

SP

FELIX

KEEP THE CAT FREE EST. 1949

23 JUNE 1999 SUMMER SPECIAL EDITION ISSUE 1150

52 page Summer Issue
Interview with the Rector
Over 20 pages of reviews

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Students Face Expulsion Over Fees

Student activism has undergone something of a renaissance during the opposition to Labour's tuition fees. While IC looked on, many universities have led extensive campaigns in the public eye and although a Governmental reform has as yet alluded them, they have won numerous concessions as well as supporters. The harsh reality of the fees is about to bring the university careers of some IC students to an end.

The college is currently awaiting payments from around forty students with five still yet to pay the first installment. The college has sent correspondence throughout the year reminding them of the payment and offering help and advice if needed. Some of those involved took the opportunity to explain their position,

but as yet none of the five who failed to make the first installment have responded. The college has informed all those who have not paid that if the money has not been received by the end of term they will not be able to return next year.

The college has had a long standing policy of expulsion for non payment of fees and it has been applied consistently over the years; last year a number of overseas students owing fees at the end of the academic year had to leave the college.

Tony Cullen of the registry office qualified the measures: "In the interest of fairness and equality we have to apply the rules across the board." Overall registry was "pleased with the

way students have responded" and he felt the widespread compliance was due in part to explanations of the college's position sent out to new entrants last summer. Maintaining "registry has been as sensitive as possible", Mr Cullen made it clear that those threatened with expulsion were given ample opportunity and still have until September to find the money.

There have been no students in the college who have refused to pay on principle and there are still options open to those in financial difficulty, but the college has been placed in an awkward position with students not replying to letters.

ICU President Dave Hellard explained many institutions had made

their campaigns against fees political, but he viewed the issue as one of practicality stating "If students couldn't pay it would be unfair for the college to throw them out." He went on "We could have helped and possibly might be able to help a limited few," referring to sources such as the Access and Hardship funds. Disappointed with the fact those involved had not come to the Union for help, Mr Hellard concluded "They've been told the consequences and done nothing. Maybe they've just resigned themselves to the fact they're leaving".

Next year all undergraduates paying fees will face a bill of £1025; the ICU President did not see the increase from £1000 as an additional problem commenting "It's going to have to increase at some point."

By Andrew Ofori

Southsiders Caged-in

By Abigail Lazerine

On Wednesday 9 June, the college researched further into the Southside windows dispute. Two south-facing Southside residents had a prototype grill installed, attached to the inside of their window; one filling half and the second filling the whole of one sliding window.

The grills are made of steel, and have a square mesh of 5 cm by 5 cm to enable more aeration than is currently offered by the blocks, which allow only a four-inch gap for ventilation.

The rooms were visited by the Pro-Rector Professor Tim Clark, Mr Tony Mitcheson, Secretary of the College, Dr John Hassard (Tizard and Selkirk warden) and Ms Brown and Mr Vincent from the Accommodation office, all of whom were concerned for a swift conclusion to the situation and looking forward to installing a more acceptable obstruction and Mews-friendly solution.

Some residents have seen the new grill, and although they agree that the grills are a better option than the blocks, they have suggested the grills make the rooms like "cages." There is concern for how new students will adapt to moving into this environment with the intim-

idation of the grills.

The new measures come have come as a result of incidents earlier this year when objects were thrown through the window (Felix 1143). One of the most costly elements of these actions was the damage caused to the college's relations with local residents; especially when taking into account they have already objected to some of the college's building proposals for the area.

On Tuesday 15 June, visitors from Westminster City Council surveyed the rooms, from inside and outside, to assess if the new installations will contradict the building's listed status. It is most likely that if this is cleared, the grills will be in place in one hundred and twenty rooms for the start of next term, although this was not entirely clear at the time of going to press.

The full cost to the College is estimated to be around £13,000 but by making the investment, the College hopes to appease local residents and make future planning applications easier.

It should be reported, however, that the installation is for approximately one year until the whole building is refurbished and the window problem can be wholly rectified.

Sir Ron Receives Peerage

By Sunil Rao



On Saturday 12 June, it was announced that Sir Ronald Oxburgh, Rector of Imperial College, is to be made a life peer (Baron) as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours list. Sir Ron, who was knighted in 1992, has been Rector here since 1993, and is one of six new life peers created

this year. Also commended is Professor David Phillips, Head of the Department of Chemistry since 1992, who has been made an OBE for his services to science education.

The British honour system is based on merit, and honours are awarded for exceptional achievement or service. Any British national can be recommended for an honour - recommendations are made to the Prime Minister's Office either by government ministers or by members of the general public. The recipients of the awards are then 'chosen' by the Queen on the 'advice' of the Prime Minister.

Sir Ron was educated at Oxford and Princeton, and subsequently taught at Oxford and then at Cambridge, where he headed the Earth Sciences Department from 1980 to 1988. He was also appointed to the National Committee of Inquiry into Higher Education, better known as the Dearing Committee, in May 1996, and will apparently sit in the House of Lords as a cross-bencher. Professor Phillips was educated at Birmingham and worked in Texas, in Moscow and at Southampton before becoming Professor of Physical Chemistry here at Imperial in 1988. He is well-known for his efforts to promote science in general and chemistry in particular, and his lectures to schoolchildren and on television.



Work Permit Abolished

The Government abolished work permits for international students last Friday, leaving them free to undertake part-time and vacation work without having to apply to the Jobcentre. The new regulations apply to all students from non-EEA (European Economic Area) countries except BUNAC (British Universities North America Club) for whom the system remains unchanged.

The new freedom for international students is subject to a number of conditions: There is a limit of 20 hours of work per week during term time except where a work placement is to be undertaken as a necessary part of the course. The student cannot engage in business, self employment, the provision of services or take work as a professional entertainer or sports person. They are also unable to pursue a career by taking up a full time position.

Non-EEA students are welcome to use Jobcentre services to look and apply for jobs. Those students who are concerned about taking up employment without a work permit can be issued with an explanatory letter to employers. The Government is set to publicise the changes over July and August and further information can be obtained from the Home Office.



At 9.45am on Wednesday 16 June a lorry leaving college by the Prince Consort Road exit claimed a gate in a 'hit and run' incident. The rental lorry collided with the gate, ripping it off its hinges before driving off. College security are carrying out a full investigation into the incident.

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Clayponds Complaint

Residents of Clayponds have received news of their 'village hall' with mixed emotions; many were unhappy at the £1.20 a week rent increase. The view that residents were prepared to bear the majority of the costs was based on a survey estimating the increase at "tens of pence per week".

Some questions have been raised as to why such an increase is necessary when a significant contribution is expected from the IC Trust. The warden of Clayponds, Dr Mark Tyrer, explained the new building "will be well received by the residents and make a huge improvement to the quality of life at Clayponds" but was concerned that "the rate of increase of these estimates seems to be surprisingly rapid for what is, when all said and done a modest, one room building and two lavatories."

A number of students have made clear their objections, one resident wrote an open letter which included the comment: "with the suggested £1.20p per week rent increase, we could hire three of the married couples flats, and have a little bit left over for a porch or covered area from the patio doors."

Plans for the developmental are at an early stage and so figures have not yet been confirmed. Many residents hope that the rent will be subject to the appropriate decrease in five years when the period of rent contribution ends. Ian Caldwell, Director of Estates was not available to comment.

Battle Of the Balls Builds

By Andrew Ofori

The exuberant production of the IC Summer ball may well cost the Union dear. The original intention of the event breaking even has now been replaced with the distinct possibility of a £20,000 loss.

The original budget submitted to the Union Finance Committee on 9 March was based on the sale of 1,900 tickets. The modest rate of ticket sales leading up to the event led the Union to take the pre-emptive measure of re-negotiating the event finances with the hosts, Alexandra Palace. They accepted a minimum capacity of 1,400 with a resultant penalty if attendance falls below this.

The Union has set a sales target of 1,200, a scant improvement on the 1,187 tickets sold for last year's sell-out event and with the latest estimates at 1,100 last Wednesday, the event is going to leave them with a bill of at least £13,000 which is likely to be covered by Union contingency funds.

