm not so much saying that there is nobody around to speak up for us, more that the majority of us can't see that there is.

Being excluded from the Fantasy Sabbatical League I'm forced to fantasise about what would make my ideal Sabb... someone who know's that ICU is not the representative

body it should be, someone who cares enough to make this a priority, and - most importantly - someone who's determined to do something about it.

ICU's biggest nightmare shouldn't be that it is unable to trade; it's that it doesn't fulfil a true representative role, making it irrelevant to the student population that it exists to look after.

Yours etc

Olly Newman (Civil Eng 4)

Taken for granted?

Dear Felix,

It's good to see Imperial students getting involved in the debate on higher education funding (Simon Wistow, *Felix 1076*).

I was interested to see that in the 'Options for Change' box there was no mention of a funding scheme which I believe to be the best option: A return to a full grant at 1979 levels. Obviously Mr Wistow no longer considers this to be an option. The student population is getting too carried away with 'new realism' that we are beginning to question our own rights. We should have the right to a free education, no matter what.

Yours Sincerely,

G Constantinides

Apology

Dear Mr Feakes

I would like to express my concern about the report in Felix today [24th January] about Richard Parker's death, especially inaccuracies in the article.

The specific inaccuracy that most concerns me is that Richard is said to have gone to "a business lunch in his department on 20 December". There was no business lunch in the Biochemistry Department that day and Richard was not drinking in the Department, as implied.

I would also like to comment that it is regrettable that the article attempts to give such detail of the events preceding Richard's death.

With best wishes,

David Chapman

The News Editor replies: We apologise for the minor factual inaccuracy - Mr Parker had in fact been at a business lunch with his company. Details of Mr Parker's last day were included to shed some light on his motivations.

Letters may be edited for length. The guest editor's opinions are not necessarily those of the editor.

Deadline for letters in Felix 1078 is Tuesday 7th February. Letters may be e-mailed to our address: felix@ic.ac.uk



Student Newspaper of Imperial College

Editor Alex Feakes / Advertising Manager Mark Baker

It is perhaps a little ironic that a notice announcing the temporary closure of the Library should sit so close to a letter condemning it. The timing of this stage of the Library's development is also unfortunate coming so soon after another closure of half the Library due to an electrical fault earlier this week. Together, these closures put extra pressure on Library users who may have exams in the coming weeks.

Presumably the scheduling of works in the Library is done in advance, so why was such an inappropriate time chosen? It reminds me of similar situation at the end of last year when Weeks Hall residents were treated to a cacophony of building noise and disruption in the week proceeding the summer exams. The building work was not a major concern; a path was being laid to connect the north side of Prince's Garden's to a newly purchased piece of land behind Weeks. In order that the path be ready for a garden party to mark the opening of the new plot, the path had to be completed during

the revision period of the residents.

They were not impressed and made their feelings known to various members of the College hierarchy. Their disquiet went so far as to advertising the internal telephone number of Ian Caldwell about the Hall along with an encouragement to use it.

Eventually, the College agreed to a rebate on the residents' rent for the disturbance, which accounts for disruption to the students as residents, but not academically wise. However, in the current situation I think some form of compensation to those put out by the Library's closure is unlikely. It would be difficult in any case to identify who should receive remuneration, but also how can the effect of the missing resource be quantified and the result applied to exam scores?

The biologists who have signed the letter have a valid point - the closure is going to affect them - but in the absence of any suitable compensation, I would recommend that you take as many books out as possible.

Produced for and on behalf of Imperial College Union Publications Board.

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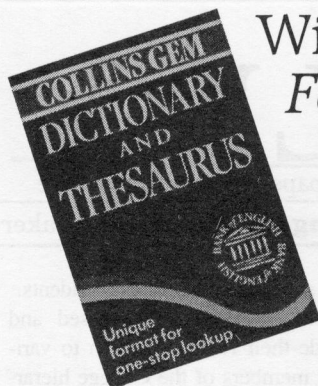
NEWS: MARIA & JACKIE; FEATURES: AFUA; ILLUSTRATIONS: STAVROS; PUZZLES: DUNCAN; GRAPHICS AND LAYOUT: DAVID; WEB EDITOR: LEON; PHOTOGRAPHY: LILY, MATHEW & ROBIN; SPORT: SIMON AND MO; COLLATING LAST ISSUE: DAVID & DAVID

