

SP

18
January
1999

FELIX

KEEP THE CAT FREE EST. 1949

Issue
1132

The Students' Newspaper at Imperial College

Union to Expand into East Beit

The Union looks set to dramatically increase its facilities in August next year, with expansion into both the East and West Wings of Beit Quad now approved by College.

Although the Beit basements were theoretically guaranteed for student use two years ago, controversy erupted in November when initial plans for the Beit Hall redevelopment suggested that the net gain for the Union would be negligible (*Felix* 1127). However, the last meeting of the development committee appears to have overturned this decision, favouring increased social and recreational space, in line with the recommendations of the 1996 Committee on Social & Recreational Space.

According to senior sources, credit for this dramatic planning turnaround rests with ICU Manager Mandy Hurd. Having persuaded the planning

By David Roberts



Photo: Jonas The East Wing basement as it presently stands - not a pretty site.

committee of the benefits (both social and financial) of the change in outlook, committee chair Professor Alan Swan-

son is then believed to have taken up the Union's cause at higher levels, resulting in this week's key decision.

The additional basement space means that the Union can now go ahead with a comprehensive redevelopment plan, aimed to provide more adequate provision for club meetings and better student services. Consequently, the East Wing basement will become home to a new Union Job Shop, alongside the Advice Centre and College Chaplaincy, plus RAG and CAG offices. On the other side of the Quad, a new Media Centre will house Felix, IC Radio and STOIC (student TV), plus practice rooms for College bands, and the Science Fiction Society library. The final act of the renovation will see the present Beit Hall Bar converted into a new home for the Islamic Prayer Room.

Although at present only in the planning stage, work on the Quad is due to begin this July, with the new hall and Union facilities opening in summer 2000.

Perfect Power Plan Set in Motion

Few people can have missed the bright red temporary boilerhouse in Dalby Court, but why is it there? It is the intermediate stage in a project to modernise the college's energy supply, which took a significant step towards completion in the week before term, when two new Combined Heating and Power (CHP) engines were installed below the Electrical Engineering building.

For the past thirty-seven years, the College has been heated by an oil-fired boiler plant, supplemented with hot water from the Natural History Museum. The current boilers have reached the end of their working life and are now being replaced. The new system will generate 7.75MW of electricity, enough to meet most of the College's needs, as well as providing enough steam to heat the campus. Electricity from the National Grid will also be used for peak demand and overnight. The new gas fired engines are 20m long and weigh forty tonnes each; they are expected to reduce the College's CO₂ output by 7500 tonnes per annum. Although the project

By Gareth Morgan

will cost around eight million pounds, it will save over £800 000 a year. There is also the promising possibility of selling surplus electricity to the Grid if this proves

to be economic.

The project is due to be completed over the summer, and will be handed over to College in November. The boiler house in Dalby Court will be removed in September, so that a new car park can be built underneath it.

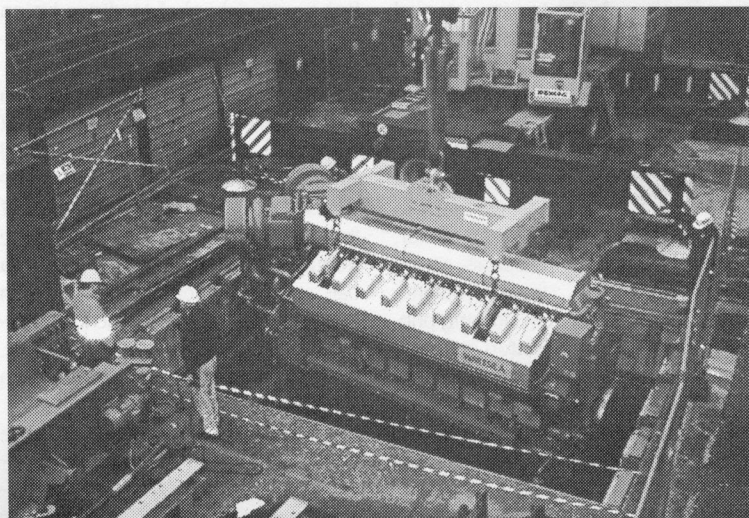


Photo: LES

The forty tonne engines are lowered into position

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Meningitis Strikes Again

The lethal meningitis bacteria has once again afflicted campus, hospitalising a first year chemist.

The student returned home having celebrated New Year's Eve in Tizard Hall, with friends. Later the following week he called his girlfriend, also an IC student, and complained of ill health. When he described his symptoms, she suggested he seek immediate medical attention. As a result he was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit of the Royal Surrey Hospital on Thursday 7 January exhibiting a number of the danger signs: a severe headache, disorientation and an aver-

By Andrew Ofori

sion to light. Within 48 hours the student was placed on the wards having made a significant recovery and is now expected to return to full health.

Dr John Hassard, Tizard Hall warden and the Department of Public Health have located those who came into contact with the individual and antibiotics have been administered. Dr Hassard viewed the student's recovery as "very good news" and felt it could be attributed to "decisive action, recognising the symptoms and not

panicking".

A "well attended" hall meeting was called, where Dr Weinreb (chief doctor at the IC Health Centre) addressed the Tizard community. She reassured them that due to the amount of time that has passed "the extra risk is now absolutely minuscule" but emphasised that the "season for meningococcal infection is still with us till the Spring and I urge everyone to be vigilant. The important thing to know is that the disease can develop very rapidly, sometimes within a couple of hours. Early symptoms may be similar to those you get with a flu or hangover".

FELIX
KEEP THE CAT FREE EST. 1949

Issue 1132

18 January 1999

Editor: Ed Sexton

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& Jason Ramanathan

Arts Editor: Helena Cochemé

Games Editor: Gary Smith

Clubscene: Giles Morrison

& Joel Lewis

Sports Editor: Gus Paul

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Winter Wonderland

By Sanjay Sikdar

On 18 December, despite the capital's numerous attractions, Christmas revellers flocked to the Union in a record attendance for the newly expanded venue.

dB's played host to two live bands, the first of which was Specimen A. Initially disenchanted with the infamous IC apathy, they succeeded in filling the floor with their big beat and high octane compositions. This was followed by the Repliants and true to their name they produced thought provoking interpretations of various famous covers. The band's rendition of one celebrated Nirvana song

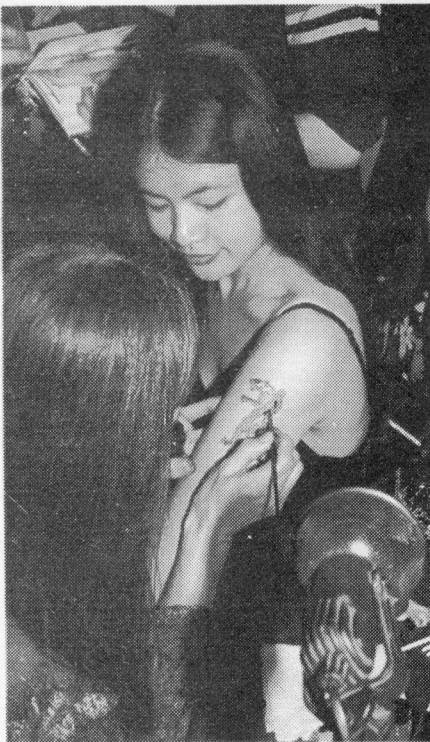


Photo: Brett You'll regret it in the morning

inflamed the passions of those in the mosh pit and several Union stewards were called upon to mitigate the skirmishes.

Other noteworthy distractions

included a snow board machine, though judging by people's efforts it was quite easy to see why there is still a dearth of winter Olympians from this country. The chill out room was elegantly adorned with various drapes depicting scenes from the chronicles of Narnia. The Tarot card reader for the evening resided there and was continually engaged by Imperial students keen to confirm their lucrative careers.

The casino in the Union gym was a major attraction as were the tattooists. The only problem was that nobody was prepared to have one done in an unusual location despite the sincere requests of Felix's ace photographer. The gambling produced many a drunken loser, especially on the Russian roulette. Some went for the all or nothing principle while one inebriated gambler claimed he could predict on which half the wheel the ball would fall by a careful application of the Doppler effect.

Library Theft: Arrest

By Ed Sexton

A handbag stolen from the central library last Monday (11 January), was later recovered by security. The incident resulted in one arrest being made by the police.

Suspicions were raised at around 4.30pm when two men, who were not members of the College, were noticed wandering around the library. Security were called to investigate and stopped the suspects for questioning. One of the suspects was found to be in possession of a lady's handbag, which he had hidden underneath his jumper. The bag was later found to belong to a

woman who had been working on the third floor of the library. The police were called to the scene and arrested the man who had been in possession of the bag. Barry Woodgate, Chief Security Officer for IC School of Medicine, reminded all members of the College not to leave their belongings unattended when on College property at any campus.

Referring to the incident in the JCR at the end of last term [Felix 1131], Mr Woodgate stated that police were still investigating the case. As before, anyone with any information should contact the police officers listed in last week's article.

Medical RAG

By David Roberts

Last Sunday saw the beginning of the first ever IC School of Medicine Union Rag Week, with a Rag Dash to Edinburgh.

The week combines events which traditionally formed part of either St Mary's or Charing Cross RAG, and should hopefully raise tens of thousands of pounds for charity. A variety of fundraising events will take place throughout the week, culminating in a ball at the Shepherds Bush Empire on Friday where the Medical School President, Wade Gayed, will be guest DJ. Tickets can be purchased for £15 from the ICSMSU office on each site.

A series of RAG games will take

place this evening (Charing Cross, 7pm), designed to conclusively prove which campus is best. Tuesday night sees a soiree (Mary's, 6pm) and a revue & hypnotist (Charing Cross, 7pm), whilst Wednesday sees an 'Invasion of London' in the early hours, followed in the evening by a Battle of the Bands Bop (Charing Cross, 7:30pm). Finally, Thursday sees a horde of medics descend on an unsuspecting London for the Circle Line Pub Crawl finishing up at a post crawl bop (Mary's, 11pm).

For more information about the week contact the ICSMSU RAG Chair Mike Smith on 0181 846 7048, or drop into the RAG office at Charing Cross.

More information on ICU RAG Week (which kicks off next Saturday) can be found on pages 11-14.



In brief...

Wrong Number

A misprint has led to "every man and his dog wanting to play rugby" with one unfortunate London resident. Due to her number mistakenly appearing in the BUSA list of contact details for IC School of Medicine, one individual's home has been plagued with calls enquiring about sporting fixtures. Could all concerned please note the contact for ICSM is: **0171 262 3025**.

Cannabis Clinic

Clinical trials of cannabis have been announced by the British Pharmaceutical Society. Doctors in Hammersmith and Plymouth hospitals may start work in the next few months. Nine hundred patients, suffering from multiple sclerosis or post-operative pain, will be given either herbal cannabis or purified cannabinoids such as THC. If the trials are successful, cannabis could be made available on prescription within three years, according to *The Guardian*. Meanwhile, the first harvest of legal cannabis plants is being dried at a top-secret location in the south of England.

Posh Parentage

Imperial College has been placed sixth in the national posh stakes with around 70% of its students having what is deemed to be a middle class back-

ground. The top spots were unsurprisingly filled by Cambridge and Oxford where about four-fifths of the intake come from the middle or upper-classes. The champion of the working class was the University of Central Lancashire with under one in three of their intake coming from a professional/managerial socio-economic background. Imperial was particularly outstanding when it came to its ethnic intake, however, scoring one of the highest percentages in the country.

Nightline

London nightline are currently looking for caring, friendly volunteers. They are a confidential listening organisation supplying practical information for London students. The student volunteers would need to give up three nights a term.

Volunteers gain valuable experience and the obvious satisfaction from knowing they are helping others. Nightline also offers the opportunity to become more involved with every aspect of the organisation, from marketing to training. The helpline also has an active social dimension and gives volunteers the chance to meet students from all over London.

There is an introductory talk at 7pm on Tuesday 9 February at ULU, room 2C. Volunteers are available to answer questions on the helpline: **0171 631 0101**.

Grandmaster To Challenge IC Students

It's not every day that you get to tackle a Grandmaster over the chessboard... On your own? No way! But with a few friends to keep you company? Hmm, maybe...

On Monday 25 January you will have that chance. Dr Jonathan Mestel from the Maths Department, one of the top Grandmasters in the country, will be challenged by up to 40 opponents simultaneously.

He's good... but he's not invincible. With 40 games to concentrate on at the same time, he's got a tough job on his hands. You may just get lucky. You only need to draw and you'll be a hero (or heroine). Even if you lose you'll be

in good company, you'll have some fun and find out just how good a Grandmaster really is.

Anyone at the College can take up the challenge. You don't have to be a Grandmaster yourself, you don't have to be a member of the chess club, you only need to know how to play.

The event will start at 6.30pm and finish by 10pm. The location will be announced later. There is no charge for entering. Latecomers can be accommodated, and spectators are welcome. To reserve a place in the line-up on Monday 25 January, or to find out more about the Chess Club, contact Barry Gale (Email b.j.gale@ic.ac.uk, tel. **0181 316 4132**).



The Holland Club, a members only club for IC staff and some postgraduates (e.g. Felix columnist Simon Baker), is situated underneath the west end of the Sheffield Building. The bar received a brief refurbishment over the holidays - but don't worry, all you finance conscious club treasurers, the work was paid for by profits made in the Club and not out of college funds.

Photo: Jonas

ICU Council

The next meeting will take place at 6:30 on Monday 25 January in the Clore Lecture Theatre (in the Huxley Building).

Items on the agenda include the future of the CCUs and the need for a sabbatical president for the Medical School Union.

The meeting is open to all, and all interested parties are advised to attend.

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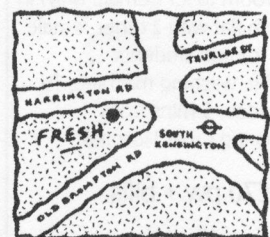
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London SW7 3ES

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LT Delays? Surely not...

Dear Felix,

I'm having a lot of trouble in getting my student Photocard from the London Underground. I sent an application form on the 6th of October with the £1 coin, photograph and all the other stuff they require. But I didn't receive anything. So at the beginning of December I phoned them to ask what was happening with my application. They told me they had not received it. That is quite hard to believe that this kind of envelope (I mean big, yellow and printed) can get lost...