The schedule for the evening is:

4:30pm - pre-ball Pimms reception in Beit Quad (not included in ticket price)

5:30pm - coaches begin to depart from Prince Consort Road and from behind the Union building

6:15pm - last coaches to leave Quad

7pm - reception begins in Palm Court. Table seating plans available

8:10pm - enter Great Hall

8:30pm - hors d'oeuvres served when everyone is seated

10:15pm - dinner scheduled to finish

10:30pm - address and formal toast

10:35pm - Platinum Abba funfair rides and disco following Platinum Abba

12am - first coaches leave Alexandra Palace for Trafalgar Square then on to Beit Quad

1:40am - bar closes to allow 20 mins drinking up time

2am - rides and disco end

2:30am - last coaches leave Alexandra Palace

Further information is available from the summerball website at:

www.su.ic.ac.uk/summerball.

Tomorrow the ICSM Ball takes place at Cobham with just under a thousand expected to attend.

Coaches leave at 1pm, 3pm and 5pm from South Kensington, St Mary's and Charing Cross and there will be coaches back to the campuses every two hours from midnight to 6am. The sports run from 2-6:30pm and include 7s rugby, 5-a-side football, hockey, tennis, volleyball and cricket. There are changing rooms and showers available and it is advisable to bring evening wear along and get changed on site.

A champagne reception starts at 7pm and the 4-course meal begins an hour later. The evening's entertainment is headlined by Corduroy supported by medic's bands. Other attractions include a bungee run, gladiator jousting, human table football and the laser quest. There is car parking available at the venue and the nearest British Rail Station is 5 minutes away.



AUT Attack Admissions

By Andrew Ofori

After the limited success of the strike, the AUT is planning further action with the ultimate aim of re-negotiating their pay increase. Although last month's picket had little effect on IC, its primary aim was to make employers aware of the staff's anger. Numerous other examination boycotts have been organised for the end of June.

Members of the AUT have now decided to extend their action to the admissions process and plan to boycott all admission related activities on 9, 10, 19 and 20 August, the days of Higher and A level exam results across Britain. They stated these measures were "designed for maximum irritation administratively, but to cause minimum disruption to students."

The action may lead students to initially accept their "insurance" offers when unable to proceed with their first choice and continue the application process with their favoured institute at a later date. As well as being against UCAS regulations this approach would result in administrative chaos leaving institutions with

only a vague idea of which students to expect for the new year. However, in the opinion of the AUT, it would also "maximise the proportion of students gaining admission to their preferred course." They emphasised they did not intend to impede the admission of any potential student to an institution.

There still remains a gulf of 7.5% in the pay dispute and the association are also tackling the issue of what they describe as "systematic pay discrimination" against women. David Triesman, General Secretary of the Association of University Teachers commented "No wonder the public sees them as out of touch, the last bastions of poor employment practice in the public sector. The system has failed. Strong remedies are needed."

John Payne of Employee Relations explained IC's plan for dealing with administrative difficulties: "As usual the college will take any steps that it can to minimise disruption." But Imperial's AUT have plans of their own described as "actions short of a strike", which include the refusal to take part in appraisals and any bureaucratic work concerned with the QAA and RAE.

Laundry Vandals

By Abigail Lazzarine

Southside residents, keen to do weekend laundry, were surprised to return to the laundrette to find the new swipe card system, for entry into the laundrette, had been removed from the wall. It was most likely "kicked off" by vandals on Saturday evening. On reporting the incident, Security taped up the entrance of the laundrette and did not allow anyone in, even to

retrieve their clothes from the machines.

Security are currently surveying video footage in the hope of finding the culprits, but if no one is found Southside residents will most likely have to pay the bill for repairs. Residents believe this is not fair since the identity of the offender is unknown and access to this area is unrestricted through the doors opposite Southside shop, which are open until very late at night.

Military Investigation

The Student Pugwash group is starting to investigate the extent of military research at Imperial College. Student Pugwash wants to shed light on this area, exposing where research money is coming from and to raise awareness of the implications of this research. By making it more transparent, the hope is to stimulate discussion and to open up the ethical question of when it is justified and when it is unacceptable.

In addition, alternative career paths will be highlighted. "Jobs You Can Live With: Working at the Crossroads of Science and Technology-An alternative career guide", published by Student Pugwash USA, will be available at the careers centre shortly.

If you are interested, please visit <http://www.su.ic.ac.uk/pugwash> and/or contact Carsten c.rohr@ic.ac.uk or student-pugwash@ic.ac.uk.

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Portman Prices

Dear Felix,

I have just had my first experience with Portman Travel. I was wondering what would happen having read Simon Baker's column last week, and I wasn't disappointed. I was flatly (but politely) told that they cannot get student fares, even if I am paying with a purchase order number. (I wish to fly to Edinburgh for a meeting for my PhD research). STA used to, and I thought the quality of service was supposed to be better now. Ah, now I see, there is no mention of the number of services.

Clearly College think that research students should be spending more of their research grants (in my case the grant is from College) on travel! Well, they've lost my commission, as I'm going to STA now. I wonder if they will accept a purchase order number ...

PhD student, TH Huxley School

Proposals for a Better IC

Dear Felix,

Could you please remind Mr. Tony Ofori of Felix that before the Prince Consort bought the 21 acres with money from the Great Exhibition the whole area was Green.

Princes Gardens and Ennismore Gardens remain Green as does Hyde Park. Whereas the Queen's Lawn is mainly a vast open litter bin. We now have the Weekes Arms; the Frobisher Kellar, the Linstead Pub and the Tizard Pizza Parlour and sometimes 200 hundred steel drums of empty steel barrels to show for it. We also have medical waste scattered around from time to time.

It would be easy to double the charges of beverages on the IC Campus and recoup the loss of earnings from the very few parking spaces lost.

I had to call IC security to attend to noise and drugs abuse this week at 0320am at No 13/14 Princes Gardens. There will be masses of student accommodation available in Paddington shortly - See New Life for Paddington project. There will be summer jobs for IC students too in Paddington. At the minute it is a concrete jungle so Mr. Ofori will feel at home there.

At week ends the college should charge the same prices as the NCP Park near the House of Commons which is £9.00 for over 2 hrs. Housing Estates are experiencing huge problems with an influx of refugees and the noise they make right through the night and the day too.

I tried to call Felix on 594 8064 to get their fax number but to no avail.

Did you Nie ever resolve the ingenious flower watering problem with your insurance Company. You could issue a Tennis Court ticket to Ennismore Gardens Mews Residents who collected the money or contributed to the construction and planting discussed some four weeks ago with BHS. You could give one Free Parking Space for Jennifers Harley Davidson or Carol's bicycle. I must say you are all Engineers of Exceptional Ingenuity when it comes to explaining why it takes so long to get anything done by the Estates Department at IC.

Sheffield University give the MAP-PIN medal for the Year's most exceptional student. The Vice-Chancellor of Brunel was a winner in his day. To celebrate the Rector's elevation I would like to propose a Mappin Medal for the Year's most celebrated E.E.I event.

David Mappin

Dissent from the Ranks?

Firstly I'd like to apologise in advance for using this page as a forum for my incoherent ranting - maybe if more of you had written letters this week then there wouldn't be space for this.

Politics, they say, is a funny old game. Student politics, I have decided, isn't even funny. It is, to be frank, a pile of arse.

The basic problem is power. Specifically there isn't any. College gives not a flying fuck for us and our opinions, and having watched the petty bickering and backstabbing which seems to hold endless fascination for so many, I can't say I blame them.

ICU is bad; the Constituent College Unions are worse. The general apathy towards politics which is regularly berated is due to no-one really caring. All we want is something to keep us amused and a nice big salary at the end of our time here.

If there's one issue that irritates me it's that of Medics. I don't have a problem with your typical Medic-in-the-bar, but those who insist on moaning about IC in general really need to become aware that they are part of something bigger now. This goes doubly for the non-Medics out there who seem to dislike ICSM on general principles. Most Medics are pleasant, articulate individuals who happen to be doing a slightly different course. They're not hugely different from any of the rest of us, although I do appreciate that clinical students in particular have different issues and problems. Sort of like Postgrads, really.

At the risk of sounding Utopian and idealist, if we could overcome these prejudices - on both sides - then life here would be better for all of us.

Medics need to make an effort to integrate themselves without losing their identity, and everyone else should help in achieving this. However, it seems that the vocal, self-important minority will keep the arguments and resentment bubbling away for the foreseeable future, dooming us to outdated racism (yes, racism - it seems to fit the description) and dull polemic.