Imperial College & Science Museum Libraries building

As the next stage of the developments within the Library, work has to start on the extension to the main stairs and lifts, and on the removal of the screed on the existing roof surface. We very much regret that this will cause considerable noise and disruption, but it is impossible to postpone the work. We therefore must shut the library during the morning for two weeks:

**From Monday 10th - Saturday 22nd February, the library will be open:
14.00 - 21.00 Monday - Friday and 14.00 - 17.30 on Saturdays**

The Department Libraries will be open as usual through this period, and borrowing allowances are being increased. Up to date information will be available from the IC Library Homepage <http://www.lib.ic.ac.uk/>



Win a Collins Dictionary and Thesaurus with the Felix Prize Crossword

In our continuing series of crossword competitions, *Felix* in conjunction with Collins are adding a prize to your usual Friday morning cerebral activity. On offer is a copy of a **Collins Gem Dictionary and Thesaurus** to the first correct entry drawn out of the hat. Entries into the *Felix* Office by 2.00pm Friday 7th February.

CROSSWORD BY SPHINX

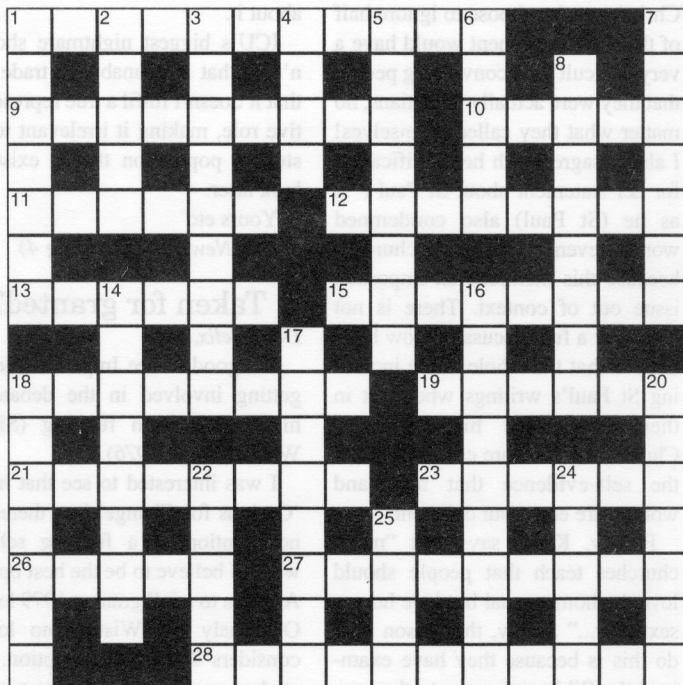
(3,4,2)

Across:

1. Old climber passed the summit. (4,3,4)
9. Rule James rebels at in Israel. (9)
10. Hell fire! (5)
11. Sexual plan Rachel holds back. (6)
12. Tries to set army reserves back with urges. (8)
13. Stanley hugs me for blooming reproduction! (6)
15. Difficulties with questions. (8)
18. Very anxious to tell you where the American lives. (2,1,5)
19. Cuts always made in a ship. (6)
21. The small, soft Scotsman is an actor. (8)
23. Glider made a messy streak. (6)
26. Lug it about with shame. (5)
27. Return and take ones revenge.

Down:

1. Disapproves of things. (7)
2. Queen right - else there's a mistake. (5)
3. Will meant to get drunk after exam. (9)
4. Point where the Spanish head of state finds fish. (4)
5. I am old but still childish. (8)
6. Sovereign island producing cotton. (5)
7. Tim is so upset about the separation. (7)
8. Utter end. (8)
14. Theoretical facade Michael's wrapped up in. (8)
16. Make a meal of advice to scrum when the ball is lost. (9)



17. Choke novice in odd surroundings. (8)
18. Greeting cut short disruptively by a number. (7)
20. King in social position must be in the clouds. (7)
22. Erect reversibly. (3-2)
24. Capital is all right invested in broken toy. (5)
25. The way you get an eye sore. (4)

The solutions to last week's Elimination will appear next week.