But anyway I sent a second application form on the 3rd of December with the £1 coin and all the other stuff. Today (12th of January) I phoned them. I mean, I'm becoming a bit nervous about getting this student photocard... And guess what they've told me! This time they received my application form but they refused it. As I'm a PhD student, I sent them a photocopy of my registration form as an Internal postgraduate student of the University of London stating clearly in capital letters that I'm a full-time student. This is a very official form on an Imperial College letterhead and the signature of the Registry. However they told me that they accept only the registration cover note (you know, the red sheet with the college stamp you get when you register). I think it is really unfair as it is written in the application form that they need 'a clear photocopy of a document to confirm your full-time status' and this is exactly what I sent them! Furthermore a friend of mine sent exactly the same registration form and got her student photocard in two weeks!

The worst thing in this entire story is I wasted a lot of money buying a weekly travelcard every week as I was expecting to receive my student photocard fairly quickly. And as you know, or should know, buying weekly travelcard is more expensive than buying monthly travelcard.

I begin to believe that the London Underground is doing whatever it can to

delay the process to get your student photocard. I mean if they really wanted to help students, it should be possible to get your student photocard in the same way you get a normal photocard: in two minutes at every underground desk!

I would like to know if I'm the only one to have troubles in getting the student photocard. **SO IF YOU'RE HAVING / HAVE HAD PROBLEMS TO GET YOUR STUDENT PHOTOCARD, PLEASE E-MAIL ME.**

Capucine
(e.mail: c.watine@ic.ac.uk)

I know that this is not an uncommon problem. David Hellard, ICU President, is currently looking into the matter (see Presidential Talk-Back this issue), so hopefully there will soon be a resolution. In the mean time, I suggest anyone who has experienced similar problems emails Mr Hellard (president@ic.ac.uk) - Ed

Optimism for Equal Ops

Dear Sir,

Your editorial on "Equal Ops - the New Sexism?" uses your belief that women "think differently than men" as a basis to question whether women are as equally suited to science as men. Your statements seem worded to avoid excessive offence, but nevertheless they are a crass generalisation. It is a question for the psychologists, and frankly rather irrelevant in this instance. Every individual studying at IC was accepted to do so on the basis of A-Level grades/interviews which were supposed to indicate their suitability for science. At no point should their gender have been an issue.

It is easy to explain away the gender disparity at IC with such arguments as yours, but these can often be a veil for "the old sexism", the kind which kept eminently capable women out of many professions for centuries. Both you and Susannah Humphrey (in her piece on women in science) are right to blame the

sexism endemic in wider society, but this is something we at IC have no sway over, for the time being at least. Admitting more suitably skilled women to IC is the first step to changing this, and the college's efforts under the WISE scheme are laudable. While I agree entirely with Ms Humphrey that positive discrimination/affirmative action (e.g. Insisting on admitting 50% women) is a flawed philosophy likely to exacerbate the problems, I do not share her pessimism pertaining to the wider scientific world. A new generation of dynamic women scientists is needed to sweep away the residual bigots and their outdated prejudices, and IC graduates should be at the fore in this.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Lewis
(ICU Equal Opportunities Officer)

Brightening Prospects?

Dear Felix,

I have a few quick comments on Claire Bayntun's article (advert?), 'Brightening Prospects' in issue 1131, about travelling abroad.

I taught in a summer camp for children near Moscow in 1995, and can wholeheartedly recommend the experience. I came back a much changed person, and not only in that I had become a Vodka connoisseur and had lost a lot of weight!

However, my word of warning is that at that time, 'Teaching Abroad' had quite a bad reputation for not providing much support after you got to the developing country of your choice. I will not go into further details as they are only vague recollections of second-hand information that is 4 years old. And besides, I was left pretty much on my own by the company I went with. I think it is the way of things when you are 3 hours journey away from the nearest city, with a phone

line that worked for 2 weeks in 7. It is for you to make it a worthwhile experience, not them.

Happy travelling,

Jonathan Hastings
Pet. Eng. PG

Campaign for Clayponds

Dear Mr Sexton,

I am a postgraduate student at Imperial, and I am writing to you about the lack of a common room at Clayponds.

I was a little disappointed when I first arrived in London at the lack of a bar / common room at Clayponds, where it would be possible to relax and meet other students. After making a few enquiries, I was told by several sources that permission for such facilities had been granted by the relevant College authorities, and that the money to build them had also been sanctioned in spirit.

There are many students at Clayponds who arrive knowing no-one else in England, let alone London, and given the stressful nature of this city, it would be worth the £15k or £20k it would cost to build such a small facility, bringing Clayponds in line with every other Imperial College hall.

I have spoken to many of my fellow residents, and they all agree that a common room would improve their quality of life tremendously.

Thanks for your time,

S Virmani

I myself have visited Clayponds, and wholeheartedly agree that it needs a common room. As far as I can see, there is no good reason why it shouldn't be built right now. Can anyone in college enlighten me? - Ed

Deadline for letters is 12noon Wednesday.

Letters may be edited for length, but will not be altered in any other way. Letters need not be signed, but a swipe card must be shown when submitting anonymous letters.

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Sinfonia 21 Resident at IC presents a concert

Friday 29 January 1999, 7.30pm in the Great Hall

Conductor -	Stefan Asbury	Soprano -	Rosemary Hardy
Britten - Prelude and Fugue		Julian Anderson - Poetry Nearing Silence	
Jonathan Harvey - From Silence		Shostakovich - Chamber Symphony	
Charles Ives - Three Places in New England		(arr. Barshai)	

Booking and information line open from 29th December 0171 594 9359
£10/ (concessions £4)
Imperial College Student Price £3 (Student number must be supplied)



Ecstasy is the Unknown

Without any conscious effort by me, it seems as if drugs are back in the lime-light in Felix. The article on ecstasy [page 7] is, in my opinion, balanced and fair. One argument that has always irritated me in drugs debates is the old 'if you enjoy taking drugs you can't be enjoying everyday life / must be depressed / are probably mentally unsound' etc etc. Rhubarb and fiddlesticks, as my father would say. Ecstasy is a great drug - I doubt whether anyone who has taken it in amicable surroundings could claim otherwise. Its recreational value is undeniable. The question is how high is the price for that rushing euphoria? And the answer is that, with a drug only decades old, we have no way of yet knowing its true dangers, or benefits.

Whatever your stance on the legalisation of cannabis as a recreational drug, I hope that most people applaud the trials shortly to be undertaken at Plymouth and Hammersmith hospitals [page 3]. I'm sure that MS sufferers all over Britain will, anyway. It's interesting to speculate how far the term 'medicinal use' could stretch. Headaches? Probably. Mild depression? Possibly. How about writer's

block on a Biology essay? Hopefully. After all, surely creative ills are as important as physical ones... Anyway, this leads me nicely on to

Creative Arts

There aren't enough arty people at IC. No surprise there, I hear you say. We all have an artistic side, though, and most of us express it through one medium or another. Most of us probably also think we are 'bad' at art (whatever that means). The story in this week's issue [page 8] is a welcome (and very good) change from the nitty rationality of science. Imperial does actually have an arts magazine; Phoenix. It is always after contributions, be they prose, poetry, drawings or whatever. Phoenix is now an annual magazine, reduced from the popularity it enjoyed under its founder, H G Wells, by the birth of Felix in 1949...

Fifty Years Ago

...which means, of course, that Felix is half a century old this year. Fortuitously for me Felix's birthday is next Autumn, after my term of office has

ended, so I'll avoid the dreaded 'collect all the editors from the last fifty years and dump them in a bar' party. I was thinking, however, of printing bits and pieces from those early years as 1999 progresses. Which is where you come in. If anyone has been at IC for, how shall I put it, a substantial amount of time, or has relations who were here in the decade after the war, let me know. I'm also missing some years of Felix from the sixties and seventies, if anyone has an attic full of back copies.

Write Travel (with no links)

Those lovely (!) people who make the Rough Guide series of books have offered me a deal. I print regular blurb about their books, and they'll give a Rough Guide to someone writing a travel feature for Felix. So if you know a bit about some far flung corner of this world, and fancy getting yourself a guide book on it, let me know. Hopefully we'll be starting in a week or two. Perhaps a similar scheme involving free bitter would tempt some sports teams to write match reports next week...?

- Ed



The Week Ahead

Monday

- Games Meeting 12.30pm
For PC, PSX & N64 reviewers.
- Film Meeting 1pm
For all you cinema-going types.
- News Meeting 1.30pm

Tuesday

- News Meeting 12pm
To review progress and discuss new news

Wednesday

- Late News Meeting 2pm

Friday

- Arts Meeting 12pm
For theatre and museum goers
- Photography & News Meeting 1.20pm
For ALL photographers and news writers
- Music Meeting 1.30pm
For ALL single and album reviewers





Well, here we are again, happy as can be. Unless, of course, you are one of the unfortunate ones who have exams to do as we speak, for which you have my sympathy. I hope that you all had a good Christmas, affording you the opportunity to recharge the batteries prior to getting annihilated on New Year's Eve. For my part, as is now traditional, I ventured to a little shindig at Alexandra Palace, boppin' the night away with all you youngsters (though I was surprised and disappointed to see virtually nobody else from IC there). Damn fine evening, and well worth the charge of interfering with the Royal Mail that was nearly brought against a good friend of mine, who became locked in a mail room in pursuit of tickets for said event. It's a long story, the details of which can be recounted if you cross my palm with bitter.

So far, as is to be expected, it's been a bit quiet at Imperial. It is reassuring to see that Estates' passion for signs is not diminished as we approach the millennium. The big silver installation outside the BMS is certainly a departure from the blue ones, both in colour and legibility; I was beginning to think that my eyes were going, but since I only had them checked a fortnight ago, it must be the grey on grey colour combination. Still, we can't have the medics slumming it with the blue efforts. Perhaps it will be easier to read when it has been gilded and encrusted with diamonds. The Union seems to have achieved a bit of a victory in its battle for a new licence, giving the building a sensible fire limit. Hopefully this will mean an end to the paranoid officiousness displayed by some of the stewards, whose uncharacteristic behaviour was so over the top as to be laughable. Congratulations to all concerned.

With that milestone out the way, you can now focus your efforts on serving consistently good beer, a slightly bigger undertaking, I'll wager.

The Euro, for the benefit of those living on Mars of late, has now arrived, with more of a whimper than a bang. Despite the ludicrous pronouncements by various European politicians, who proclaimed it a success after two hours trading, it is far too early to tell if it will be successful. One early benefit has been to clarify the future direction of the EU. Anyone who claimed that talk of federalism was mere anti-Europe propaganda should have been suitably humbled by Franco-German statements on the Euro being the first step to full integration. This, of course, was painfully obvious to many people, who were particularly troubled by the political dimension that the French were so keen to promote, with talk of creating a currency designed to insulate Europe from the menace of globalisation. It is almost touching that grown-up people still hold such ridiculous views. The Germans have

also made no secret of their desire to use the single currency as a tool to achieve tax 'harmonisation.' For the uninitiated, this is an ingenious plan that enables Germany to sustain its crippling rates of corporate taxation by imposing an equally damaging regime on the rest of Europe. Many European nations have no problem with this, because they already have an equally outmoded and unhelpful tax system, but Britain would pay an incredibly high price for such a move, aside from the grave sovereignty issues raised by such a move. The argument as to whether Britain should sign up to the Euro has moved on. It is not so much an issue of success or failure of the currency, but what would follow from membership, namely an inexorable drift toward federalism. In the words of the great philosopher, is that what you want, 'cos that's what'll 'appen.

The shifting sands of sovereignty (first issue of the year, and he's started alliterating) will be an issue this year within the loose confederation of tribes that is Imperial. Moves are again afoot to

tinker with the CCUs, a topic which has given gainful employment to sabbaticals since the dawn of time. Whenever this issue comes up, it inevitably stirs great passions in all of about half a dozen people across the campus. Even by Imperial standards, the supreme indifference that greets any such efforts is incredible, and very telling. The recent history of the CCUs has not been a happy one, dominated by cockups and people elected on a democratic mandate of a couple of percent of College members, who are incapable of running a bath, let alone the RCSU, C&GU and so forth. The problem stems from the fact that the people running these august bodies seem to see their organisations as rivals to ICU. Consequently, they establish vast numbers of posts for the most trivial tasks, with which they need not concern themselves. CCUs seek to duplicate all aspects of the Union, so we have welfare officers, academic affairs officers etc etc. Such over-representation merely generates more paperwork and committee meetings with precious little tangible benefit for students. The clubs issue raised by the ICU President is less controversial, though on balance they would lose none of their identity and it would purely make things simpler to administer. As it is, the only activities that the CCUs need worry about are ents, principally in Freshers' week, their publications, however execrable they may be, and alumni relations. Leaner organisations, stripped of the legions of self-opinionated bores so lacking in organisational skills that they couldn't even find gainful employ within ICU, would over time become more popular and successful, rather than the pitiful shadows of their former selves that they are at the moment.

Simon Baker



Voice of Reason

Presidential Talk-Back

Since the beginning of term, the Union has been inundated with complaints about the London Transport scheme (thank you Michelle for giving half of your time to them.) Applications have been lost, rejected, stolen and as a result students are having to part with budgeted money. Having complained several times verbally, in letters and through the ULU chain to the company with no joy, I decided to try and track down the source of their problems.

There are very few lines of complaint for students: the telephone service is ineffective; you can find out whether or not your application has been processed or rejected, but complaints are never logged or recorded and the phrase 'brick wall' springs to mind. I spoke for quite a long time to one of the operators, making them explain the shambles and of course there were 'vary-

ing reasons.' The most obvious one was that there could be a dodgy postman taking all of the envelopes to make a bit of cash before they reach LT. The solution to this is to send your applications in a white envelope. I also found out that they accept cheques, just make them out to London Transport. LT also blamed the mail house; the forms are processed at LT, checking whether they are valid or not and then the information is sent onto the mailing house who send out the cards.

David Hellard, ICU President



Next year there is doubt as to whether the same mailing house will be used; let's just hope not. This does still not account for the time periods from sending a letter off to the rejection letter or the high number of 'inadequate' applications.

There are still some issues that need to be settled with London Transport, the most obvious being access to the scheme for all students (not just under 25s) and an increase in the period that the card is usable to all twelve months of the year,

as PhD and clinical medicine students are still studying. Hopefully these will be resolved by the end of the year within the University of London Union.

Until then if you have a complaint the best thing to do is to write to Dennis Torycliff, Chief Executive, London Transport, 55 Broadway London SW1 H0BD and copy the letter to Richard Parry, Market Planning if you're extra keen.

If you did not receive a card within the usual 28 days and have lost money because of this, or if you have bought weekly Travel cards instead of a monthly one in the expectation that your card would come within the next few weeks and have consequently lost money please email me with the amount and reasons at president@ic.ac.uk. If we receive enough letters I've got a stunt up my sleeve that might have some effect.