I have therefore taken it upon myself to exchange the life of a Union hack for that of a heroin dealer. I feel that this is a more personally fulfilling and socially acceptable pastime, bringing sweet narcotic oblivion to those whose sanity is being devoured by their final year projects.

Thanks for the colours, by the way.

Anon

Football and Fags

Dear Felix

Re: letter from Karan Kapoor about cigarette butt littering. I'm a smoker myself, and while I know that often I'm less than sensitive about where I drop my filters I'd like to address an issue of social inconvenience that I consider a bigger problem - football fans.

Now, the considered opinion is that all good boys should enjoy football but I (and all of my friends, in fact) couldn't care less. Yet we are summarily ousted from the tv lounge in our halls whenever an "important" match is about to be shown on a different channel. This would be more bearable if the Union was a haven from football, but no - all too often we have to put up with selfish rowdy football fans who've gathered to watch some match or other; remember that what may seem to you as acceptable high-spiritedness often comes across to other people, including myself, as at best irritating and at worst intimidating behaviour.

I tried to enjoy football when I was younger, and a few years ago I went to a local derby in my hometown of Bristol, Rovers (us) vs. City. The score was one all, we had bottles thrown at us, and a Rovers fan died of a stab wound before the match had even started. In comparison, I think I'd rather have to put up with a bit of litter, wouldn't you?

Toby Dore

1st year, Physics

Prince Albert Feedback

I've just read Prince Albert, and I'd like to say that the medics' observation that many IC students are apathetic, spoddy, celibate freaks with a computer fixa-

tion, who like nothing more than calculating VAT for ICU's assorted acronyms, has some basis in truth. I also agree completely that the administration at IC is a beurocratic pile of dung that doesn't give a flying fuck about student welfare. However, I don't think the medics have done themselves any favours by writing a magazine that bears out the belief of many IC students that they are a bunch of sport-obsessed, over-privileged separatists with their heads up their arses. Aren't stereotypes fun? Nothing like them for breeding prejudice, is there?

Given IC's appetite for gobbling up other functional institutions and inflicting its idiocy on them, isn't it about time students stopped bitching about each other (and that counts for both 'sides') and started on people who really deserve it, i.e. the IC administration? Is it any wonder that IC shits all over us when we spend our whole time infighting? Is it just me, or has anyone else noticed that since the medics have arrived, the bitching between engineers and scientists has gone on the backburner? This does not bode well for the influx of students from Wye: how will the cliques form after they arrive? Medics 'n' Wye 'n' Biologists vs. Physicists 'n' Engineers, or what? If we ever want to get IC to stop ignoring our welfare, we need to present a united front, not one that can't stop beating itself up.

S. Cook.

Biology.

Dear Felix,

Medics & their enemies are at it again. Recent weeks have brought to surface various resentful bodies, notably including ICSM's publication 'Prince Albert'. Smooth re-association this is not, but it is inevitable and some of us even want to meet certain individuals from 'the other side'.

Non-medics need to stop feeling intimidated by (and thus hatred for) our medical colleagues, while the doctors-to-be have got to accept that they are part of IC (after all it is 'Imperial College school of medicine') and not some separate college or Uni. So how do we settle these deep-rooted differences? With a right good ruckus that's how. Medics v. non-medics fighting it for supremacy on Queen's Lawn. Having bludgeoned each other to near death, weary survivors from both sides can cure their pains, and any lingering ill feeling, in Southside. If we're lucky we can get the staff in on it too... 7pm tonight, anyone?

Andy Vivian

Bio II



Win an Ericsson Palmtop

Name the new Internet service for IC and win!

Imperial College has got together with Ericsson, the telephone people, and is launching a Personal Telephone & Media Service for students this autumn. This means that, not only are there a host of useful telephone services available, but soon we will have our own Internet Service, dedicated to the needs of IC students and staff. Things like e-mail addresses, which you can keep for life and other associated goodies will be available from next term.

But what do we call it?

This is where you come in. In conjunction with Ericsson we are running a competition to name the service. The prize? An Ericsson MC16 palmtop computer.



What you need to do...

All you need to do is come up with a name that can be used for all e-mail addresses - and makes people think of Imperial College too. It must be of the form xxxx.net, and we have already identified that the names ic.net, impcoll.net and imperial.net are already in use, so be creative.

The small print

Answers should be submitted to c.ince@ic.ac.uk before the end of the month. If you're leaving College then don't forget to attach a contact address or phone number, so that we can notify you of your prize.

Can all recipients of ICU Colours please pick up their awards certificates, ties and pins from Pat Baker in the Union Office as soon as possible.

Win Big Day Out Tickets
Any individual who registers with Huntahead's recruitment service at www.huntahead.com before 30th June will automatically be entered into the free draw. The winners will be drawn at random on the 1st July 1999 and will receive two free tickets (worth £31 each) to attend the Big Day Out at the Milton Keynes Bowl on the 10th July.

Suggestions for Rag Charities needed
So far The Stroke Association and RedR (The Register of Engineers for Disaster Relief) have been proposed.
Email rag@ic.ac.uk or phone ext 58099 with any good ideas

Computer Programming Tuition
Having trouble with your computing course?
Friendly tuition by IC computing graduate
Email James at jrr1@doc.ic.ac.uk

Bound Edition Order Form

Fancy owning all of this year's issues of Felix in one hardback edition? You even get your name in gold lettering on the front, so there's no confusion as to who paid for it. If you would like to order a bound edition, please fill in the form below and return it to the Felix office. Please note that bound editions will not be available before early Autumn, so it is important to provide contact details for next year. The cost of each bound edition will be **not more than £32** (payable on collection of your edition).



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Deadline for completed forms is Monday 28 June.

Felix is moving

As of tomorrow, the Felix office will no longer be situated in Beit Quad. The new office will be located in portacabins next to the Physics and Maths buildings, but will not be open until August. In the meantime, any enquires should be directed to the Union Office.

All competition prizes must be collected today



The Right Thing To Do

I was going to write the usual 'this has been my year' signing off piece, but as there seems to be about ten such columns and/or editorial notes on that vein in this issue, I'll spare you the agony.

Which, fortunately enough, started me thinking about an interesting question; what exactly do you lot want out of your student newspaper? I am not convinced that I am any more qualified to answer that question than I was nine months and thirty-one issues ago. I know some of the things you don't want (Viz and mazes spring to mind), but then that's the trouble with journalism, and positions of public responsibility generally; you only get feedback when you get it wrong... Hang on, I seem to be looking back at the year after all...

What It is to be a Hack

Moving away from my own small world of Felix and into the small world of student politics, I've been attempting to pin down what it is that annoys me about hacks. Is it their irritating ability to habitually recite regulations at you whenever you ask the simplest question? Not really - after all, someone somewhere has to know the rules. Is it the diqueness? Perhaps, but that is fading as the years go by and, if we

were being honest, is no worse than the insular groups you find attached to most aspects of society.

I'm beginning to think it is more to do with the jobs involved. Consider a company in the 'real' world. Would they ever allow someone with no direct experience, no prior knowledge and no previous in-house training to run budgets of thousands if not millions, lead policy-making committees or represent the management to important external bodies? Although the *actual* responsibility and power available to students in student unions is minimal, when compared to that of doing a degree, it is quite striking.

Sabbaticals take up their positions without the confidence-boosting experience of promotions and pay rises behind them, and sometimes it shows. Taking it all too seriously is one sign. Taking it as a complete joke is another. Striking the balance is difficult, as it requires experience and confidence. I think Dave, Chris and Marie have got that balance right on most occasions, and certainly on more than some previous years' officers. As for other Union hacks... well, I'll leave that one for you to decide.

Rhetoric without a Cause?

I would like to leave with some words of advice, with some grand cunningly con-

structed remark to remember me by, but to be honest I don't know how to begin. The weariness that infects us sabbas towards the end of our terms has got to me too, and all I can think of is sunny Mediterranean beaches and Italian ice cream. Still, here goes...

If you want something, anything, at this college, you have to fight for it. The Union will help students... to an extent. Dave Hellard has already implied twice this year that students should help themselves whenever possible, and I reluctantly must agree. If something is wrong in your hall, in your department, in your life, track down the person responsible and tackle them head on. By all means write letters to Felix, by all means complain to the relevant ICU officer, but this will only get you so far. Think your new lecture timetable is unfair? Write letters to your head of department, pester them in their office until they agree to listen to you. In my experience what the College can get away with, it will. Don't let it.