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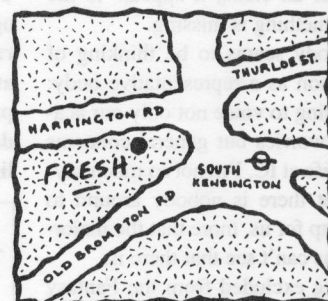
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Mary's cruise through to Semis

As the sun struck the lush green fields of a sleepy Chislehurst on a Tuesday afternoon you could cut the atmosphere with a cliché. The two rival camps of supporters gathered to cheer on their respective teams. While UCH ran out looking around nervously, Mary's stormed out - focused and full of determination. This attitude continued straight from the kickoff into the match.

It was our kick and the forwards charged through to win a ball that should not have been theirs, rucking impressively to a position in front of the posts. They had no option but to kill the ball and Nev slotted away the penalty for three points. From the restart there was a similar story and Nev again put the kick away for six-nil.

The third kick-off saw their forwards getting it right and slowed down our drive but only for our backs to break through with Will Jackson and Ollie Kayes. Faced with this onslaught they infringed again, with Nev opting for the line out this time. From here Tremmor won good ball and Bill Tuff drove into the heart of the UCH defence. As the forwards neared the line Phil Sauve at scrum-half showed he too could drive and forced the ball over the line.

After dominating for much of the first quarter UCH started to get back into the game. First of all they tried the direct approach, only to find the tackles of Lidely and Jackson a bit hard for their liking. The kicking strategy was next employed but

Platty, Lee and Rogers were more than a match for it. They managed to gain three points, however, after an infringement in the ruck was penalised. Their supporters cheered the first points they had scored against St Mary's for quite a while.

Whilst their celebrations continued we got back into the task at hand. Ban and Tremmor won good balls from lineouts and Tufty and Sankey were both clearing and driving. Some incisive running from Ollie sent Simon Rogers away to score next to the posts.

The half ended with brief exchanges between the two sides, with UCH beginning to play with more urgency, but our line never wavered. The only bad points were another penalty for them and Ollie having to go off with a broken nose. Rob Elliot replaced him and did a fine job starting where Ollie had left off.

The second half started with some more power play from our forwards, but as it progressed things again became more frantic as befits a cup match. They pressed again and won another penalty. The only highlight of this half was another run from Roger - breaching through the line from full-back to settle the match twenty-five to nine.

We progress to the semi-finals knowing that arch-rivals Charring Cross will play no farther part in the competition as they crashed out thirty to eight against UMDS.

St Mary's 25 - 9 UCH

Fatboy crowned King

With the football seconds looking to build on last weeks glorious victory, the game began with captain Steve picking a formation literally out of a hat and urging the lads to "Show 'em what we can do". Unfortunately this produced the most boring first half in history, with all concerned agreeing the we were "worse than the Villa" [Arsenal, surely - Sports Eds].

The second half saw the arrival of Dave who replaced Andy, and Dixon who Steve enticed onto the pitch with the promise of pies. With the sun at our backs and the wind in our hair (Phil's, by the smell of it) we tore into King's with Loz, Felix and Si all going close. The defence

looked sound, with German breaking legs whenever he felt it was necessary and Rob playing a blinder at right back. Dixon was having none of this, however, and he combined beautifully with Donal in goal to let Steve through to score his second own goal in two games. Bloater could not be denied his glory as he summoned up his inner qi and calmly stroked the ball with the King's defenders nowhere to be seen. This was followed up by a flick-on to Martin who put the ball into the net after kicking their keeper in the teeth. Good work fella!

IC IIs 2 - 1 King's College IIs

With all the London league BUSA matches over (and won) the men's fencing team now face their first direct elimination BUSA match on the February 5th against Nottingham University.

THE LATEST SCORE

Introducing a new regular "external" sports column by the ever talented and good-looking Dave Robinson.

England have now managed just two test victories in five winter tours and both of those when the series were lost and Australia and the West Indies had already given up. This appalling record was furthered earlier this week when England failed to win. Unlike most I don't think that this is an easy tour. Zimbabwe or New Zealand away was always going to be tough, but we should have enough killer instinct to wipe out anyone who slips up.