Agony or Ecstasy?

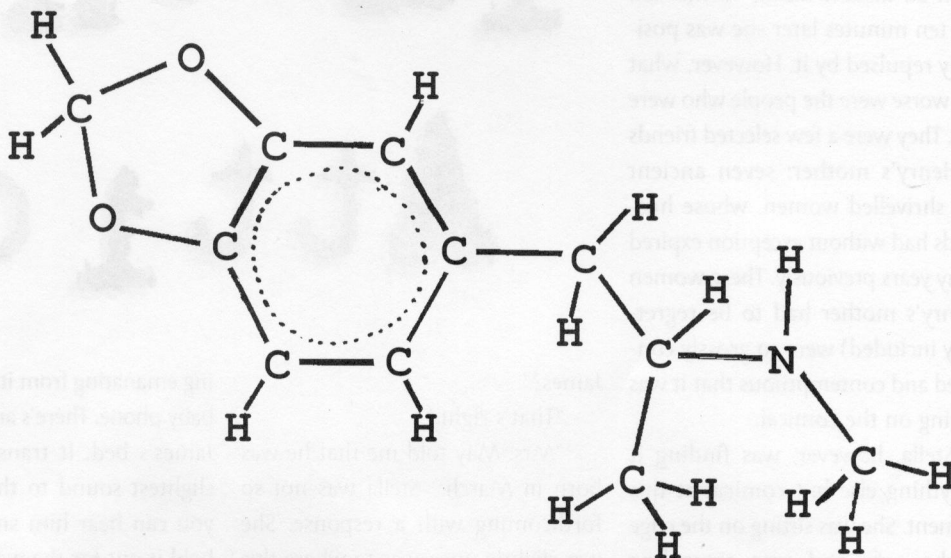
Sarah Rutt's personal perspective on the love drug

...so here I am, right at the front of the stage in the centre of the dancefloor, right in the middle of this breakdown meltdown which is going on forever this is never gonna end and the lights are in my eyes or perhaps my eyes are closed PUT YOUR HANDS IN THE AIR and learn how to fly COME ON NOW GET YOUR HANDS IN THE AIR we're almost there it's nearly time nearly time and woah there I just lost my head somewhere can't feel my feet but everybody's shouting hey just look around and see FIVE the smiles FOUR the lights THREE the choonz TWO the crowd ONE here we go are you ready for this because it's NINETEEN NINETY NIIIIIIINE....

...and then, somewhere in the midst of the hugs and the grins and the 'happy new year's that breakdown finally comes to an end, the beat kicks back in, and there'll be no sitting still for at least two hours. You know the feeling: the music rips right through you, you're getting mile-long tracers off your hands, and, apart from a spot of jawache thanks to that gum you can't stop chewing, you've never felt so fuckin' amazing - mate - in your life. You know damn well you'll feel like shit tomorrow, but that doesn't matter right now, does it? After all, the comedown is a fair price for such a blinding night out, and that brain-cell meltdown will only last a day. Won't it?

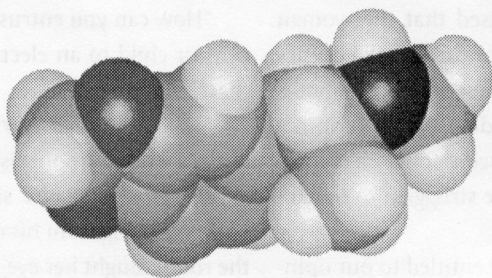
Let me tell you about Adam, a salesman. I met him in the street: he came rushing up to me one summer afternoon, big grin and wide eyes, and asked straight out if I knew where he could get Es, dope, even a wrap of speed. No, I said, I quit the stuff a while back. His face fell. Sort of. The grin was still there, as if painted on, and his eyes were still wide, blank, staring. He started to talk triple speed, in the way that pilled-up people do, and I just assumed he was off his face. More Es? He sounded to me like he'd taken a month's worth already.

He asked me my name, and told me his. Then whether I knew of any decent clubs locally: he was new to the area. Two minutes later he was asking my name again, and again in another twenty seconds, and again a minute after that. "I'm Adam, how're ya doin'?" occurred at least five times in ten minutes. It turned out (several times) that he was



3,4 Methylene-dioxy-N-methylamphetamine - do you really want this swimming around inside your body?

n't even on anything right then, he just took a few pills most weekends, and had been doing so for the past year. Or three. He couldn't really remember. Two 'I'm Adam's later I couldn't take any more, and walked off. Had I seen him again a minute afterwards I doubt he would've remembered ever meet-



ing me.

If that's not brain damage, I don't know what is. And if you want 'hard' evidence, you can have that, too; results of recent studies on ecstasy users strongly suggest that prolonged use can result in long-term memory loss, depression, and paranoia. That's not just forgetfulness and mopey feelings on comedown-day: brain damage is for life. Adam may think he's enjoying himself, but I suspect that within another year or so, he'll be incapable of doing anything more complex than the washing up. The upside is that he'll wash all the plates at least twice, because he can't remember that he's done them

already.

Okay, so ecstasy is dangerous. But, on the other hand, I'm not suggesting that we can all live up to the government's ideal of supreme will power, and resist the stuff altogether. I'm not advocating the use of drugs here, but people *will* take them, and they have a right to know where they stand. The odd pill every few months probably (and note I say probably) won't do you much harm - provided you don't mix it with other drugs, especially alcohol, and watch your water intake (a pint an hour is about right). But, if you're taking ecstasy most weekends, or if you feel that you *need* a pill to enjoy yourself, then you're doing yourself some serious damage. Get yourself sorted, mate, and get yourself off it. If you don't, the chances are that you'll become another Adam, another vegetable whose thoughts run in ever-decreasing circles. I don't want that. You don't want that. As the saying goes, choose life.



If you would like advice, information or counselling to do with drugs, call the National Drugs Helpline on 0800 77 66 00. The service is free, confidential, and is operated 24 hours a day.



Stella did not want to be here, that was all that she was thinking about. She did not want to be here, sitting on this lumpy sofa, drinking this tea, trying to make conversation with these impossible people. She would have paid a lot of money to have been somewhere else, anywhere else.

She was at her mother-in-law's, who had issued the invitation almost five months previously. Stella had taken an instant dislike to the flat, and ten minutes later she was positively repulsed by it. However, what was worse were the people who were in it. They were a few selected friends of Henry's mother: seven ancient and shrivelled women, whose husbands had without exception expired many years previously. These women (Henry's mother had to be regretably included) were so grossly conceited and contemptuous that it was verging on the comical.

Stella, however, was finding it everything else but comical at this moment. She was sitting on the edge of the sofa and was struggling through the last ruins of a conversation with the person on her right. It was clear that the dialogue had died some time ago yet she was stubbornly trying to carry it on. Part of the problem was the fact that her conversational partner looked and smelt like she had been living in a bottle of gin for the past ten years. With a sudden compulsion, Stella abruptly stopped the monologue and turned to her left to find the person sitting there staring at her. Stella's left neighbour had a very interesting mouth: it looked like it had been yanked shut with a length of string, and twitched and protruded from the sunken face as if someone was still pulling the string.

The old woman's eyes were fixed on Stella's and it actually looked like she was going to say something. Fire the cannons, thought Stella, one of these crones is actually going to start a conversation with me for once.

"Tell me," the woman wheezed, "you were married in December, is that correct?"

Stella nodded hesitantly. "Yes..."

"And you have a child named

Toys in the Attic

James?"

"That's right."

"Mrs. May told me that he was born in March." Stella was not so forthcoming with a response. She was slightly uneasy as to where this was leading.

"Yes..." she said again. The old woman paused, as if she was trying to achieve some effect.

"Don't you think June or thereafter would have been more appropriate?"

Stella had to think for a moment and then realised that the woman was referring to the fact that James had been born less than nine months after her wedding. For a moment anger threatened to crush her composure and she struggled to remain civilised.

"We are all entitled to our opinions," she said curtly.

"Where is the child now?" the woman croaked.

"He's asleep next door."

"Alone?"

"Yes, alone." There was an uneasy silence between them, which the old woman seemed to regard as a kind of victory. Stella decided to continue. "But I can hear if he so much as squeaks, look." She briefly squirmed on the sofa and extracted a radio-like object from her jeans pocket. There was a soft but clearly audible rasp-

ing emanating from it. "We call it the baby phone. There's another like it by James's bed. It transmits even the slightest sound to this one. Listen, you can hear him snoring..." Stella held it out for the woman to examine. For one moment, it seemed there was a gleam of curiosity in the old lady's eyes and her withered hand was already hovering to reach for it. Then she started and her hand dropped back into her lap like a dead fish. She gave a kind of snorting sound.

"How can you entrust the safety of your child to an electric box like that?" She grated.

Stella regarded her adversary with a mixture of disbelief and almost pity. Then the sight of her husband rising from his chair across the room caught her eye. Henry met her gaze, winked, and slunk through the door. "Excuse me," Stella snapped and followed him with great relief.

She found him sprawled on the double bed in the adjacent room, beside the cot where James was still snoring away through his tiny pink nose. With a resigned sigh she lay beside him and rested her head on his chest, which tremored with silent chuckles.

"Don't say what you're about to say," he whispered. "You were about to say that you would rather have

washed a hundred dead camels than coming here today, am I right?"

"Near enough."

"OK, but would you have also given them mouth-to-mouth?"

"Look, I'm sorry Henry, but I'm not in the mood for this."

"Alright, Alright," and they lay for a while in silence.

After a while Henry spoke again. "I think it's time I let you into some secrets." Stella stirred on his chest. "Are you in the mood for some really juicy secrets?"

"Go on then."

"Maybe I should have told you before we came, it would have certainly cheered you up. Where shall we start?...um...OK, you remember that woman who you were sitting beside last time, the one with the really curly died hair, yes? Her name is Mrs. Crow and she has a rather unfortunate health problem. A problem which none of the others know about, bar my mother that is. You see, she has a quite large and very painful cyst on her...um...well, to put it crudely, on her arse. And, er... to be accurate, it's in her arse."

"Henry, why on earth would I want to know that?"

"Listen, it gets a lot worse. Because of this...this...THING she can't wipe herself like normal people after having a...well, you know what. Anyway, so instead of wiping she washes herself and at home she has a bidet installed for this purpose. However, when she's at other places there sometimes aren't bidets around, so..."

"I really don't like the sound of this."

"...So she has to use the sink." Henry paused and savoured the moment.

He knew very well that the flat in which they were in - his mother's flat - did not contain a bidet. He waited for a comment from Stella but as there was none he continued. "One day Mrs. Crow went to the loo here and forgot to lock the bathroom door. My mother entered the bathroom unawares and caught her in flagrante delicto, contorted over the sink - you can imagine the scene.



Unfortunately though, she managed to blackmail my mother into silence because my mother – as you know – is as incontinent as a sieve. By coincidence Mrs. Crow was the only one from their group to know this and therefore she threatened to make it public if my mother spilled the beans about her. It's quite sad really."

Both lay in silence for a while, but Henry noted with satisfaction that Stella was smiling slightly.

"It's totally true, you know," he said. "Now I'll tell you about Mrs. Chambers. You remember her, she's the one that told you all about her son. You will have found nothing unusual about that, in fact it's an interesting and very touching story. But had you had another conversation with her you'll have found that she would have said all the same things, because her son is all she talks about. She is infatuated with her son, her son's legacy is the reason for her life.

"Now you'll think that even though that might be slightly eccentric, you can't hold it against her, seeing what this son of hers did. Well, I'm telling you that everything that she told you – everything that she tells anyone in fact – is made up, a figment of her imagination."

Stella coughed. "Henry, how can you be so sure of this?"

"I'm telling you, it's the truth and not even my mother knows about this. I heard from a very reliable source, but that's another story. Anyway, the only true fact in her story is that her son was in the 24th bomber squadron from 1941 onwards. After that the fiction begins. He never saved two wounded comrades by single handedly flying their plane back with a bullet in his lung. Neither did he shoot down 12 German fighters. And least of all, he was never posthumously awarded the DFC. He did die during the war, but not by crashing his aircraft through an enemy bomber formation. He died whilst he was on leave, at home, with his mother, Mrs. Chambers."

"Oh my God, what happened?"

"It's so awful. He was having a shower when he must have stepped on a bar of soap, or something. He slipped over and cracked his head on the hot water tap. One hour later his mother found water dripping onto the kitchen table, because her son was lying facedown in the plughole. He had drowned and she had a nervous breakdown immediately afterwards. I don't think she ever quite recovered completely." Henry paused, almost respectfully, before carrying on. "As far as I know, only three people alive today know about this incident."

Again they lay in silence for awhile, before Henry started up again.

"Now I'll tell you about the last secret, and this time nobody next door – not even the person it concerns – knows about it. It concerns Mrs. Wilson, she's the one that you were talking to before you left. Now she is a particularly unpleasant character but, as fate will have it, is also fabulously wealthy. She owns a large house in Sussex which contains many valuable items of furniture, especially a very important collection of paintings. She has a son who is the single heir to this considerable estate and who also happens to be very good friends with John from last week, remember? That's how I know all this. Anyway, this son of hers is not really into his antiques and just

wants to sell the whole lot and make a few profitable investments. Now our Mrs. Wilson was very ill at one stage and everyone – including her son – assumed that it was the end of the milk run for her. He and his brokers began to make elaborate plans for the money but were thwarted when she made a complete recovery. That was seven years ago. He is, understandably I suppose, quite bitter – and she knows it. One year ago, purely out of spite she gave away an extremely precious painting from her collection to some obscure gallery. Her son found out and hit the roof but there was nothing he could do about it of course. Then, however, he contrived a brilliant plan: he correctly assumed that his mother would make similar gifts to various other causes so he commissioned an artist to make copies of all the valuable paintings in the collection, which was basically all of them. Then he carried out several clandestine missions into his mother's house, at night of course, and replaced the original canvases with the copies, whilst leaving the frames. His mother is, I believe, a little fuzzy in the optical department so the whole thing worked liked a dream. I've been informed that he's now stripping the house of tapestries and ceramics."

Stella burst into her bright laughter and Henry too was infected. They kissed briefly and then for longer, and then for longer still. But Henry suddenly started.

"What's the matter?"

"Stella, whilst we were in there you had the baby-phone out." His voice was entirely different now, deadpan and ominous. "Where is it now?"

"Why, it's here in my pocket". What followed was a brief rustle of bedclothes and garments and then a deep silence. Stella was the first to speak.