On that note please don't let some of the ongoing news stories from this year fade away. Residents at Clayponds - keep an eye on the financing of your new common room. Users of Portman Travel - complain every time you get a rough deal compared to STA. All students - don't let college throw out your peers who can't pay their tuition fees. Just because

we're not part of the NUS doesn't mean we can't have a voice. I have done more work this year than I did in three years of my degree. University is one time, perhaps the last time, in your life that you have the freedom and energy to make your opinions count, to say what you think and get recognition for it and, most importantly, to be whoever you want to be. Don't sit around complaining about your course, your college or your life. Use your time to act, and change them.

Goodbye and Thank You

As for me? I'm off to the dizzy heights (?) of LSE next year, but I'm sure I'll pop by and say hello occasionally. The customary thank yous should go here, but there's too many of them - you know who you are. Three are worth special mention, however. Firstly, thanks to my girlfriend for all she's put up with since Christmas - I know it hasn't been easy. Many many thanks to David Roberts - Felix wouldn't have happened this year without you - and best of luck for next year (I know you won't need it). Finally, thank you, the readers. You are the most important part of Felix, and the force that kept me going throughout this year. You are also the College's most important part - don't let anyone tell you otherwise. Have a good summer. - Ed

Final Thought For The Day

Has it really been three years? Was it really three years ago when I was sitting on the train from Liverpool to Euston, clutching the few remnants of my childhood which I was not too afraid to bring with me? When I was deciding which compartments of my wardrobe in Linstead should hold which of my possessions? Was it really three years ago when my drunken alter ego first discovered the step outside Southside Bar, at the expense of one very full pint?

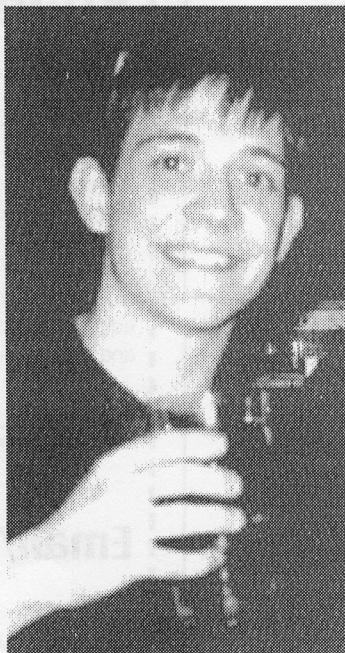
The innocence of youth. Ain't it cute? I remember reading in the blurb sent by College that I was expected to be doing something like thirty hours of work per week in my spare time, and I also remember actually believing it. I also recall picking up my first copy of Felix, and deciding that it must be produced by one hundred and fifty super-efficient amphetamine-addicted thinking machines. (I later discovered that it really thrives on an ailing set of personal computers operated by a handful of people with a penchant for failing their degrees.) Most naive of all, though, I was convinced that Electronic Engineering would be fun.

University, it seems, is a tough place. A great deal is expected of poor undergraduate students, especially at such a

competitive, frenetic, and apathetic institution as Imperial College. Many students have mental health problems. Pressure can be enormous, with financial constraints; academic handcuffs; pharmaceutical and alcoholic temptations; unpredictable members of the same or opposite sex, and, arguably toughest of all, attempting to stay motivated and happy amidst all the social wrangling. And what often makes it worse is that no bugger will listen.

Last year, the then editor of Felix wrote an editorial lamenting the lack of proper emotional support for students, citing his own experiences as an example. I remember reading it and feeling that he was absolutely right. By the time you read this I may have finished at

Ali Campbell



Cheers!

Imperial forever, but on so many occasions I was convinced this would never be the case. When I came to London I was reeling from the death of both my parents. If anybody was going to struggle at university, it was going to be me; for those who attempt to provide support for students, the writing should really have been on the wall.

It would be easy now to name names; point the finger at those who are supposed to be responsible for students' welfare and proved no help at all; but I'm not really a troublemaker in these pages, despite the very occasional pop

at Simon Baker and ICSM over the last two years. I do not pretend to know how to make the system better, when such a phenomenal number of potentially

unstable students are together in one place. But during those weeks I spent absent from College in a state of utter depression last year, when nobody seemed even slightly concerned, it became clear that something was very wrong somewhere. Students' work also suffers under pressure. This undoubtedly happened to me, and is a problem in which academic institutions ought to take more interest; it probably costs them more dearly than they might think.

Provided that these dents to my degree have not been too excessive, I bring to a close what should be my final offering to Felix. We have seen the loss of the bookstore, the Print Shop and potentially a few other things, if current rumours are to be believed. We have seen Eric Allsop do a sponsored marathon Union Presidency. (What do you mean, it wasn't for charity?) And we have seen the installation of some very expensive granite.

There's no room for proper salutations here, but I want to thank everybody who has been nice to me in any capacity over the last three years, especially the women. It's been tougher than you think. Two fingers, though, go up to everyone who has been thoughtless, selfish, exploitative or arrogant. Goodbye, and don't forget what I said about Columbo.

A Trip Through Time

Imagine going to see England play football in the world cup. In 1966. Or you could go to 2999 to see what kind of parties they're preparing for the third millennium. What about going back a hundred years and putting some money into a bank account? Back in the present, you'll have accumulated more money than the Sultan of Brunei could ever dream of. You know, with a time machine, anything is possible! Alok Jha looks at how you could book a trip through time.

Time travel is a favourite in science fiction. People skip between different times almost as effortlessly as you might send an email or ignore reading your lecture notes. The machines they use are widely varied too. There's the TARDIS in *Dr Who*, a phone booth in *Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventures* and, of course, the famous DeLorean in *Back to the Future*. Each of these devices have their own mechanism of defeating the progress of time's arrow as they hurtle their occupants through countless adventures in countless different times. While these make great stories, it will come as no surprise to anyone that actually travelling through time is not an easy thing to do. So what exactly are the problems?

Theoretically, there are methods of travelling through time. General Relativity says that it's possible to bend space in such a way that you can create things called 'wormholes'. By travelling through these, you can take a shortcut through space and cover huge distances very quickly. This concept can be taken a step further to encompass time travel as well. Since space and time are similar concepts in General Relativity, there's no reason why you can't have a wormhole connecting two different points in time as well as two different points in space. By travelling through one of these, you can travel through time. There are problems with this model though. The main one is that we have no idea if wormholes actually exist anywhere in the universe. It has been postulated that they may exist inside black holes, but this idea suffers from the fact that it can never actually be tested. As far as creating artificial wormholes goes, you can forget it. The technology we have at the moment is far too crude to do anything like bend huge amounts of space or time into wormholes. You would need materials that you could subject to extreme conditions and Dr Andrew Liddle, of the Astrophysics

Department at Imperial College, believes that we won't have anything like that for the next millennium or so.

Then there are questions about which way in time you could actually go. There are a lot of people who think that travelling backwards in time will never be possible. Their argument is that, if we do ever develop the technology to travel back in time, there should be evidence of it already. In other words, people from the future should be amongst us right now. Since there has been

no hard evidence to support this, we can safely say that no-one from the future has ever been here. Or can we? Jenny Randles, author of over forty books on the paranormal and time travel, believes otherwise. She strongly suspects that we have indeed been visited by people from the future but that they keep their identity secret. "Like we watch animals in the jungle", she suggests, "the people from the future watch us from a distance." She says that there is a lot of evidence to support her ideas. One of her ideas is to look for what she calls 'out of place objects'. These are, as their name suggests, things which exist in

places where they shouldn't be. Like iron nails in rock beds that were formed millions of years before the appearance of man. Or human-like footprints which can be dated to similar times. Jenny Randles suggests that things like the nails may well have been carried to their discovery sites from the future and that the footprints are those of time travellers.