England's attack on the first day and in the late stages of New Zealand's second innings was abysmal. Even Atherton himself admitted it was the worst his side had ever bowled. But shouldn't he have been more assertive in attacking? Couldn't he have surrounded the heroic Danny Morrison with at least six fielders when Tuffnell bowled? Surely he should have instructed Mullaly to give the tail end the kind of treatment dished out to us by the West Indies in 1994? Two 90 mph bouncers an over would have softened them sufficiently. And if England's best couldn't dispose of 'the world's worst test batsman', then why didn't he have an over or two himself? At least then he could say he that he had tried everything. Instead after the match he spouted on about the match not being won til the winning runs are struck. Shouldn't he have explained this to his team rather than soldiering on hoping to knock them over eventually? Captains should make things happen rather than wait for them.

The obvious upshot from England's failure over the last few seasons is to relieve Atherton of the captaincy and change the squad. Unfortunately unlike football and rugby all of England's best are

already selected. There are no natural replacements for any of the positions, the only candidate for captain with experience would be Stewart and his dips in form make Atherton look consistent.

Sadly, it looks likely that the tests in Wellington and here next summer will follow a similar script with Atherton, like Gooch, not going until the Ashes are lost at home.

Even worse than national humiliation down under is the proposed plan for a two up two down system for promotion to football's Premiership. Although I never saw the Football League do any favours for Kidderminster, Macclesfield or Stevenage, I do have some sympathy. The best in the First Division are becoming stronger than those at the base of the top flight. Barnsley, Bolton and Sheffield United all play better than the bottom half and would give West Ham, Southampton and Middlesborough a run for their considerable riches. The British system relies on the realisation of aspirations and hopes. Any attempts to stifle this will create a less interesting national game. Any team out of the race will see gates and funds plummet. The teams up there have had a windfall that effectively cuts off all but the clubs managed by geniuses. If the entry is reduced to two a season the best players will stay in reserve teams rather than drop down a division with the prospect of promotion and consequently any side that goes up will do a Swindon, conceding over a hundred goals and getting only a handful of points. The only consolation is that the football league will be able to say no - but will they hold out with the huge financial bribe the big clubs can and no doubt will offer in an attempt to buy security?

Thrice-conquering hockey babes kick butt

It was muddy, it was cold and it was shite, but the ladies firsts were out there on a grass pitch at Royal Holloway to fight for a place in the final of the UL plate. Half time approached with no goals scored but that's not surprising as half the team - especially Basil - spent most of the time in the puddles on their bums. The second half included one extremely beautiful slide tackle from Sarah Corneille (!) and in the last five minutes our star player, Lucy "Humming bird" Robinson, got the well deserved goal. One-nil for the

IC and off to the finals we go.

IC I 1 - 0 Royal Holloway I

Next was the league match against QMW. Great hockey from the forwards, great hockey from the mid-field, great hockey from the backs and Laura I'm sure you would've been great if the ball had come your way. IC swept the opposition away with a ten-nil win!

IC I 10 - 0 QMW I

Wednesday saw another game at QMW and another victory with a nice goal from Snotface.

IC I 3 - 0 QMW I

SPORT SHORTS:

RSM Rugby beat Heathrow in a show of youthful vigour and pure aggression in the face of tough opposition.

FELIX SPORT

Goldies flattened by double Dekker

On the 22nd of this month, IC football seconds produced a stunning second half performance to win a game that Goldsmith's led by four goals to one at the interval. A strike either side of half time by Dekker, the Dutch Destroyer, and four second half goals ensured that IC took all three points and gave their dim promotion aspirations a flicker of hope.

With goalkeeper Cook making his senior debut and the heart of defence falling victim to flu, captain Fleming had to shuffle the pack and come up with a formation that could thwart a fast and physical Goldsmith's line-up. The unfamiliarity at the back caused IC problems and in a sweeping move Goldsmiths scored their first. From the centre IC immediately started their usual fluid passing and within five minutes had levelled through Dekker with a clinical shot just inside the post from outside the box.

This perhaps should have precipitated IC's ascendancy, instead the defence pressed the self-destruct button. Cook was the first culprit - poor handling from a bread-and-butter shot gave the centre forward the ball who finished from a seemingly impossible angle. Next was Fleming - from a lofted, defence-splitting ball he found himself under pressure from the forward and lobbed the advancing Cook from fully twenty-five yards out. A spectacular effort, unfortunately in the wrong goal! Soon afterwards in left-back Siverns

found himself in near identical circumstances and, so as not to be outdone by his captain, lobbed Cook again.