"It must have fallen to the floor" A slight tremor was unmistakably present in her voice. Slowly she raised herself and peered over the edge of the bed.

by
Casper
von
Wrede
A story
for Dan T



CLUBSCENE

Singles and Albums

SINGLE OF THE WEEK

Tyrese
"Nobody Else"
(Arista)

Now strictly speaking this should be in "tha Bomb" as it is an R&B tune, but it does come along with loads of remixes, one of which is from top UK garage boys London Connection so we've included it here. It's an uptempo funk song and I'll admit that this guy sing bloody well. And he also makes ads for Coca Cola and models for Tommy Hilfiger. There are various other remixes available, but the one for the clubs is by London Connection. Out at the beginning of February, with an album shortly after.

★★★★★

Bedlam
"Da Force"
(Edel)

A great single which contains a sample from the disco classic "Can you feel the force?". But unlike many recent artists and producers, he hasn't screwed up the original - just added a more funky beat. There's a range of mixes so this should keep you dancing for a while.

★★★

Released 18/01/99

Arthur Baker
"Breakers Revenge"
(Freskanova)

Very funky tune on a rather long awaited project and well worth it. There's three mixes altogether, the B-side includes the Plump DJs remix which isn't up to much and the Cut La Roc remix which isn't too bad. The best mix is the A side Freestylers Remix, which adds a great bass line to a very funky choon.

★★★

Released 25/1/99

The Family feat. Alexander Hope
"Love my brother, love my sister"
(Cleveland City)

Bloody excellent tune - was nearly single of the week! It's a single you could dance to all night long - great vocals although I am not sure if the title insinuates incest - though the rest of the song does! It may not get released, but if you like your house then buy this. A side is standard house bass-line, B side features a hard hitting bass line.

★★★★

Electrotheque
"Everyones a Winner"
(Fresh)

The title's a giveaway! It's a dance version of Hot Chocolate's "Everyone's a Winner" and what's more they like it. Norman Cook and Tong and Jules from Radio 1 love it - so no doubt everybody else will. Personally I think that dance versions of classics are crap but that's just me. Will it be big? Course it will, and if you want a dance version of "Everyone's a Winner" then err..... buy this.

★★

Released 22/02/99

ALBUM OF THE WEEK
Mad Doctor X
"Picnic with the Greys"

Mad Doctor X is an alias of supreme Funk Wizard Jay-Rock from the freestylers (best band of 1998 at the Muzik Awards). It's a mixture of funk-soul and hip-hop. It's a 13 track CD album and each song is very different from the rest, giving value for money.

★★★★★

All reviews by Gurm



Nymph @ Mass

St. Matthew's Church, Brixton, London, SW2 - currently monthly residency, the second Saturday of every month, £10/12/14, 10pm - 6am, capacity = 1000. Dress code = just make an effort.

What a venue!!! Mass, as the name suggests, is an old converted church. But this isn't the C of E's typical old stomping ground. Instead the building has an imposing entrance, flanked by huge columns, making it resemble a mini version of the Parthenon. From the outside this place looks like it should have an unfeasibly high ceiling, but to get to the club you have to go up an endless spiral staircase - this is a truly weird experience in itself 'cos there are no windows along its whole length. But once that is over with the fun really begins. The venue opens out into two large rooms at either end of the church. The main room has dance floors on two levels, with some of the crowd dancing above the sunken main dancefloor. The DJ is raised above the crowd and is silhouetted against some stained glass windows. The second room is more conventional, but the stage at the front gives any posers amongst your group the chance to do their thing whilst looking down at us normal people below.

So the venue is one of the funkiest I've been to in London, but what about the people? They are the ones that make nights actually worth going to, especially again and again. Well the Nymph folk, from the DJs right down to all the dancefloor punters, are just as stunning as the venue. It's rare to go to big London venues these days that are really friendly, but that's how it is at Nymph. And the people here are really, really, really friendly to each other. There's probably a lot of pre and post clubbing rooting involved with an outing to Nymph, and people don't even stop in the club. With a title like Nymph you'd expect there to be a

lot of beautiful people around - and they're there by the truck loads.

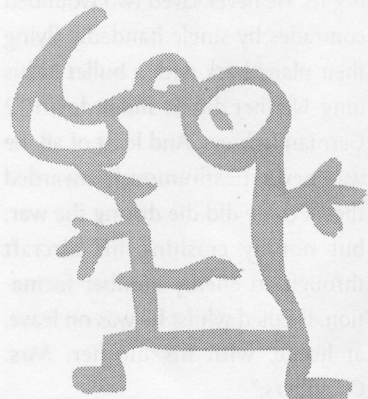
This is highly sexed clubbing. But don't you go thinking that this is a meat market or a pulling joint. Nymph is still very much about the music and the vibe that's in the club - some of the crowd just take this to its natural progression before they head off home. The Nymph sound leaves nothing to be desired and this is what gets the night to its euphoric levels. The main room is smooth, funky, groovy, Boogie-nights, disco-house - the place to strut your funky stuff in. And the second room gives a nice contrast. Progressive beats and n-breaks from the likes of Cream's Steve Lawler will have your's and everybody else's hands in the air and a big cheesy grin slapped across your face. This is hard and happy music. But it never falls down on the side of cheese - it's always leftfield enough to retain a sense of street cred.

So there you have Nymph. A stunner of a night at one of the most memorable venues in the capital - sounds good to me. I'll see you there next month.

Make the pilgrimage



Roobarb



RAG WEEK '99

JANUARY 23RD - 30TH



ICU RAG '97
a Load of Arse !!!
ICU RAG '97
a Load of Arse !!!
ICU RAG '97
a Load of Arse !!!



Rag Week '99

Who? What? Where? When? How much?

Date: Saturday 23rd January

Event: SNKPJ

That old favourite the naked run from Harrods back to the Union. Have you got what it takes? ie Complete insanity, and the ability to run and hold your bits at the same time! Oh and I'm afraid you have to be male.

But it makes good spectating for us few IC females!

Runners and sponsors needed.

CONTACT: mark.jellinek@ic.ac.uk

Date: Monday 1st February

Event: C&G Slave Auction

Your chance to buy and make use of a number of crazy volunteers. This is the annual event where you get to get your own back on a number of people, including ICU President Dave Hellard and DP(C&S) Chris Ince. If you fancy having a slave for a day, why not come along, or if you are interested in being a slave, get in touch. If you don't think you can afford one on your own, grab some mates and you can share!!

12.30 Union Concert Hall CONTACT: r.connolly@ic.ac.uk

Date: Tuesday 26th January

Event: Variety Show

Come and see people showing off in the name of charity. So far we've got a stand up comedian, a jazz band and the all new Spice Girls! Think you could do better than the rest? Acts still needed!

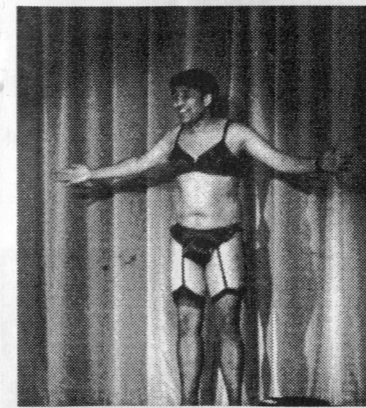
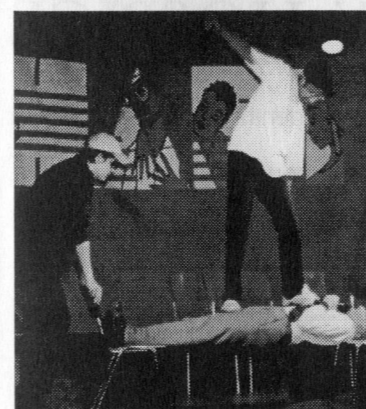
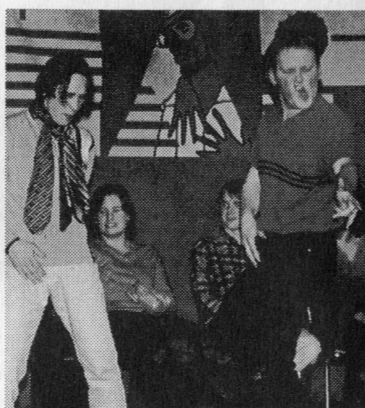
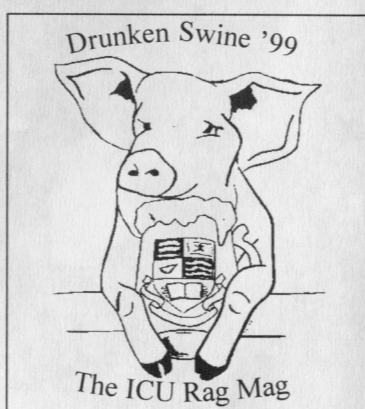
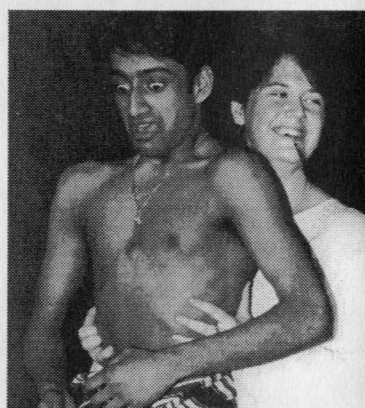
8pm, dB's only £1 CONTACT: farhad.cooper@ic.ac.uk

Date: Wednesday 27th January

Event: Manic Street Collection

We have managed to get permission to collect within the bounds of Westminster, so let's go! This could prove to be a huge collection, so why not join us? We intend to raid Oxford Street and the nearby area, but if anyone wants to go anywhere else, let me know! If your club or society fancies molesting unsuspecting members of the public all in the name of charity now's your chance! Drop us a line at rag@ic.ac.uk and all can be arranged. If you just want to come along and help shake a bucket.

12.30, Beit Quad CONTACT: sarah.coburn@ic.ac.uk



Date: Thursday 28th January

Event: Hypnotist

Former IC student turned professional hypnotist and magician Martin Taylor returns to the Union to do a special show for Rag. Is hypnotism really in the realms of astrology and crop circles, or should IC be running courses in it? Well maybe courses would be taking it a bit far, but Martin helps to explain how it's all a state of mind. A big hit last year, Martin does his show with the help of the audience, so if you've ever wondered what it's like to be hypnotised, come along and find out! He has promised not to do anything completely evil, but I'm sure it will still prove to be an entertaining evening! A bargain night for just £3! Advance tickets are available from the Union Office. You must be over 18, and a member of ICU to attend. 8pm, dB's Tickets £3

Date: Saturday 30th January

Event: The Field Cup

Permits allowing this could prove to be a huge collecting pub crawl! In teams of four, you have to follow the clues to the next pub, once you get there answer questions to win points. And we all know what points mean! There are prizes in a number of categories (including most money collected, best team name/mascot and best fancy dress), although only C&G teams can go home with the cup. If you are interested in taking part grab three friends and get hold of an entry form (from C&G Union, or email the contact below). If you don't think taking part is your scene, how about spending a day sitting in a pub with some mates? Sounds like a normal Saturday? Well, why not help raise money at the same time? For details about being a marshal just get in touch with the contact!

11.45am, Beit Quad. CONTACT: p.h.mitchell@ic.ac.uk

PINT GLASSES FOR SALE

Having a party? Don't want to get your glasses smashed? Why not buy some of ours! Old Beer Fest pint glasses for sale! One day these could be collector's items! Who knows they might make it to the Antiques Roadshow! We need to get rid of them, so all donations gratefully accepted.

Just email us at rag@ic.ac.uk and we can arrange collection!



And the point is....

Rag Chair Sarah Coburn explains what Raising & Giving is all about, and gives a rundown on just who will be benefiting from the money raised this year.

After a somewhat hectic couple of months as Rag Chair, and with the help of some brilliant people, we've finally managed to come up with something vaguely resembling a Rag Week! All I'm going to say about it is please give us your support as it's all for very good causes. If you don't like what we're doing then don't just sit there moaning about how crap we are - DO SOMETHING! We always welcome new ideas and we definitely don't bite!

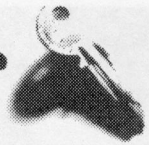
The fundraising doesn't just start and end with Rag Week. So far we have raised over £1500 for various charities including the Poppy Appeal, Alone in London, and our own nominated charities. Although I'm really pleased that we raised this money in one term, compared to the likes of Nottingham, Bristol the IC Medics and others this is absolutely pants! Why? They are all raising thousands rather than hundreds of pounds. This is where you come in; we need your help, so that we can begin to make our Rag as successful as some of these other universities. After all we're up there academically, so why aren't we up there in other ways!

I'd like to say thanks to loads of people for helping to get Rag week off the ground and for keeping me on the ground! So here goes! Felix guys: Ed Sexton and Dave Roberts. Union people: Mandy, Michelle, Neil, Jane, and Mark Horne. And also: Dramsoc, Gareth Morgan, Jenny Edwards, Farhad Cooper, Martin Lord, Phil Mitchell and Pete Hannam for giving me somewhere to live!

RAG MAG NOW ON SALE
Available for a mere 70p from the Union Office and at all Rag events

For more information on anything to do with Rag or Rag Week, email: rag@ic.ac.uk or sarah.coburn@ic.ac.uk, or ring the office on ext 58099.

Shelter



A well known charity who help homeless people and those who are in bad housing situations. The money helps rehouse people or help them to find somewhere to live.



Imperial Cancer Research Fund

Another big charity whose work is well known. The money helps to provide for research into all forms of cancer, and hopefully one day a cure will be found.



TRINITY HOSPICE

A hospice in Clapham, which provides residential care and support for those terminally ill and their families. The money goes towards the care of the ill, and to help provide support services for their families.



Another smaller charity, who help to fund ground-breaking medical research into AIDS and HIV. They also focus on educating people about the disease, and how it can be prevented.

ENTERTAINMENT

Tues 19th

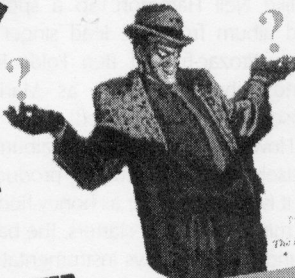
ST/1
STA TRAVEL
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ICU presents....