Another problem with the whole time travel thing is that of paradoxes. Let's

assume you

paradoxes like this one. The first is to say that history has already happened and that it is already set in stone. That means that, if you did go back in time, then the fact that you are here now means that you didn't kill your great great grandfather. If you do go back and try to kill him, time will conspire against you and you will somehow be prevented from doing it. This means you cannot change history. The second way out of the paradox is to employ some quantum mechanical thinking. Professor Chris Isham, head of the theoretical physics group at Imperial College, says that if you did travel back in time and kill your great great grandfather, you would return to a different present from the one you came. This is basically what happened in *Back to the Future Part 2*. The idea is that every decision you make forces you down a particular path through time. This leads to the idea that there are an infinite number of universes out there, each of which represent all of the results of all the possible decisions you could have made in your life. Going back in time to change one of those decisions will make you enter another universe, and so there is no paradox. In that universe, you never existed anyway.

can go back in time and meet your great great grandfather. Imagine what would happen if you had an argument with the old man and ended up killing him. He could never meet your great great grandmother and your family would not exist. More importantly, you would never exist. So if you never existed, you couldn't have gone back in time to kill your great great grandfather. So that means that he survived and that he did meet your great great grandmother after all and that your family does exist. So that means that you were born as well and you can now go back in time again and kill him. But that means that... and so on. There are two ways of getting around

So where does all of this leave us with time travel? Basically, it looks like we won't see people stepping into machines and disappearing into another time for a while. Certainly it seems as though it won't happen in our lifetimes. But, once again, Jenny Randles thinks differently. She says that we will see some form of time travel within the next thirty or forty years. It will not be a situation where people can physically travel but one where we see information from the future travelling into the past. She thinks that the first indications of time travel will come when we begin to see messages on our computer screens which have been sent from an experiment twenty years in the future...





The Last Word From

The Last Goodbye

Well, this really is it. I know I have had more farewells than Sinatra, and have invariably invoked the great man's lyrics on each occasion, but this is absolutely the last Voice of Reason. You will therefore forgive the odd smidgen of self-indulgence. Before I start thanking the cast of thousands that have made all this possible, it seems a good time to explain how it all started, since, if I had a pound for every time somebody asked me, I would have enough for a loaf in Southside shop, and that's a lot of dough. It all started in the autumn of 1994. Though I had had a couple of letters in Felix in the previous year, more of which later, it was the Frater Fiam column that led to my first real rant. Written by Felix luminary Marcus Alexander, I, in my humble opinion, saw it as nothing more than vacuous drivel (no sniggering at the back, please). This I detailed in a couple of letters, which caught the eye of the then News Editor, Rachel Walters. She went on to be the 1995/6 editor, and asked if I wished to write a column on anything and everything. The rest, as they say is history. Initially intended to be a fortnightly feature, it ran weekly for three years, becoming larger this year and interwoven with my good friend Matthew Salter's Right Angles to Reality.

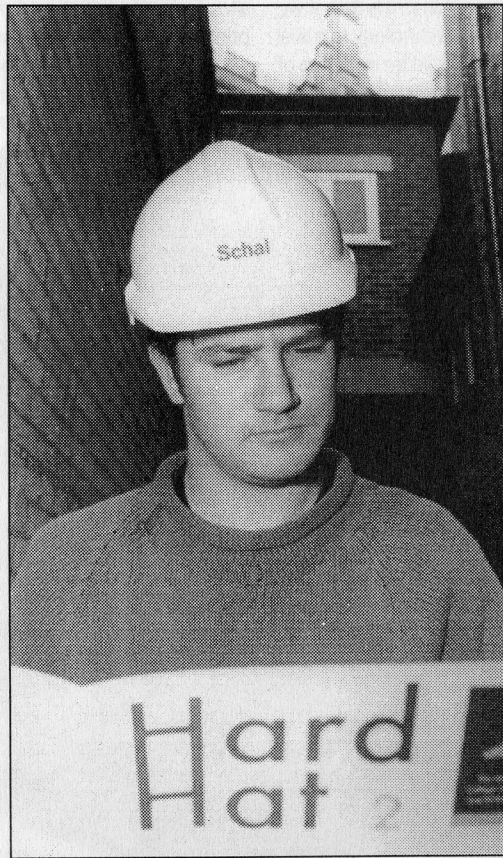
It all began on October 13 1995 with a piece about French nuclear testing in the Pacific, in which I suggested an alternative, deserted test site could be EuroDisney, and a moan about the no-smoking policy in the JCR, which people were beginning to enforce by the installation of about 50 red and white signs. In those halcyon days, I knew virtually nothing about Sheffield. Messrs Caldwell, Hansen, Foster, McClure and Sir Ron were mere entries in the phone book, so it took a while for me to get into my stride, confining myself to the weird ministrations of student politics. Ian Caldwell, later to become a star feature in my column, first got a mention in the middle of January 1996. The subject? Signs. What else, dear reader, could it be? The biggest thing in common between me and Caldwell is signage. He loves putting 'em up, I love slugging 'em off. The absolute pinnacle of Estates' achievements still remains the 'This is a Temporary Gate' sign betwixt the Central Library and Biochemistry. I hope the promise of one of them still stands...

Beyond Year Zero

In what was to become a regular feature, my job was in jeopardy for the following year, but frantic negotiation with Alex Feakes (I grovelled) secured my position. Campus Renaissance was well on its way, though not without a few glitches: BMS cranes crashing into buildings, bulldozers nearly falling through the Library roof, that sort of thing. Clayponds was a bit of a hot issue that year, on account of a very large spate of burglaries and an even larger number of breathtakingly crass com-

ments from College. Somebody suggested that "IC admin v students [is not] an equal contest". I couldn't agree more. Sheffield don't stand a chance. Of course, I don't just slag off IC's legions of administrators. The European Union has also been the subject of many a rant over the years. In November 1996 I said, "how on earth can the Deutschmark retain all its value after 1999?" Now I'm not one to crow, but...

You will know by now my views on alcohol. I am broadly of the opinion that the beer in Southside is a little ahead of the Union in much the same way that a Ferrari is a slightly sassier motor than a Fiat 126. This caused a bit of a storm in early 1997. Censored by the then editor, I can now reveal that I



meant to say, "if you think real ale is synonymous with amorous activities in a canoe, leave the Union Bar and head for Princes Gardens." The point still stands, though I must say I had a half decent pint of 6X there recently. Much still needs to be done, however.

Many people wrongly assume that I have a major problem with ICU, which is of course a load of old cobbles. I may have given this impression when I was cruelly misinterpreted over the legitimacy of hockey bar names (a tremendous invention), and my views on Poetic's Weekly Poem, which vied for space with my humble prose. Poets, being gentle folk, don't go round slapping people, so they wrote 'An Ode to Simon Baker.' I would quote it, but my copy of that issue has disappeared. The

boss of that society, who I attacked on several occasions, was some bloke called Ed Sexton. What ever happened to him?

The Best of Times

I shan't continue to list all the times I offended someone important that year, but I must recount the Great Marquee Debacle. For the benefit of younger readers and those old lags who don't now know what day of the week it is, Imperial College decided that undergraduates should not sit their summer exams in the Great Hall, but rather in a very large tent in Princes Gardens. The reason for this was the startling discovery, just before the scheduled exams, that knocking seven bells out of the adjoining library might generate a bit of noise. That's why we pay our senior people all that money, you see. It turned out that the builders' request for an exam timetable went unheeded, leading to this crazy situation, which made it as far as The Independent, if I remember correctly. Let's just say that 1996/97 was a good year for a columnist at IC.

My employment secured again at the eleventh hour from Jeremy Thompson, 1997/98 began with a new photo for me, replacing the one that actually made me look reasonably good with one that looked like Stevie Wonder had been conducting microconstructive facial surgery with a blowlamp and a lump hammer. Having decried the 'motley crews' and Schal project mismanagers, I finally entered the lion's den and went 'on site'. Thoroughly nice chaps, I was a bit unnerved when a seven foot Irishman said that he was not happy about the motley bit. A pathetic half-laugh on my part and it was exit stage left. One of the biggest issues of the year was the Conference Office. I must be careful here, for reasons that will soon become clear, but they started off by 'masterminding' the London Fashion Week extravaganza. Through incompetence that would have been dismissed as unrealistic on the pages of a 'Yes, Prime Ministe' script, the College barely made a profit out an event that caused untold chaos to the centre of the South Ken campus. Of course, it wasn't all doom and gloom as Ken Weir, Security supremo, will tell you to this day. Despite the fact that I missed the whole week, I'm not bitter. I never did rate Helena Christensen anyway, Ken.