The second half was a different story. Goldsmiths hardly touched the ball as it was stroked about the pitch by the reds. The defence was as tight as a vice; the midfield masterful with Ubogu winning everything; the strikers a constant menace to the bewildered Goldsmith's defence. Soon the patience and pressure produced a goal - a loose ball came to Ferguson on the edge of the area, he dropped a shoulder and floated it beautifully into the top corner.

Minutes later IC were awarded a heavily disputed indirect free-kick from six yards after a back pass. Shanidze touched it to Dekker who rifled it above the heads of the players on the line.

Still the pressure continued unabated and still Goldsmiths found no answer. An high corner from Schroeder was headed down, towards goal by Ubogu. Dunsby, in the thick of the action as he had been throughout, received it; turned and shot all in one motion - doubling his account for the season and squaring the game at four each.

Both teams by now sensed the inevitable and when the ball came to Archbald in the Goldsmith's area minutes from time he efficiently stuck it away and finished the match. The seconds: first for class, first for entertainment.

IC IIs 5 - 4 Goldsmiths

IC Skiing Team excel - at last

Despite a lot of bad luck in the past few races, the IC Ski Team came fighting back last Saturday evening with a strong team performance.

Dan Figueras Niero, Rufina Emo, Nick Hursemex, Alex Cherdel and Xavier Grosliedie travelled up to Hemel Hempstead to participate in the "Huskies" race and achieved some excellent results with some inspired individual efforts.

The race consisted of two individual, timed runs down a slalom course; followed by a team dual slalom. In the individual slalom, Rufina was placed first in her age

category despite a blunder by the organisers in believing that we were fielding a male team, and second overall in the ladies with a total time of 35 seconds exactly, whilst Nick was placed second in his category with a time of 33.96s. Furthermore the team won the individual combined slalom event with a total time of 140.68s and were placed second in the team dual slalom. These impressive results are a definite boost to team morale. Keep it up lads and Rufina!

Team Combined Slalom: 1st

Team Dual Slalom: 2nd

The fourths go marching on...

As usual, we won, they lost. However, they didn't just lose, they bore the brunt of the fourth's most impressive performance this season, and were thrashed into submission by a team seemingly possessed by the spirit of Brazil 1970.

The pressure built in the first half, a shot off the inside of their past and another blatantly handled on the line. With the ref still in the wrong half our calls for a penalty were ignored. But justice came with a fantastic diving header - albeit by a Holloway defender - which put us one up at half-time.

And so the floodgates opened. The Holloway team was helpless in defending wave after wave of our attacks. Like Moses parting the Red Sea we pulled apart their defence with our vision and movement.

Adam finally scored after hitting

...and on...

The fourths are now officially top of the league. With all the other Imperial football teams struggling we are surely the best football team in Imperial. This will be confirmed when we win BUSA(!), and sooner still beat the IC seconds in a challenge match in few weeks time.

Chris scored in the first minute of

the post in his last three games and Morgan shrugged off defenders to slot in the third. The blitzkrieg on the Holloway box led to a swivelled shot by Pistol Pete - our number four. Nak put on a star performance, taking no prisoners and scoring brilliantly twice from twenty yards. All this without Dazzler anywhere to be seen...

We worked together like a well oiled unit (ooer) to demolish the league leader's pride and self-esteem. With a game in hand and three points between us and the top the championship looks within our grasp.

Inevitably they scored the obligatory goal from a corner but who cares? Roll on the last thirty-two in BUSA and the grudge match against the seconds.

IC IVs 6 - 1 Royal Holloway

the match and we never looked back. The graceful Morgan danced through to score, and the rotund Darren slotted another home with our defence hardly troubled. Surely we will walk this league as Champions [if our enormous egos don't get in the way - Sports Eds].

IC IVs 3 - 0 QMWC

RESULTS

FOOTBALL

IC IIs 2 - 1 King's

IC IIs 1 - 2 St Mary's

IC IVs 6 - 1 Royal Holloway Vs

IC IVs 3 - 0 QMWC IVs

SKIING

Team Combined Slalom : 1st

Team Dual Slalom : 2nd

RUGBY

C&G 7 - 31 Royal Free Hospital

St Mary's 25 - 9 UC Hospital

LADIES HOCKEY

IC Ist XI 3 - 0 Queen Mary