TRIVIA

EVERY TUESDAY
8PM

Da Vinci's
Cafe-bar



WIN £50
OR A
CRATE OF
LAGER

FREE TO ENTER

ICU Your Union - serving your needs

Weds 20th

ICU ents presents

Club

Party tunes, chill out room


Your Union - Run for you

Thurs 21st

Glamour, sophistication

Da Vinci's and Cocktails after dark

Cocktail Night



Every Thursday from 5pm
In Da Vinci's Bar

Printed by The Doc Centre X49581

Another service from your Union

ICU

Fri 22nd

COMEDY CLUB

BUSTAGUT

FRIDAY 22ND JAN

SIMONEVANS
DANEVANS
DANANTOPOLSKI

dBs 8pm. £2.50/£2 entscards

Fri 22nd

Ohmygod, they killed.....music.....the bastards

Levi's
56B Kings Road
London SW3

common people

Friday January 22nd 9pm



Indie, big beat & alternative dance
Plus chill out room & cocktail bar

Your Union - run to meet your needs

ICU

Sat 23rd

the electric café

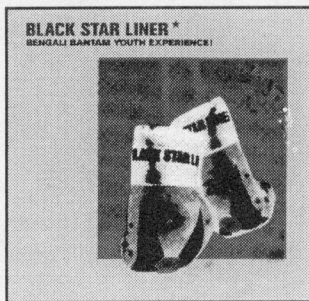
dBs. 9-12. FREE



Albums

BLACK STAR LINER

Bengali Bantam Youth Experience! ★★★



Searching the wonderful expanse known as the world wide web I was struggling to find a picture for the above space which I obviously never found and had to settle for the album cover instead. During my wandering through cyberspace I came across many Black Star Liners, but not the band. Apparently it was the name of Marcus Garvey's dream of a pan-African shipping line. Perhaps not very interesting, but is this how Black Star Liner the band ended naming themselves? Something for you to think about.....don't spend too long on it, it could be a health risk.

Anyway, on to the album proper. As

you can easily suss out from the album's title, Black Star Liner are one of the multitude of bands in the scene labelled by some as "The Asian Underground". I'm not sure if this term is used by music industry bods to group together bands with an Asian sound to their style or if it means that a member is a person of Asian origin?

Well, BSL fit into both categories with an array of sitars, tablas and more conventional samplers providing a more Western dance beat. BSL are not new to the so called "Asian Underground" and have built up a devoted fan base. The use of synth violins is abundant and very effective, although it can get a little repetitive at times. The album's opener *Sita D* sets the mood, dark and oppressive but always provides you with a hint of lightness to relieve the claustrophobia. *Superfly* and *Bindi* has leanings towards the majority of Massive Attack's *Karma-coma*. What I would like to know is whether BSL listeners actually know what a bindi is?! Chilled out is blatantly the approach here, so if you like your sounds mellow give this a try. **M**

Jason

FEAR OF POP

Volume 1 ★★★

Normally, spoken-word 'concept' albums invoke images of crusty Beat poets smoking Gauloises in dingy Fulham cafes - the preserve of musical pseudo-intellectuals like Neil Hammon. So a spoken word album from the lead singer of chirpy, Prozac-fuelled Ben Folds Five sounds about as likely as Marilyn Manson covering B*witched.

However, a spoken word album is precisely what Mr Fold has produced and it is nowhere near as honey-fied as you might think. For starters, the background music displays instrumentation far more varied and interesting than the poppy but ultimately bland Ben Folds Five's efforts.

Mr Fold takes us back to Starsky and Hutch with his 'waka waka' song *Kops*, and over to Japan for the most bizarre song, *In Love* - William Shatner talks about his love for a girl, his acting capabilities used to the fullest. It's almost as moving as when he says 'Fire!' in a Star Trek film. Ben Folds Five eventually show their face in *Avery M. Powers Memorial Beltaway*. There's no keyboard but the barbershop quartet are certainly there.

It's a cliché to cite Beck, but the experimentation and diversity of the music, which in truth dominates the spoken word aspects, are at Beck-like standards. Should you buy it? I'm not sure. It's hard to say whether I like this album because it's good or because it's not as bad as it could have been. Try before you buy, I think. **M**

Oliver H

Singles

Llama Farmers - *Big Wheels*

Craving controversy by putting a photograph of an eight-year-old girl smoking on their record sleeve, Llama Farmers would do better to let their music take the front seat. A constant fight between R.E.M. style semi-acoustics and the powerful clatter of drums and guitars, *Big Wheels* is a more than satisfying song to take us into the new year. It is well deserving of its more than generous airplay.

Eve6 - *Leech*

Just as we can not have the hedonism of New Year's Eve without the annoyance of Angus Deayton on our TV screens, so we can not have a thriving British indie scene without the occasional disturbance of a band that uses volume as a substitute for talent. Eve6 are such a band.

Umajets - *When I Wake Up*

In one respect, Umajets are a lot like the Lighthouse Family in that they both seem to release a lot of singles that sound the same. However, Umajets provide us not with cheesy MOR pop-soul, but a relaxed concoction of Beatlesy melodies and West Coast harmonies. Not that bad, actually.

Monster Magnet - *Powertrip*

The title track from both Kerrang's and Metal Hammer's album of the year, *Powertrip* is also featured in Kurt Russell's new film, *Soldiers*. So, we kind of expect it to be quite good. Actually it's pants, a hilarious combination of heavy metal and lets-do-the-hand-jive.

Loop Da Loop - *Hazel*

The remix master Loop Da Loop (a.k.a. Nick Dresti) pro-

vides us here with the first of his own material. Released next month, *Hazel* is a comic mixture of the Freestylers' style and Big Beat's, erm, big beats.

Ed J

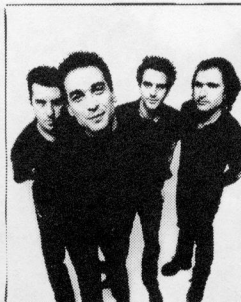
THE ESSENTIAL CHOON

Grand Drive - *Wrong Notes*

This one's definitely a bit of a grower. The vocals are almost identical to those of the dread-locked lead singer of the long absent, grungey and at the same time mellow, Soul Asylum. The song uses a Hammond and pleasant acoustic guitars that lean towards Spanish strumming to create a dreamy number.

3 Colours Red - *Beautiful Day*

This is a far cry from the punky freshness of previous singles like *Nuclear Holiday*. Instead 3 Colours Red



have chosen a melancholic anthemic string laden ditty to possibly break into the mainstream? I'm afraid it's not going to happen this time lads.

NT - *Responsibilities*

A gravelly textured voice crying out soulfulness, accompanied by a looping bass riff is what you get from NT. The voice is a little too similar to one of Gomez's two singers, and the cynics amongst you may say that this is only getting released due to the inexplicable success of the Gomez boys.

Naem - *Parrot Fever*

I'm sorry, but this is just plain and simply boring. It is repetitive and probably could have been made by any amateur working away at home with their own eight track recording gizmo. Allegedly Skint records are meant to be the cream of the crop when it comes to 'Big Beat' releases. They'd better think again if they want to maintain this exalted position.

The Yo-yos - *You Got Me Out of My Mind*

Visions of Status Quo leap out of the recesses of my mind where they had been long buried since the violent torture endured at the time of *Rocking All Over The World*. This song scared the pants off me.....we don't want a Status Quo clone, please please please!

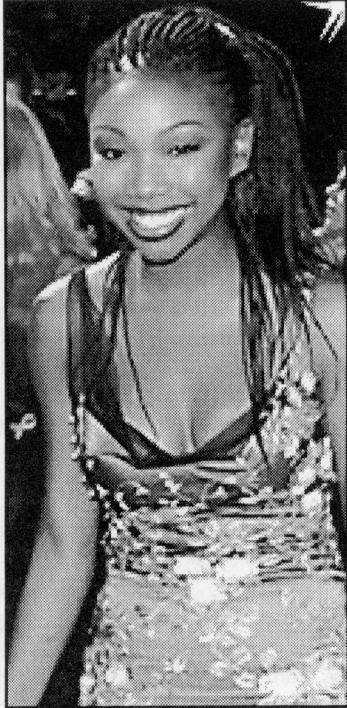
Audioweb - *Test The Theory*

This is yet another single to get lifted from *Fireworks City*, and Audioweb come at you head on with an energy fuelled track. It's not as stylish as *Policeman Skank* so I wouldn't recommend going out to buy this unless you want the two extra remixes, with one from the excellent Freestylers. Get the album instead if you like this and the other previous singles. **M**

Jason

That Was The Year That Was1998

So, another year has gone by. As ever, loads has happened in the 9-8, problem now is where to even begin.....



Well, a few artists could have dreamed for a better start to 1998 than have a No. 1 hit on the Top 40, especially a US R'n'B singer and that is exactly what happened to Usher. After blowing up on import in '97 *You Make Me Wanna* got a British release and entered as a new entry at the top of the charts back in January. Since then Usher has released *Nice & Slow* and *My Way*, both of which were relatively low key and the man seemed to disappear. Have no fear, fans can look forward to a forthcoming single *One Day You'll Be Mine* as well as Usher's big break onscreen in that "extended-Tommy-Hillfinger-commercial" feature *The Faculty* in 1999.

Sticking with the teens, Brandy & Monica had a surprising crossover hit with *The Boy Is Mine*. The song itself not only caught our attention but also provided various stories about the major rivalry between the two - why did Brandy perform solo on *The Tonight Show* and what about the punch up at the MTV Video Awards? Brandy's second album *Never Say Never* hit stores in June and Monica's *The Boy Is Mine* followed shortly. Both long players have gone on to achieve platinum success, but the battle will go on and on. Meanwhile the other teenage sensation Aaliyah (yeah, she's still a teenager) provided us with one of the summer's anthems- a clever concoction of Timbaland beats *Are You That Somebody*.

1998 must be remembered as the year of The Fugees, all 3 members managed to hit the headlines over the year. Wyckle began the year in the middle of the feud between LL and Canibus, he was dissed as a Bob Marley impostor by LL and as his comeback 'Clef recorded *What's 'Clef Got To Do With It*. *Gone Till November* kept us rockin' all through the early months of the year (R Kelly's vocals made the remix) and after a quiet summer he returned to end the year on a high note with a remix of Queens *Another One Bites the Dust*. Pras took the world by storm with the massive hit *Ghetto Superstar* as well as giving the *Grease* theme tune some edge in the form of the catchy *Blue Angels*, truly cementing his place in pop-hop circles. Lauryn penned the excellent *A Rose Is Still A Rose* for diva and idol Aretha Franklin, has a baby son Zion and releases what was truly one of the hip-hop albums of the year *The*

Miseducation Of Lauryn Hill. No news of any Fugee project in the works but things ain't looking so bad on the solo tip, huh?

Girl Power may have suffered a setback this year with the loss of Ginger Spice (like we really cared?) but there was no shortage of female talent in the R&B world. Destiny's Child were undoubtedly THE girl group of the year. I know y'all were gettin your groove on to *No, No, No* and *With Me*. The girls had a little lull but returned at the end of the year with the amazing Timbaland produced *Get On The Bus*, their latest release which is taken from the *Why Do Fools Fall In Love* soundtrack.

We first heard her quite stunning vocals on Quincy Jones' album *Q's Jook Joint* and this year, Tamia did not disappoint with her self-titled debut album. However, due to the lack of promotion, neither sales nor general opinion will reflect the quality of this release which is so often the case with R&B. Other notable releases include that from Mya, Kelly Price's stunning *Soul Of A Woman* and the wicked but underrated Miss Jones album. On the single tip, who could forget Tatyana Ali's *Daydreaming* or for the real R'n'B connoisseur, that bangin' remix of Taral's *How Can I Get Over You*, it's times like this when you know LL's still got the skillz.

The UK didn't fair badly either on the lady front with Beverly Knight and Kele Le Roc breaking through with their albums *Prodigal Sista* and *Everybody's Somebody* respectively. Beverly hadn't dropped anything since *Flavour of The Old Skool* but she came back with one of the summer blockbusters *Made It Back*, Redman helped on rap and Beverly you definitely back. Hinda Hicks came from nowhere at the start of the year and immediately started hitting us with tune after tune. How can you forget *You Think You Own Me*. With Shola Ama and these three young ladies as well as The Honeyz? It looks a bit good for the R&B scene.

Another Level are on another level, much props must go to the four boys, they produce tunes which really are doing it, their vocals are as good as anybody else out there and the production from Blacksmith is top draw. Their ability to crossover and bring a street edge to the charts is incredible, record bosses must be kicking themselves for turning these boys down, remember they had to go to the States to get a deal. *Be Alone* *No More* started it all off, but for me *Freak Me* was right on point and these boys just keep coming!

Will Smith set the scene alight with his own brand of pop hop and we thought long and hard about whether you could really call Will Smith an MC? Well not really, but with infectious hits like *Men In Black*, *Gettin Jiggy With It*, *Just The 2 Of Us* and *Miami*, how could you hate this guy? You gotta check out his latest flick "Enemy Of The State", 1998 was his year, and he's storming into 1999 too.

Rap went back to its roots this year. To the good ol' Boogie Down (aka. The Bronx) where it all started. The likes of Big Pun, Fat Joe, Lord Tariq & Peter Gunz hit us with floor fillers such as *Still Not A Player* and *Déjà vu*

(*Uptown Baby*). Elsewhere, Cam'ron represented for 110th Street and above (Harlem World, baby! Check out the excellent remix of *Horse & Carriage*). N.O.R.E. blew up the clubs with *Superthug* Queens stylee and we even had upstate representation from DMX, two albums in a year, someone been busy. Brooklyn in the house, well sorta, A Tribe Called Quest decided to call it a day with the release of their 5th and final album *The Love Movement*. Black Star continued to uphold the "hip-hop-with-a-brain" tradition with their much anticipated debut set- *No Alize or Benjamins Here* and LA based Black Eyed Peas had us all shouting "That's the joint, that's the jam!!". A mention has to go to Jurassic Five and their album *J5*, these boys came along and have lit up hip-hop.

Music moguls/producers made releases but none really lived up to the hype, there was JD's *Life in 1472* (hold up though, we did all dig *Sweetheart*, if only for the video) and Master P's *MP Da Last Don*. Incidentally, both producers have decided not to release any further solo material and will concentrate solely on their recording artists from now on.....thank God for that!! Missy took us one step closer to that filth-pit known as pop-hop with a collaboration with Mel B aka. Scary Spice, yeah we all loved that song *I Want You Back*.....not! Word has it that the Spice Girls flew over to the US recently to talk to Teddy Riley about plans for their next album, don't say I didn't warn ya!

There was no significant contribution from THAT man, Puffy, until the end of the year and boy, did he hit us hard - showcase at London's newly opened Sound Republic (which he sunk some money into), performance at the MOBO's and 3 new studio albums from Faith, Total and 112. At last the wicked *Love Like This* was given a release and laid down its claim as tune of the year. Faith's album *Keep The Faith* was packed with tunes and will certainly go on to classic status. The Total album was a serious disappointment, but 112's *Room 112* made up for it and made me think twice about the boys' ability.