The Long Arm of the Law

Things went from bad to worse on the Conference front. £8,000 was lavished on 13 office chairs (I always said that Chippendale and grey Formica would clash, but would they listen?). And then the biggy. As had become a trend by this stage, my famously sharp hearing had picked up a discussion of the Conferencing trading accounts on the Walkway. Alas, a few errors crept into a news item (not my column, mind), prompting the threat

The Voice of Reason

of legal action by the inestimable Annette De Lima, Head of the Conference Office. Ultimately, no action was taken, for which there are two explanations. Was it the inexorable flow of the milk of human kindness from that department, or could it have been the discovery that, as ICU is not a separate body from Imperial College, a lawsuit would have roped in the Rector and the Chairman of the Governing Body? To this day, it's a mystery.

1997 will be remembered by many as the year when ICU held more elections than Italy. The sterling Eric Allsop proved a hard act to follow, resulting in four rounds before Andy Heeps successfully took the reins. Along the way we saw some candidates of execrable ability, desperately trying to bolster crappy CVs, a trend which I'm glad to say seems to have reduced of late. All in all it was a busy year, with a huge number of different bits and pieces. In short, I managed to offend the following groups: Third World First, the Overseas Students Committee, The CCUs (all of them), the Hockey team again (honest, lads, it was all a misunderstanding) and the medics. Having said that, Nick Newton of ICSM annoyed me not inconsiderably, so I suppose it's honours even.

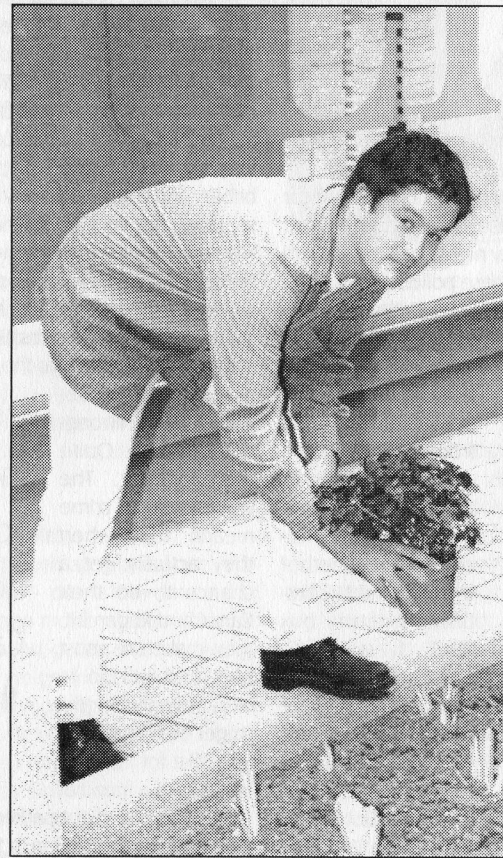
I also managed to offend large sections of the modern 'art' community, and a Pro-Rector to boot. I wrote a lengthy diatribe on an exhibition hosted in the Ante Room in November 1997. "While I have no desire to meet the two talentless cretins responsible for this utter waste of taxpayers' money, I would dearly love to meet the person that wrote the biographical sketches of these creative non-entities. To describe a video of a few peas and model sheep vibrating on a washing machine as 'immensely funny' indicates that he or she is peerlessly ironic or deeply disturbed (or the recipient of a back-hander)." As anyone who saw it will agree, this is fair comment. Unfortunately, this was unwittingly published two days after a Sheffield Council of War met to discuss the semi-destruction of said 'installation art.' By an amazing and untimely coincidence, the damage occurred at the same time as a '22 Club ball, at which I was Club President. This irony was not lost on many senior College staff, with the odd Pro-Rectorial exception. And no, it was not me.

A Final Thank You...

And so we come to this year, under the stewardship of the esteemed Ed Sexton, who again succumbed to my charm and grovelling. No need to review it, because someone will have done that elsewhere. It is therefore time to start thanking people. Firstly, John 'Hamish' Teale. As well as persuading me to send my first letter into Felix, he came up with the column's name. On the subject, thanks to Beccy Land. If you hadn't made such a mess of running Felix in 1993/4, I would probably never have done any of this. Rachel Walters holds the fearsome responsibility of letting me do this originally, for which I am eternally grateful. Against their

better judgement, Alex Feakes, Jeremy Thompson and Ed let me continue - Cheers!

People less grateful are Ian Caldwell, Mike Hansen, Marion Kimberly, Vernon McClure, Lynda Davis and John Foster. Amazingly, Ian, when we finally met on St Patrick's Day 1997, resisted the urge to lamp me, instead, if I remember correctly, buying me a pint of Guinness. I think we were both surprised that the other was a human being, and later that year became quite close - he was on one side of a full colour poster and I was on the other. Mike Hansen, whose capacity for beer and jalapeno chillies is more than respectable, first tackled me over allegations of chess playing within Finance. I think that was eventually a draw - I was slightly incorrect,



and went on to appear on a Level 4 dartboard. Marion very nearly took me to task over several comments, but thought discretion to be the better part of valour. Having had a chance to refine my opinion, I can say that the Personnel Division is safe in her hands. Pint glasses are a different matter... Vernon McClure, with whom I have yet to quaff an ale, took offence at the suggestion that the Registry was the size of Wembley Arena, staffed with a capacity crowd. Thankfully, he didn't take this too badly, hence the fact that I was allowed to stay on for a PhD. Lynda and John are also mere faces on the walkway, having never met either of them. Though we have had numerous disagreements, they have always been professionally courteous; Lynda has never slagged me off in IC Distorter and College

Catering have never poisoned me. Well, there was that meat pie in the SCR once, but I digress.

I must thank the Rector, Lord Oxburgh (congratulations, Ron, I promised I'd put in a good word, didn't I?), for allowing me to continue my studies, when many would have slung me out for being lippy years ago. Thanks also to the College Secretary, Tony Mitcheson. Though I'm sure he has done much else, he is responsible for the flying of flags. Not a single day is missed, a testament to his military training I assume. When the Union Flag appeared recently for the Duke of Edinburgh's birthday, I nearly rushed over to Suite Five to buy you a drink. Marvellous.

A huge number of people are guilty of aiding and abetting this column, but I shall single out a few. As you know, the very highest journalistic standards are maintained in this column (sometimes). Thanks therefore to all the people with whom I have lived or worked, roped into reading through the raw text. Additionally, Prof David Goodgame in my own department, who has given frequent and detailed critiques of my spelling, some of which I hope I have taken on board - I hope I've finally got it right! All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy - you've got to eat and drink. This column and degree and PhD would not have been possible without the constant and dependable source of liquid refreshment that is Southside Bar. Roger and his superb staff have, over the years, consistently served perfect real ale, during the consumption of which most of the ideas that I have used came to the fore. They have just received the Cask Marque in recognition of the excellent standard of beer served, which is very richly deserved. This column's finishing, but I'll still prop up your bar. My lunchtimes for the last three years have mostly been in the excellent and unsung Holland Club, under the excellent stewardship of Kev and his fine team. Coming off brie, bacon and walnut jacket potatoes was not easy, but after that stint at the Betty Ford Clinic, I can now vary the dishes with impunity. A great venue, and one that could teach other outlets on campus a thing or two. Finally, there are a number of people that I would truly love to thank. Unfortunately, they would probably face the firing squad if their names ever appeared in print. You know who you are, and I am immensely grateful. The students and many of the staff owe you all a great debt of gratitude for helping to hold to account people, policies and departments at Imperial.

...and Goodnight

And so the end is nigh. I have enormously enjoyed doing this for the last four years, and hope that some of you found something in it to amuse, entertain, inform or infuriate. Some of you must have, because this column generated more than its fair share of letters, even ones that said nice things. I better stop before the upper lip starts to quiver. Goodnight and God Bless.