Sheeeeeeeesh, some people take their time, don't they? It's taken 3 years for R Kelly to write and release his new double album *R*, but if you heard it you know it's worth the wait. That, though, still doesn't top the 8 years it's taken Whitney Houston to release only her 4th studio album, *My Love Is Your Love*. Guys, it's real nice to have you back and all but do you think you could hurry the hell up next time?!

1999! Watch out for new albums from the street soul masters Blackstreet, the beautiful trio TLC, Foxy Brown, Queen of R&B Mary J, Men Of Vision and of course the much awaited second set from D'Angelo. On a British tip I'm looking forward to hearing some new stuff from Nine Yards, Kleshay, Kele Le Roc and even the All Saints. Bring it on!



Reviews

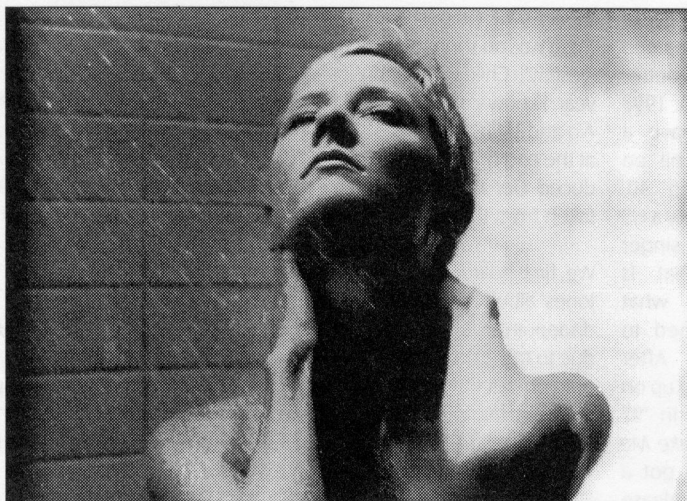
Psycho ★★

Starring : Vince Vaughn, Anne Heche, Julianne Moore, Viggo Mortensen, William H Macy
 Director : Gus Van Sant

There's something very strange about Gus Van Sant's remake of *Psycho*. It's not the fact that it's very, very, very similar to Hitchcock's original - I was expecting that when I walked into the cinema. The problem is that, despite the fact that it's almost the same film, it's far, far worse. And I don't know why.

It's not the cast - admittedly, Anne Heche (*Six Days Seven Nights*, *Volcano*) is hardly in the same league as middle-class fantasy girl Janet Leigh, but it's certainly not a bad rendition of Marion Crane. Moreover, whilst Vince Vaughn (*Swingers*, *The Lost World*) is the antithesis of Anthony Perkins in the crucial Norman Bates role, he comes away from the movie with credit in tact thanks to a nice line in disconcerting laughter and nervous twitching.

It's definitely not the direction - Van Sant goes to great pains to re-create 99% of the original (only adding in a couple of additional details which help to explain Vaughn's complex mentality). Every scene, every camera angle and every edit is the same - even the opening titles are copied from Hitchcock. Besides, with



Psycho 1999 vs Psycho 1960. Same shower. Same knife. New blood.

the likes of *My Own Private Idaho*, *Drugstore Cowboy* and last year's brilliant *Good Will Hunting* on his CV, Van Sant is amongst Hollywood's foremost directors.

Above all, it certainly isn't the plot, which is 100% the same as it was in 1960. Heche steals \$400 000 from her boss, flees town, hiding out in the lonely

Bates motel, run by Vaughn and his mysterious mother. The classic shower scene ensues and her sister (Moore) and boyfriend (Mortensen) set off on her trail, call in a *Private Eye* (the ever-reliable Macy) and try to find out what links her disappearance and the motel.

Perhaps it's simply the passage of time. The elements that produced a clas-

sic in the sixties simply don't stand up to nineties moviemaking. This *Psycho* is (dare I say it) boring. It treads water for an hour, only hotting up when Moore finally enters the Bates' gothic home to discover the truth. That's not to say that the original *Psycho* isn't still a great movie, it's just that any piece of art has to be judged - at least in part - by the standards of the day. For example, if the forthcoming *Star Wars Episode One* retains exactly the same look and effects as *A New Hope* did in 1977, it won't deserve the same recognition because it won't have the same ground-breaking originality. Similarly, this doesn't mean that there's anything wrong with remaking old movies - see *Scarface*, *The Magnificent Seven*, *High Society*, and the upcoming *You've Got Mail* for prime examples of good remakes - it simply means that there's no point in remaking something if you don't add something new. Van Sant has claimed that all he wanted to do was raise the profile of the original, and to those of you who haven't seen it, I suggest you take his advice - and rent the video. **F**

Dave

The Opposite of Sex ★★

Starring : Christina Ricci, Martin Donovan, Lisa Kudrow, Ivan Sergei
 Director : Don Roos

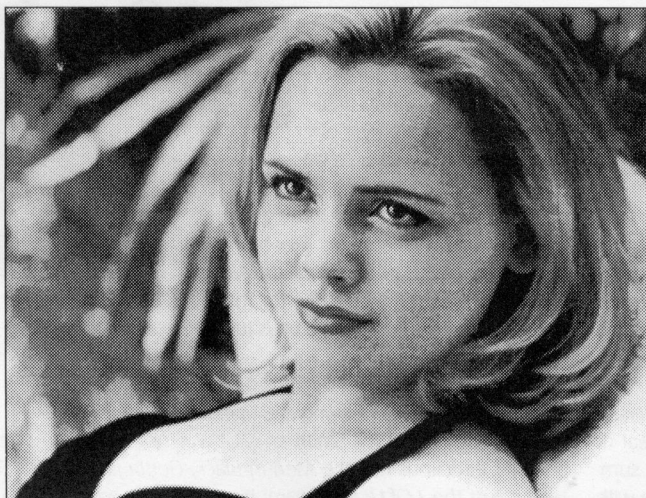
Have you ever missed a fortnight's episodes of your favourite soap opera and completely lost track of what's going on? Whatever the reason for the lapse in your devotion, there's usually someone on hand to bring you up to date with a swift summary of the recent developments in an oddly eventful Square, Close or Street in the land of TV. The opening 5 minutes of *The Opposite of Sex* are liable to remind you of such a briefing - though with a now obligatory post-modern slant it's the film's central character, 16 year Deedee - played by *The Adams Family*'s Christina Ricci (more recently star of indie-hits *The Ice Storm* and *The Last of the High Kings*) - whose voice-over provides the explanation of her own troubled circumstances.

Ricci's unenthusiastic mourning at her step-father's funeral suggests that she's not so upset to see the back of him, but bereavement has driven her mother to unbearably neurotic depths. Desperate to escape her Louisiana home, Ricci

heads for Indiana and her long lost half-brother (Donovan), though her reasons for doing so probably extend beyond the hope of renewing acquaintances.

Thanks to the legacy of his gay lover, Donovan is a wealthy man, and his easy

going nature provides a standing invitation for Ricci's precocious mercenary wiles. Donovan's friend (and his dead lover's sister - keep up) Kudrow is convinced that Ricci is no good, and sure enough, she sets about the rather



Eighteen certificate here we come.

unlikely seduction of his new niece but dim boyfriend, Ivan Sergei. Very soon the resulting love triangle is further complicated by announcements of pregnancy, charges of sexual harassment, and other storylines culled from the scripts of third rate Dallas spin offs.

There are one or two funny lines, and Kudrow has her fair share as the repressed Lucia. However, she seems unable to abandon the trademark kookiness of her role as Pheobe from *Friends*, and comes across as half scatty, half uptight. Even though she shares screen time evenly with her co-stars, it's Ricci who dominates the film. Unfortunately, her non-politically correct knowing commentary fails to illicit the belly laughs it aims for, and succeeds in lending the proceedings an irritatingly self-satisfied tone.

When a soap like Channel 5's plainly ridiculous *Sunset Beach* does a better job of satirising attitudes to sex in the 90s, a film like this seems pretty pointless. **F**

Simon

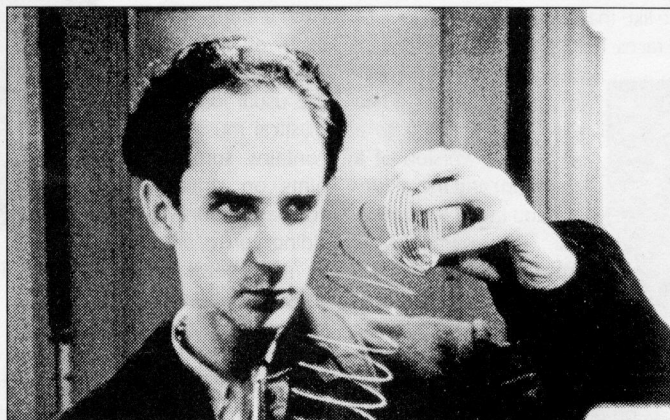
Reviews & Competition

π ★★★★★

Starring : Sean Gullette, Mark Margolis, Ben Shenkman, Pamela Hart
Director : Darren Aronofsky

As well as gaining world-wide critical praise, *π* has secured first-time director Darren Aronofsky the Directing Award for Dramatic Composition at the Sundance Film Festival. With these accolades in mind I was expecting a visual feast when I entered the cinema. I was not disappointed. Aronofsky demonstrates his amazing command of cinematography, showcasing non-linear editing (MTV style, epilepsy inducing, cutting) and some bizarre camera set-ups (at times strapping cameras to various actors bodyparts). But apart from all these doubtless fascinating and innovative 'tricks' is there a film underneath the audio-visual bombardment?

The answer is a resounding yes – with solid performances from the supporting cast (who mainly consist of the director's friends and family), and Sean Gullette's impressive display as a man spiralling into paranoia. The film demands self-mutilation and a series of painfully realistic fits from Gullette, which he duly completes with a manic stare reminiscent of Nicholson's glory days in *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*.



Introduction to mad scientists. No 1 - the slinky obsession

While the plot sometimes does get a little tenuous, (an overly aggressive Wall Street firm and a Kabbalah sect try to unlock the secrets of their holy texts) the extreme pace at which the film's storyline advances forces you to put such gripes aside and concentrate on what's going on on-screen. Considered as a thriller the film works well, keeping the viewer attempting to second guess the true motives of the people surrounding Gullette - whether they actually care for

him or are only aiding him to feed their own selfish needs. Whether the film is science fiction is another matter entirely, so don't expect Mulder and Scully or any warp drives to start appearing.

If you're allergic to strobes or value your ears, don't see this film – everyone else can sit back and fry their brains, happy in the knowledge that they are watching a great film.

F Joel.

VIDEO NEW RELEASES UPDATE

Good Will Hunting

Amongst all the Hollywood success stories of last year, Matt Damon and Ben Affleck strode to the front of the pack with this brilliantly moving film.

Two years ago, so the story goes, the pair were in their final year at Harvard and decided they wanted to be actors. Trouble was they didn't think they were good enough to get cast in anyone else's film, so they wrote their own. That script turned into *Good Will Hunting*, and two years later they're Oscar winning millionaires, dating Gwyneth Paltrow and Winona Ryder and amongst the biggest stars in Hollywood. Lucky, lucky bastards.

The Ice Storm

Despite a desperately sad ending (make sure you buy five boxes of Kleenex before watching the movie) and a deceptively simple premise, Ang Lee's film has been (justifiably) showered in critical plaudits.

Whilst a seventies-set drama surrounding a crisis-laden suburban family might not sound like rivetting viewing, an eclectic array of Hollywood's finest (the likes of Kevin Kline, Joan Allen, Elijah Wood and Sigourney Weaver) bring *The Ice Storm* to life with a near perfect display of ensemble acting. Add in brilliant direction, a soul destroying script and *that* ending, and you're left with what can only be described as a classic piece of film-making.

Anastasia

Disney may have come in for some flak recently with their none too accurate retellings of *Pocohontas* and *Mulan*, but Twentieth Century Fox's *Anastasia* is on a completely different level. For starters, this *Anastasia* isn't executed - instead she's chased around Paris by the henchmen of the evil Rasputin. Hmm. On the other hand, with Meg Ryan, John Cusack, and Kelsey Grammer on voice-over duty, there's certainly no expense spared, and at times the end product is beautifully drawn. However, it still lacks the charm and sense of fun that gives Disney classics a real crossover into the adult market. **F**

Dave

Win cinema tickets with the

ODEON

KENSINGTON

As ever, those lovely people at the Odeon Kensington (no 9 or no 10 bus, in case you're interested) give you and a friend the opportunity to see a film for free. For a change, however, this week the film in question will come as a surprise (OK, so I don't know what the prize is yet, but rest assured that there will be one).

Anyhow, to win a pair of tickets all you have to do is answer the following (deceptively simple) question:

Name all the actors who have played Anakin Skywalker (In any one of the four *Star Wars* installments currently in existence).

Email your answer to film.felix@ic.ac.uk before 6pm on Tuesday 19th January to be in with a chance. Winners will be drawn at random from the virtual hat.

The winners of issue 1131's *Meet Joe Black* competition were:

Samaher Alahmed
 Imogen Lucas
 Richard Hopkins
 Helen Coates
 Ben Crabshaw

They all correctly identified that Brad Pitt played a German mountaineer (with a very dodgy accent) in *Seven Years in Tibet*.

A huge number of entries were received for the *Psycho* competition, all correctly identifying that Anthony Perkins played Norman Bates in Hitchcock's (far superior) 1960 original. The first five names to be picked out by the random email selector were:

Yin Loong Chao
 Kattie Hopkins
 Lauren Robinson
 Scott Edmunds
 Ben Pickersgill

Could all prizewinners please drop into the *Felix* office (in the south-east corner of Beit Quad) sometime this week to collect their prizes.



Blizzard Compilation [Diablo, Starcraft and Warcraft II] (PC)

Blizzard

★★★★

You can always tell when our beloved Games Editor is short of material - "Here you go" he said "Blizzard have just released three games in a special pack. Pop off and do me 200 words on each." And he disappears off to the union bar. Typical.

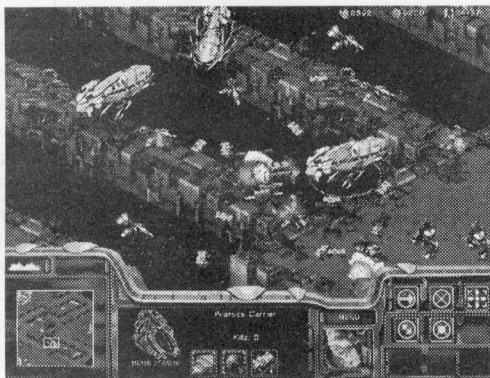


"The Human is weak, orc will smash human"

The original Warcraft was released (if memory serves me right) shortly before Command & Conquer, and suffered (somewhat unfairly) due to the blitz of hype surrounding Westwood's undoubtedly excellent effort. It also lost out to C&C in that it didn't have a multiplayer mode - almost a cardinal sin now, but not so uncommon a few years ago. Rather than being set in the near future, Warcraft was set in a mythical land where tribes of men and orcs fought it out, competing for gold, lumber and land. Warcraft II was released in 1996 and, as the name suggests, it is bigger and better. It also includes that crucial multiplayer component (up to 8 players can hook up together at a time). The graphics are much improved on both the original and C&C, but nonetheless are starting to show their age. Still, if you like RPGs and C&C, this is well worth the price. This version includes an expansion pack ("Beyond the Dark Portal", since you asked).

Starcraft has been one of my favourite games for some time. It is (again) very similar to C&C, but is set in the far ends of the galaxy (or somewhere like that). You can control one of three races; humans (as in "You puny..."),

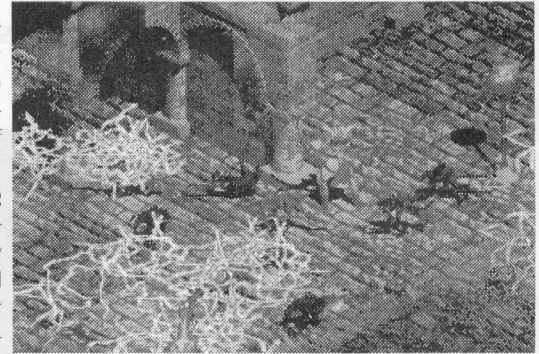
Zergs (as in the noise people make when they've had their throat torn out by a sort of alien version of a doberman) and the mysterious and rather tetchy Protoss. The gameplay is somewhat more varied than in either Warcraft or C&C, with missions ranging from securing landing zones through full-frontal assaults on alien bases, through creeping around alien-infested ships looking for lost personnel and/or data files, to sitting tight in a beleaguered garrison desperately hoping that your evacuation ships will arrive before your base is wiped out. Blizzard have made full use of their imagination in putting the package together, and as well as a mini-tutorial and the game controls, the manual con-



If you have to shoot, shoot; don't talk.

tains a very comprehensive section detailing the various units available to the races. It also contains a brief history of each of these races, which rather than being the usual load of cod-mystical mush, actually contains some useful hints on strategy for combat and survival, providing you're prepared to read between the lines. The whole thing is very well put together, and there are influences from a vast range of different semi-classics (more obvious ones being C&C, Space Hulk, Civilisation). Unless you're actually allergic to this kind of futuristic stuff, you'll love it.

Diablo is the third game in the pack. It's a more traditional RPG, with you taking charge of a character from one of three different backgrounds (warrior - big sword, heavy eyebrows, skin colour of a tandoori chicken; rogue - female, bow-mistress, elven, funny pointy ears; sorcerer - long white beard, smells funny, good with fireworks). The action takes place below ground, in a vast dungeon with a variety of lairs. The level design is a series of quests, each of which tends to end with the destruction (hopefully) of a supra-baddie. However, there's none of that nonsense about completing one quest before you start the next. If you like, you can go off halfway through one, do another one and come back to finish the first off when you like. This makes for a very open-ended game. You get your quests by wan-



The electrics in the earliest dungeons were never that safe

dering around the village sited above this dungeon and talking to its down-trodden inhabitants. There's the usual plethora of weapons, armour and magical items, and it makes for a satisfying, if at times hard, one-player game. Where it really comes into its own is in its multiplayer environment. Up to four people can link up and go on the same quest together, and Blizzard even provide you with some free internet software to help you do this, should you be like me and not have any friends. The more you play this game the more it becomes clear that it has been designed primarily for multiplayer use - many of the supra-baddies are well nigh impossible to defeat on your own.

The logic behind compilation sets is usually one stonker, one ok and one slightly iffy. In this case we have one which is excellent (Starcraft), and two which are good, particularly as multiplayer games. It's a particularly good bundle, and well worth the £35 for which you'll find it on sale in all good game shops. Oh come on, it's less than £12 each.

Danny

In From the Cold - What Blizzard are getting ready

Diablo 2

Never one to walk away from a profitable sequel Blizzard are attempting to shine up their shields and swords and lead us back into the nasty world of dungeons, crypts and caverns to fight foes and gather treasure.

Five new characters; The Amazon, Necromancer, Paladin, Sorceress and Barbarian (he's thick but can carry two weapons at once) and new non-playing characters all wanting a piece of the action. Expect more rumbles than you



can wave a pointy spear at. The graphics are expected to be improved on and, with optional 3Dfx support, will almost definitely be a wonder to watch (with line of sight lighting effects and shading being two of the big improvements).

Expected to fill four CDs (one for each Act) and to be released sometime this year. Blizzard are being very cagey on announcing an exact release date.

No, amazingly enough it's not what you are expecting. They have not done a Dune 2000. There are no massive improvements in the graphics or in the sound. No new introductions. In fact they have actually left the game pretty much alone. So why would you want to buy a game for full price that you could already buy in a compilation or in a budget range?

Networks, or rather the ability to play over the internet using the now almost famous Battle.net. This package allows you to play and compete in a huge ladder system against people all over the world. It also allows big battles of up to

eight teams, all attempting to turn their opposite numbers into embarrassed and annoyed bad losers.

Oh, for those who mock there are also two more campaigns to play by yourself - Though if you have bought the package to play single player games you either have a slight obsession or have too much money to throw at computer games (though if this is so you can always buy games and review them for Felix).

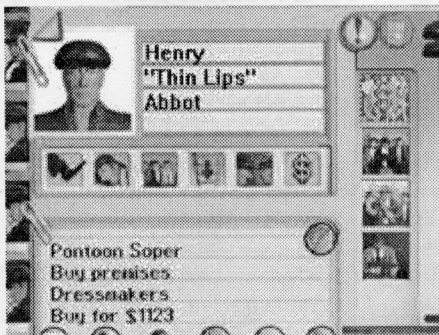
Blizzard are going to release Warcraft II sometime in the first half of this year. Someone out there is probably looking forward to it. I can't say I am.

Warcraft II - Platinum

Gangsters (PC)

Eidos

★★★



Henry's Dressmaking Habit was well known

It's an offer I can't refuse, they first told me last summer - and they were right. The people behind Gangsters rounded up several not that busy journalists, took them to Greenham Common - the site of the abandoned US airbase, and let us go mad with automatic paint guns, grenades and smoke bombs. Oh and while we were there they let us play with the game. First impressions were that the game was going to be another big Eidos game. It looked pretty enough to play with and appeared to have the depth of gameplay that enables a game to be tasking without forcing a two week manual reading session. Winter drew on and finally the game was rounded off, the same journalists received review

copies and remembered bruises and scars long since faded.

The game itself is based in the fictional town of New Temperance, where you and several rivals have decided to carve the town into a perfect example of organised crime capital. After playing a series of short tutorials which introduce most of the basic moves (your bread and butter extortion rackets, and rather nasty Gangster based mayhem), its time to get on with the job of controlling the town proper.

As in the real world the idea is not to dirty your own hands but to force others to dirty theirs. This you do by organising your men into teams with weapons, vehicles and sufficient manpower. These teams are then given their orders for the week with obvious risks for assassinations, bombings and setting fire to the businesses who fail to buy into the 'insurance market': The 'valuable mutual benefit market' to give it its full name. There is obviously less risk but also less profit to be made by owning a few clean shops, but they can be used to mix good and bad money and provide a local safe house for the little dears who work for you. The least risk of course goes with

ordering your team to pop down the shop to buy a copy of the local paper - well ok I made the last task up but with other gangs coveting your little area and willing to put more lead into your diet, someone must pop down to the shops for the milk and coffee.

After the orders stage it is time to hit the streets and watch all your best laid plans suffer from those little irritants known as the general public, the police and other gangsters. Luckily there are still a few tricks up your sleeve, and while your thugs are pretty brainless they can deviate from the plans with a simple few clicks of the mouse. The action scenes are also the place to be to see your little empire move onwards and upwards, very rewarding in a nasty pain inflicting way.

Although there has not been a huge improvement in the graphics or the sound since the summer both are about average in a game like this. The town can be viewed either in simple top down plan mode - which is easier to plan with, or in a 3D mode - which is used for the action sequences. The victims, sorry citizens, of New Temperance can be heard and seen to interact with your employ-

ees. The town does feel a little like a 1930's City. The game actually feels good to play - despite the burning, blowing up and shooting that goes on, and the only small gripette is that it perhaps takes too long to get a proper empire flowing and so for some takes a little too long to get going. For those who love management games it is one to sit on the shelf and play into the long hours. For those with only arcade games and fast flowing graphics on their minds it's not going to turn your head in the same way that C&C and Red Alert could. It's good, Fat Tony, but not quite good enough to talk its way out of the concrete overcoat.

Gary S.



Bloke behaving badly

Ideas from Eidos - Apart from Lara IV what's in store ?

Warzone 2100

Damn those satellite weapon platforms. When they're not being used to shoot at Mulder and Scully by rogue AI's they go all wrong and trigger a global nuclear armedgeddon. It's just not fair.

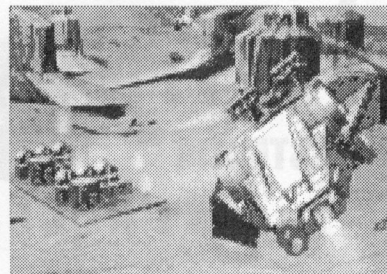
Thus the scene is set for Warzone 2100. As one of the remaining million people left on the smoking ruins you have the task of rebuilding



North America and to get some of those lost technologies working again (though if you ask me leaving it as a smoking ruin and moving to Europe might be a more sound idea). If you think this sounds rather Mad Maxesque, you would not be too far from being wrong. Against you are various bands of scavengers along with the occa-

sional remnant of civilization. Yep you could well be thinking Mad Max.

Despite having a story sounding like Mad Max it does appear to be half decent (at this stage of development anyway). Placed very near the Battlezone 2000 ideal of realtime playing combined with base strategy and defence it could challenge Tiberian Sun, whenever that decides to poke its head above the ground and parade itself for our delights. Let's hope the large number of options



doesn't make the game impossible to understand and play properly.

Not the New Year News

Pentium III - Intel goes for speed

In a very low key way Intel Corp released details of the next generation of processors. Chosing the highly original name Pentium III, Intel intend to start shipping 450 and 500 MHz versions immediately. Along with the raw clock speed increase, they have also included some extra hardware to help speed up video, audio and speech recognition tasks.

Intel also intend to move to a new processing facility which should allow the speed to increase to 600 MHz and above. Intel will also release a mobile version of the chip (in the new 600 MHz flavour) for laptops but not until the second half of this year. Just in time for the Millenium bug if they're lucky.

Free Lunch pays dough

Freeserve (the Free internet service provider paid for by Dixons - your friendly, neighbourhood electrical retailer) has managed to entice over 900,000 people to use Internet Explorer 4 and sign their pledge to their internet connection. Officially the fastest growing ISP in the UK (900 000 customers in 5 months kicks AOL's UK branch into the dirt.)

Mark Danby, general manager of Freeserve said: "It shows we have developed the right formula for our customers and that you don't have to pay for a first class internet service." The big catch is that for those less technically adept users there is no free advice and help line. Best stick to the 56k College service then.



Football

4th XI

IC 5 - 1 UCL

An exceptional performance from the IC fourth's, fresh from their mid-season break (to such delightful places as Rhyl, Llanboidy and Aldershot). We cemented our position at the top of ULU Division 3 and are now in a great position to reach the unparalleled heights of division 2. Of the 8 league games remaining, the fourth's should be aiming to win at least 5 or 6.

This game exploded into life in the first few minutes as IC raced into a two goal lead with goals by Aiden, following good work by Steve and Derek, and an embarrassed UCL defender. From then on the rest of the game was really a formality, the only question being how many could IC score. The answer: five, the extra goals coming from Adam, Nima and a penalty from Gurm (who else could have finished so clinically from 12 yards?). A mention to Dave Wishart who was "f**ing amazing" (his words) but in mine "f**ing shite" as he gave away a penalty which was crappily saved by Stu and UC scored with the follow up. Final score 5-1 to IC.

Ladie's Hockey

2nd XI

IC 0 - 8 Royal Free

Bondage Girl drove a full team to the match in style, only going onto the pavement once. From then on it was all downhill, mainly because we'd turned up to play hockey and ended up playing water polo (taking our own umpire should have helped, but unfortunately Saboteur didn't do anything to jeopardise the oppositions score). Scouse Git, who was too hungover to play, was badly missed, although to be honest the forwards rarely got the ball. 2 Jags got in some good elbow tackles, while everyone else got their exercise running around the alcohol section of Sainsbury's - its good to see the ladies 2nd team still has its priorities straight.

Also received...

Hockey: IC 1 9 - 2 UCLMS

Refs were rubbish, and the weather was poor. Although not as poor as the opposition. IC should have had twice as many goals.

Bridge

National U25 Tournament

Recently IC Bridge Club entered for the London qualification round of the National U25 Paris contest. For the new recruits in the club this was to be an opportunity to play bridge for the first time. For the more seasoned players in the club it was to be an opportunity to hone their tournament play ready for the forthcoming Portland Bowl matches. At least that was the theory.

A strong field of players made for difficult but enjoyable play. Unfortunately, the strong field and complexity of some hands proved too much for many of the IC pairs, however, x-IC partnership Dom Goowin (Bat) and Jon Todd (Heff) did win the overall competition, beating 3 England pairs, comfortably qualifying for the national finals.

Especially good performances by Michael Lee Kien Vong and his partner Anson Williams saw them beat everyone else in the club, including both Imperial A and B teams. Another impressive performance was that of Annaig Jacquemard and Rupert Chaplin, who as a beginners pair did very well beating most

of the rest of the club!

- 1 Dom Goodwin - Jon Todd (x-IC)
- 10 Michael Lee Kien Vong - Anson Williams
- 11 Giles Cope - Ben Van Lierop
- 12 Eric Parker - John Douglas
- 13 Kevin Tam - Tom Oag
- 14 Annaig Jacquemard - Rupert Chaplin
- 15 Michael Dias - Andrew Clery (x-IC)
- 16 Daniel Hook - Steve Parker
- 17 Ralph Martin - Raj Dash
- 18 Ivan Leung - Jamie Wood
- 21 Maurice Lee Kien Vong - Delphine Jarraud

OK. Even allowing for exams, the start of term and even the weather, I'd have thought you lot could do a little better than three brief articles.