Right Angles to the Rising Sun

Law and Order in a crime-free land

They say the strangest things... If Roger Whittaker, that great social visionary and legendary MOR balladeer, is to be believed, not only does England "swing like a pendulum do" but we also have "Bobbies on bicycles two by two". Hmm. Perhaps when Granny was a little girl, but these days it's more a case of Kevlar body armour and rapid response vehicles, so I'm told; but one thing's for sure - officers of the law never go abroad without at least one of their pals in tow. But it's a comforting and cosy thought, isn't it? The image of kindly Dixon of Dock Green with his bendy-kneed "evenin' all" is as much part of British consciousness as warm beer, overpriced hotels and losing to Argentina in the World Cup. It's perhaps no surprise then that we are unwilling to face up to the fact that it's about as realistic a picture of modern society as porridge is of 'oat' cuisine. Sadly, in the last few years the image of the police force, as well as an alarming number of persons in their custody, has taken a severe battering. I've lost count of how many convictions have recently been overturned on appeal as being "unsafe and unsatisfactory", let alone those cases that have gone by the board because of some technical irregularity. Whilst some of those who have been set free should probably still be languishing at Her Majesty's pleasure, the fact that a fair few of them are worthy of being given the benefit of the doubt is more than a little worrying. But let's not be too hard on our boys in blue. They do a nigh-impossible job under immensely trying and stressful conditions, normally only experienced by us civilians when watching a feature-length episode of Little House on the Prairie. Much-trumpeted 'loss of respect for authority', helmets that look like ladies' bosoms and alleged chronic undermanning have all taken their toll on police morale. This last point is a particularly sensitive one - a recent report unearthed the disturbing finding that some UK Metropolitan forces are so short-staffed that increasingly suspects are having to write their own confessions.

It's easy to forget in the enlightened days in which we live that the police force as we know it today is a relatively new beast. It was not until the

1820s that the then Home Secretary, Robert Peel had the brainwave of putting together a custom-built force dedicated to upholding the peace of the Realm. Incidentally Peel, a Tory (they were banging on about being the party of Law and Order even then it would seem), went on to be Prime Minister - twice in fact - until the bill for reform of the controversial Corn Laws saw him off. Not only did he establish the modern police force in Britain, but he gave them their first nicknames - "peelers" or "bobbies" - porcine references were to come at a later date.

Why do I bring up all this guff, I hear you ask? No reason in particular, it's just that last Saturday night I had my first run in with the Japanese police since I came to this fair (and mind-bogglingly expensive) island. Well, not so much a run in as a weave in. My experience of the long arm of the law in any country, apart from the incident on our school trip to La Rochelle involving the Chinese fire-crackers, a Sherbet Dib-Dab and Mrs Frobisher's lunch box (and I want to emphasise that all charges were dropped), has thankfully been limited to the occasional

request to know the time. But in the case of the episode to which I'm referring, I had occasion to consult the local rozzers (known affectionately as omawarisan - literally 'the honourable person who makes his rounds') on a far weightier matter. It was a problem I have frequently experienced back home as well as over here: I was trying to find my way to the pub and I had got lost. It's a little known and utterly bewildering fact that in Japan - a country so technologically advanced that they produce portable televisions the size of a grain of sand - most small streets have neither names nor pavements, so going out for a swift half of an evening can be a confusing and hazardous business at the best of times. Being already two-and-a-

Matt Salter

"...the image of kindly Dixon of Dock Green with his bendy-kneed "evenin' all" is as much part of British consciousness as warm beer, overpriced hotels and losing to Argentina in the World Cup..."

half sheets to the wind, and with a set of scribbled directions in Japanese that looked more like a lottery ticket from Mars than a map, this was quite definitely not the best of times, hence my need for assistance in finding the bar.

Now normally officers of the law and alcohol have as much of an affinity as Italians and income tax, but on this point as on so many others, Japan is different.

This is mainly due to the fact that, except for the indictment of top government bureaucrats or leading businessmen on charges of bribery and corruption every half hour or so, Japan has very little of what you or I would recognise as crime, leaving their officers of the law free to provide other services such as directing half-cut and slurring foreigners to pubs. But don't run away with the idea that the police over here take the problem of public wrongdoing lightly. Quite the opposite. The very scarcity of crime means that when they actually get a chance to do their Carter and Regan bit, they make the most of it and will go to extraordinary lengths to get their man.

Take for instance the case of a friend of mine who one night parked his bicycle outside the main station in Sendai, prior to heading off to teach English to one of his private students. If the place where he had chosen to leave his trusty steed had been in the suburbs - which are dangerously poorly lit in Japan - he had reasoned, he might have great difficulty locating it again, which is why he had left it where he had. My friend's bike was the standard model - two wheels, Sturmey-Archer gears and a little shopping basket on the front - there are millions like it and it was certainly not worth stealing. Except to one person it would appear, because when my friend, his pedagogical duties discharged, returned to the appointed spot, his bike was nowhere to be seen. Thinking he

had simply forgotten where he had left it, my friend searched amongst the crowd of others for a good twenty minutes before giving it up as a bad job. Coming from New York - where even kindergarten teachers have taken to carrying concealed weapons for their own personal safety - his natural instincts were to put it down to experience, but seeing as the item in question had been a gift from a grateful student as a thank-you for "extra-curricula activities", it had a certain amount of sentimental value and he decided to report its disappearance. He heard nothing more for two months and had almost forgotten all about it - he'd even bought another bike - when he received a phone call from the local police office asking him to come and pick up his lost property. He duly went along and was introduced to the omawarisan who had "been assigned to the case". Honestly. That's how little crime they have here - they had had one of their men out scouring the neighbourhood for a beaten-up bicycle that could have been replaced for fifty quid. Now that's service. I doubt that Special Branch back home would have time for that - they're much too busy stamping out heroin smuggling and counting the number of corpses buried in Fred West's back garden.

"...the scarcity of crime means that when the police actually get the chance to do their Carter and Regan bit, they really make the most of it..."

I swerved into the police station and, approaching the counter, I gave the desk sergeant my most winning smile before asking directions to Murphy's Bar in the best Japanese I could manage under the circumstances. Despite the fact that I now

appeared to be speaking in Swahili, I finally succeeded in getting my point across, and PC Plod-san accordingly took me outside and, smiling broadly pointed down the street to where the pub sign was winking at me enticingly. I thanked him with a feeble wave of the hand and wove off to the said establishment where there was a pint of Guinness with my name on it. If he had been surprised to see me - a 6'3" tall foreigner half-cut and sweating - come sloping into the lobby of his quiet little office asking him to show me the way to the pub, one can only guess at his reaction when I came back in a couple of hours later, significantly the worse for wear, grinning like a lunatic and asking him to show me the way to go home.



Democracy In Action

Every so often something happens to Kevin that reminds him what a brilliant place London is. This week it was the European Elections that enraptured Kevin. Where else but in London - the heart of our eccentric and developed democracy - would the process of voting be so much fun? Kevin found the whole process rather amusing, especially as the ballot paper was about three foot long, longer than the desk in the polling booth. On unrolling the scroll-like ballot paper, 150 candidates and 15 parties, along with their corresponding logos and paragraph of election drivel confronted Kevin.

Having located the appropriate location for his cross, the next challenge was to get the paper into the ballot box, which had obviously been designed for papers of more modest proportions. Kevin was dismayed to hear that it is apparently trendy to say that you don't vote in European Elections. Most of Kevin's fellow students, being wannabe trendies, didn't bother to vote.

Kevin hopes that the slightly guilty tones in which pathetic excuses for not voting were made indicates that there is some hope left. With better publicity, and increased awareness, perhaps in future students will not let their chance to influence the way their society is run pass by so lightly.

The Real World

Your average student at IC spends far too much time around other students, and ends up isolating themselves from the rest of society. Recently Kevin took a group of IC students off the campus to a real pub, where inevitably a good proportion of the customers were over the age of 23. The students had apparently never experienced the behaviour of drunk thirty-some-things before, and were certainly not impressed by what they saw. They found this environment intolerable and were begging to return to their safe student-y world as quickly as possible.

The Importance of Pullovers

Kevin was dozing in a Physics lecture recently, when the lecturer succeeded in grabbing the attention of the whole lecture theatre by announcing: "Things are about to get serious, so I'm going to take off my pullover for this next bit." On removal of his multicoloured knitwear the lecturer proceeded to

derive Maxwell's equations in terms of the speed of light, during which Kevin returned to snooze mode.

Fireworks Please

The new dean of the Royal College of Science has suggested that the RCSU should hold an event for bonfire night next year. The new Dean is the professor in charge of Imperial's Plasma Physics Group. Kevin anticipates that a fireworks display organised by the Imperial College

Plasma Physics group should be a seriously impressive spectacle.

Dazed & Confused

Working in South Kensington, Imperial College students regularly find themselves dealing with lost tourists. Kevin has noticed that some students are unwittingly and unintentionally confusing these lost souls. When confronted by lost Americans on Imperial College Road searching for the Science Museum, the response of an IC stu-

dent is typically to turn towards the Chemistry building, point directly at the Science Museum, ignoring the buildings in the way, and say "that way." Which leaves your average tourist utterly bemused and confused.