Last term saw a good range of articles from lots of teams and clubs and I hope that continues into this term. So get those articles in. In the meantime enjoy these articles from the world of professional sport. *Gus*

INTERESTED IN A WORKING HOLIDAY ADVENTURE?

TO FIND OUT ABOUT WORKING OPPORTUNITIES IN

AMERICA SOUTH AFRICA
CANADA **BUNAC** GHANA
AUSTRALIA JAMAICA
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COME TO THE

**ICU BUNAC SOCIETY'S
INFORMATION SESSION ON
TUESDAY 19 JANUARY**

IN THE

**CLORE LECTURE THEATRE,
HUXLEY BUILDING, 6PM**

For details email ICU BUNAC chair
Angela Parkin
a.parkin@ic.ac.uk

London nightline 0171 631 0101

London Nightline needs volunteers

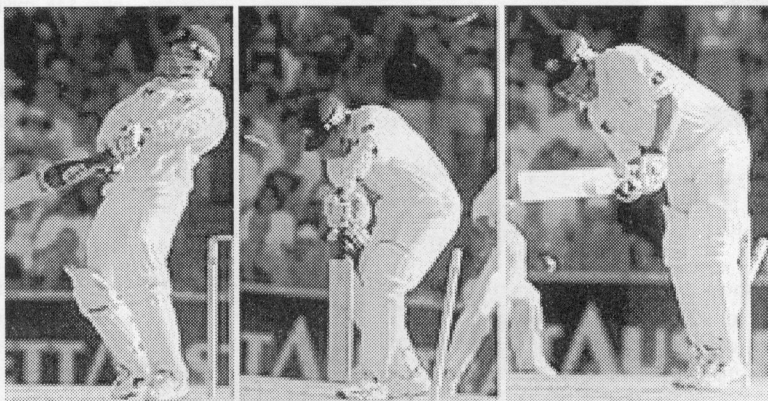
We are a confidential listening and practical information helpline, run by students for students. We are open from 6pm until 8am every night of term. At the moment we are looking for students who want to train as volunteers. We don't care what age or sex you are, or what college you are from, or what course you are studying. If you can give up three nights a term and think that you would be able to listen to someone in a friendly, non-judgmental way you could be ideal for us. You don't need any experience, we'll give you all the training you need. So if you want to help other students and join an organisation with a fun and active social side please get in touch.

Come along to our Introductory Talk
on Tuesday 9th February at 7.00pm
in ULU, room 3C
or ring the helpline (number above).

**Nightline is here, whether you want
information or simply someone to talk to.**

CRICKET: England 2nd best - again

Following a series win against South Africa last summer, and the prospect of not having to face spin king Shane Warne, England supporters were filled with hope and expectation that England would actually give Australia a run for their money for the first time in 10 years. The build up to the first test was not ideal, with several players showing a lack of form in the warm-up matches and a worrying back problem for former captain Mike Atherton. The first test was played in Brisbane at the end of November, and the early going looked to be fairly even, with Australia reaching 106-4. But a number of missed chances followed which allowed Steve Waugh and Ian Healey (perennial thorns in England's side) to put on 187 runs for the 6th wicket, and some extra runs from the tail took the total to 485. Predictably England could not manage to match this score, but looked like the might get pretty close at 360-6 until the tail collapsed to 375 all out. A rapid-fire century from dashing opener Michael Slater set up a large target for England, who predictably wilted to the leg spin of Stuart McGill, and were saved defeat by a freak thunderstorm. Definitely a morale if not actual victory for



Hat-trick Victims: Ian Healy, Stuart McGill and Colin Miller fall to successive deliveries from Darren Gough, who became the first English bowler for 100 years to take an Ashes hat trick against Australia

Australia. Onto Perth, and a much faster wicket saw 21-year old Earl's Court native Alex Tudor make his test match debut. Unfortunately the England batting (missing best batsman Graham Thorpe, returned home with a serious back problem) was woeful, making only 112 & 191. Australia romped to a 7 wicket victory inside 3 days, and the series was looking decidedly out of England's reach. The only positive to come out of the

match was the performance of Tudor, looking decidedly relaxed and hostile, which made the decision to leave him out for the next test in Adelaide questionable to say the least. This was the ground England won their only test match of the last tour, but it was not to be this time. A big hundred from Justin Langer and a complete lack of application by England's tail in either innings led to a 205 run loss. England were down

and looked on course for a 4-0 defeat in the five match series, so cue the usual response of the England cricket team in these circumstances - win a match. Decent batting from skipper Alec Stewart, relieved of the wicket-keeping duties, gave England a decent score. Darren Gough then bowled some of the most hostile fast bowling I have seen by an English bowler, and Australia's batting was finally blown away for once, giving England a 12 run victory, after the hosts were seemingly cruising to the win. This set up the possibility of England squaring the series in Sydney. Although the pitched turned square and Warne returned to play alongside the impressive McGill, England did not play badly, but a poor decision by the TV replay umpire giving Slater in when he was clearly out eventually cost England the match.

So although I am pleased my prediction from November (3-1 to Australia) came out right, it is disappointing to only see England playing well when they have already conceded the series. On the bright sides England surely start as one of the favourites for this summer's cricket World Cup, with conditions giving the host side a distinct advantage.

Bound Editions

The following people ordered 1997-8 Bound Editions and have not yet collected them. Please pop into the Felix Office, with a cheque for £32 made payable to 'ICU Publications Board (Felix)', at your convenience.

Mark Baker
Simon Baker
Ali Campbell
Ivan Chan
Robert Clark

Hamish Common
Julia Harries
Andrew Heeps
Chris Hickey
Antoine Jeanson

Alok Jha
Charlie Joynt
Wei Lee
William Lorenz
Dennis Patrickson

IC Radio
Jason Ramanathan
Andy Sinharay

Around IC & Beyond

Mon 18	Tues 19	Wed 20	Thurs 21	Fri 22	Sat 23	Sun 24
Env Soc: Jubilee 2000 Coalition Meeting, Lecture Theatre 2, Physics 6pm	LabSoc: John Monks, TUC Gen Sec, RCS Lecture Theatre C 1pm	ICSM RAG - Invasion of London am	ICSM RAG - Circle Line Pub Crawl 11am	ICSM RAG - RAG Ball @ Shepherds Bush Empire £15 in advance from BMS, St Mary's & CX 7pm	Electric Cafe, dBs, FREE 9pm-12am	
CAG: Tools for Self Reliance, Basement of Beit Quad 6pm	UFC in STOIC 6pm	Env Soc: Meeting to design a Renewables Physics Course. 1.30pm	Erasmus Information Session for students planning to study abroad. Ante Room, Level 1 Sherfield 11.30am-2.30pm	Bust-a-gut Comedy, dBs £2.50 8pm		
ICSM RAG - Games @ CX 7pm	ICSM RAG - Jazz, Food & Soiree @ St Mary's 6pm	ICSM RAG - Battle of the Bands Bop @ CX 7.30pm	CAG: Soup Run, Basement Kitchen, Weeks Hall 8pm	Idiot Son (who played at ICU Fri 8 January) et al Water Rats, Grays Inn Road 8pm		
	STA Bar Trivia DaVinci's 8pm	Club XS, ICU, FREE 9pm-1am	Cocktail Night, DaVinci's 5-11pm	Common People, ICU £1 9pm-2am		
	CAG: Soup Run, Basement Kitchen, Weeks Hall 8pm		ICSM RAG - Post crawl bop @ St Mary's 11pm			



US SPORT

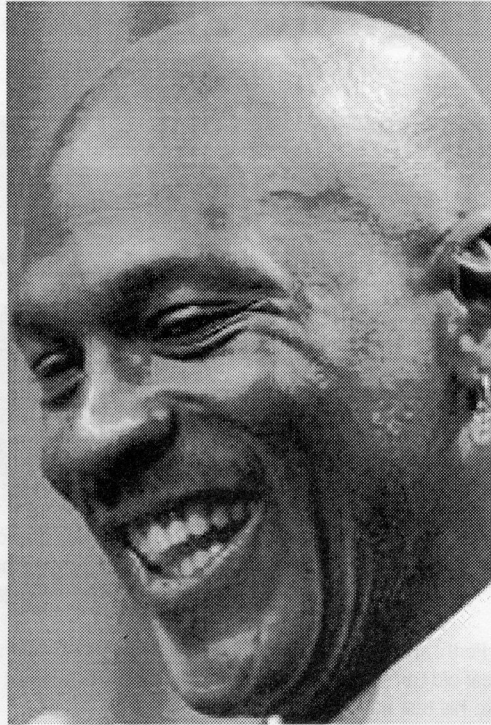
BASKETBALL: Jordan's retirement leaves chasm in US's sporting psyche

The retirement last week of Michael Jordan, regarded by many as one of the greatest professional athletes ever, has left the American people, and much of the world, in a state of shock.

The greatest, and certainly wealthiest, player the National Basketball Association (NBA) has ever seen announced his intention to leave the sport saying "I played it to the best I could play it. I tried to be the best basketball player I could be."

Jordan, whose name has been synonymous with the NBA for over 10 years says he is "99.9% certain" about retirement this time, having previously given up 5 years ago, following the gunning down of his father. After 6 championship winning seasons out of 8, and five most valuable player awards, Jordan felt it was the "right time to leave the game. I am at peace with that. Physically I am fine, but I am mentally exhausted."

Jordan, holder of several multimillion dollar contracts from various sponsors (including the 'Air Jordan' trainer produced by the sports giant Nike), said he made his decision some time ago, but wanted to wait until the end of the lockout between teams and players before announcing his decision. The lockout, which has crippled almost the entire season this year, was recently solved after players and owners finally gave each other



Michael Jordan

some ground after a bitter player strike that has lasted over 7 months, and threatened to wipe out the entire season. The retirement of the sports greatest player will have dismayed NBA officials who face an uphill task to re-engage the attention of a public disenchanted by the greediness of owners and players. TV ratings and stadium attendances will undoubtedly be significantly

lower than normal for the remainder of the short season, which begins on February 5th.

Jordan retires a very rich (\$24million dollar contract plus \$45 million in sponsorship per year) and well-loved man. But it seems the sport he served so well for the past decade is going to be left with the almost impossible task of trying to find some way to fill the gap created by his departure.

NFL: Denver v Jets, Atlanta v Minnesota in conference finals

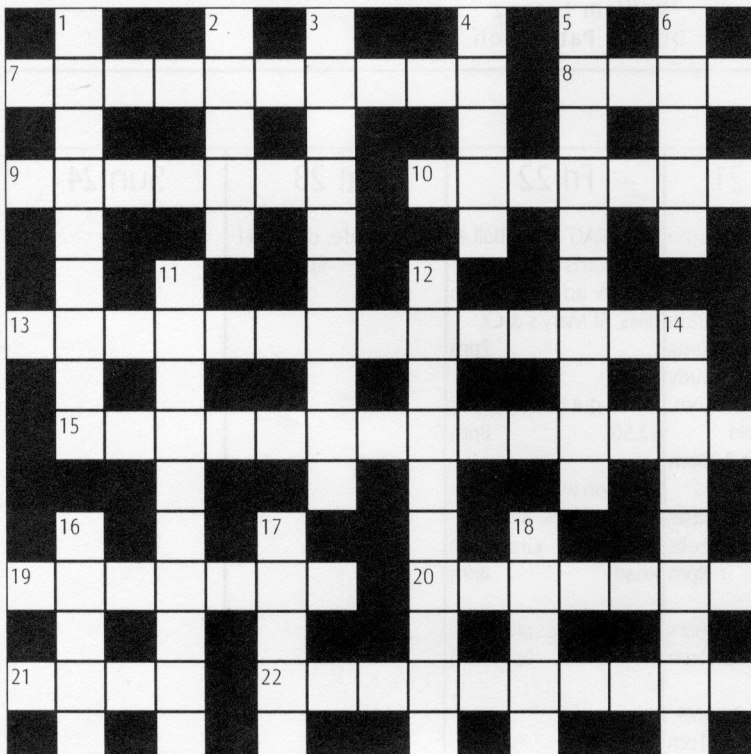
Last weekend saw the NFL conference finals between teams that are hard to separate in terms of ability. Reigning champions the Denver Bronco's start as favourites to recapture their SuperBowl title in two weeks time, but Atlanta or Minnesota will provide tough competition in the SuperBowl. This of course assumes the good but not-quite-good-enough New York Jets do not overcome the odds to defeat the Broncos.

If I have space to fill again this term, I intend to publish a full review of the NFL season and the SuperBowl shortly after it is played. If anyone out there feels they know something about American Football and feeling like writing an article get in contact. I am also willing to publish articles on the FA Premiership/Rugby Premiership when/if space allows. If you want to write anything drop me a line at goap98@doc.ic.ac.uk.

Gus

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

by Ed & Gnat Chum



Across

- 7 Belonging to Conservative group is correct.(2,3,5)
- 8 Nation, initially, is right between points.(4)
- 9 Quiet garden tool and vehicle for Apollo.(7)
- 10 Holiday? New York state confused in post.(7)
- 13 Focus expertise.(14)
- 15 Oriental enlightenment? Collapsible and solanaceous.(7,7)
- 19 Real United Nations split in spirit.(7)
- 20 Regardless of discharge in river.(7)
- 21 Drive in U reg.(4)
- 22 Influential time in South American country, before breaking one vase.(10)

Down

- 1 Man-like worker has human resources officer on film.(9)
- 2 Northern town or a clash between two of them.(5)
- 3 Top notch RC lass gets a fist.(5,5)
- 4 Saint on Scottish crop has a long body.(5)
- 5 Send home Pat and rat to Eire in a bundle.(10)
- 6 Dick's a girl's name.(5)
- 11 Religious text of strip cures.(10)
- 12 Do pits slam up this singer of hymns?(10)
- 14 We hear narrow Tiff tells a story.(9)
- 16 We hear the French underwear is a beast.(5)
- 17 Spins around, uses scissors.(5)
- 18 This chap is a current Biblical figure.(5)

Answers to 1131

- Across:** 1. Hairdresser 9. Alabama 10. Petunia 11. Chorister 12. Upset 13. Rota 14. Reproached 15. Sheepfolds 19. Ices 21. Droll 22. Associate 24. Maestri 25. Upright 26. Thereabouts
- Down:** 1. Heat Of The Moment 2. Iraqi 3. Draftee 4. Emperor 5. Satsuma 6. Rings The Changes 7. Cancer 8. Ranted 15. Sodomy 16. Palette 17. Opaline 18. Disturb 20. Sheath 23. Corfu