Another common source of lost individuals is Prince Consort Road, where often there are people looking for the Royal Albert Hall. Bizarrely this occurs even at times when the answer is simply to follow the other people wearing turbans / Salvation Army uniforms / Christian yoof dog tags / dinner jackets, or whatever 'uniform' the people attending the event happen to be wearing.

I'll Be Back

Kevin has been promised that he will be returning to Felix next year. To conclude this year, Kevin would like to congratulate Mr Hellard, on being a popular, efficient, clued up, generally "Fantastic" President. Most students are not aware of the more boring aspects of the President's job, and when the person in the job is not a self-publicist, a lot of the work can appear to go unacknowledged. Kevin would like to see Tasha, her cronies, and her flatmates do as good a job impartially running ICU next year.

And on that bombshell, we depart.

Presidential Talk-Back

The Hellard Era Comes To An End

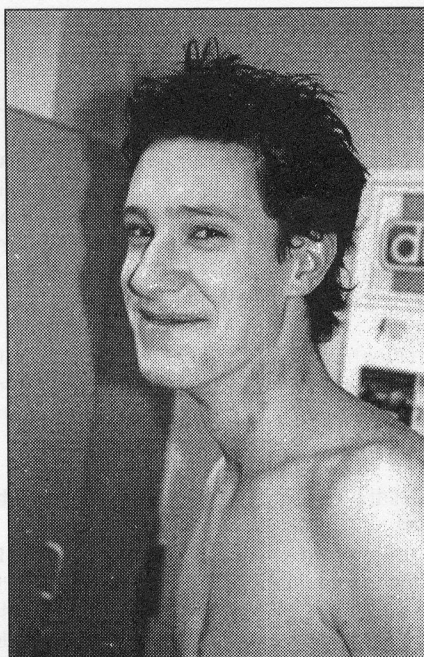
Well it's almost over, probably the most bizarre year in my life. So I thought I'd reflect on the year that's been.

When I first got the job, I saw the Union as a cheap place for a good night out, great fun to work in and not much else. I'd never got around to joining a club or society, although the idea did appeal to me, and I'd only ever voted in the elections on the basis of good posters. If you had asked me then my opinion of anyone holding a post in the student union, the reply would have been the standard uninformed generalisation, that everyone was a hack.

By the time the summer came, I already had a reputation as being anti-medic, despite my frequent social visits to their bars. And then it hit me. What the hell was I going to do for a whole year? The manner in which I was elected had allowed me to get through hustings and the like without actually forming any policies and my knowledge of how I could implement them if I did have any was limited to my

crash course in how to blag that you know something about the Union, purely based on past copies of Felix and a few council minutes.

Luckily Andy had left me with a few toys to play with. The dB's redevelopment was well underway and the contract for the University of London Union was still unsigned and then the hardest realisation of my life occurred: Having relied just on cramming for the previous two years, I might actually have to do some work.



The rest of the story starts to get boring and, if you've been reading Felix, hopefully you'll know most of it. I have formulated some opinions along the way, though, and become as bitter and twisted as even Mr Baker. Firstly, I don't believe in the conspiracy that the College are all ganging up in an asserted effort to get the

Union. I do however believe that the Union is an after thought for them, seen as a thorn in their side and if they want something we have, they will

have no qualms trying to take it from us. Just look at the Union Bookshop, Junior Common Room Refurbishment, the Southside Gym and possibly even the Newsagent.

Secondly though, I have realised that apart from the few individuals in 'Union Politics' for its sheer thrill and rush, most people in Union positions are involved for selfless reasons and without their input the Union would be crumbling.

I will now predictably try and sell the Union, but at least it's easy to. Until this year, I never realised how much the Union can help the average student's life. Whether in looking for accommodation, fighting an academic appeal or even meeting graduate recruiters, the Union has the mechanisms and expertise to help you along every step of the way.

So do I think I did a good job? I'd rather not comment, but I've enjoyed it and I got to spend a whole year living only ten meters away from a pint of Carlsberg... a Carlsberg for only £1.18 at that.



Sir Ronald Oxburgh: up close and personal

He runs the College. He's responsible for your education. He ultimately controls a £250 million budget. But do you know anything about him? Simon Baker finds out by interviewing the newly honoured Sir Ronald Oxburgh, the Rector of Imperial College.

How does it feel to be awarded a peerage?

"It's been awarded as much for IC's achievements as my own". Noting no firm political affiliations, Sir Ron promised to sit as a cross-bencher when he takes up his seat later in the year.

What is the Rector's job?

Asked what he does now, the answer was a simple (and surprising) "Very little". In rough terms, however, "it's akin to a CEO in any major organisation... all internal and external issues come, at some point, through my office - though much is delegated".

As a rough example, on any average day Sir Ron spends "at least a third of my time in correspondence and a third in meetings". More specifically, he is responsible for all the College's interactions with key outside bodies - the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, the University of London, Parliament, HEFCE (the government authority responsible for funding), the Department of Education & Employment etc etc.

Do you have any regrets?

Chiefly, "the lack of a decent Senior Common Room and an academic staff club".

Can you clarify the finances of the SCR development?

The total cost is projected at £1.6 million, "making this a much larger job than the JCR". However, he admitted flaws in the business plan for the project, noting that "the SCR need not be self-financing". Nonetheless, he accepted that "it should almost be so" thanks to shop units and expanded trade (receptions in evenings, etc), but ultimately it's "something we need to do".

The other area of controversy surrounding the project is the contracting out of catering. However, unable to confirm the future of the outlet one way or another, the Rector simply stated that "no decision has been taken". Nonetheless, he made it clear that he's not against contracting out in principle, "but it requires resources to be committed to monitor the contract". In these terms, he believes that the new CHP (Combined Heating and Power) Plant programme - currently taking shape beneath the Electrical Engineering building - is an "ideal project".

Moving onto the second regret, he also noted that, come 2001, the site presently occupied by Huron University (on the corner of Exhibition Road

and Princes Gardens) will be taken over by IC, which owns the freehold on the property, and that the present intention is to convert the building into an academic club.

What about the controversy surrounding the Portman Travel deal?

"I was not involved in that...I don't have the figures". So what about the bizarre, no-rent, commission only arrangement? "I am learning this for the first time... I will ask some questions"

How does the Beit project currently stand?

Confirming that "the project will definitely be finished come July 2000", he set minds at rest with the assurance that, whilst all the new rooms will have ensuite bathrooms, "rents will not be disproportionately higher". Ultimately, the College's aim "is not to make money out of students...the cost of the building works will be covered by increased conference activity". His hope is that this will allow Accommodation and Estates to "break the vicious circle ... to form a virtuous circle where increased rent from improved room stock will feed back into more upgrades".

So what impact will the Wye merger have on accommodation?

The merger will not lead to a material change in the total number of rooms, but the rooms gained in Beit will lead to "small" losses elsewhere, as other halls are disposed of. In truth, "Wye will not make much difference, since there are only 400 students there", hence "there should be no net change, ideally".

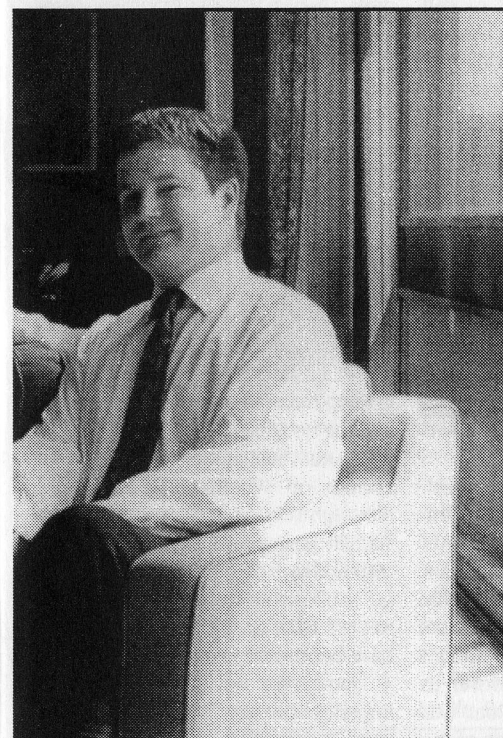
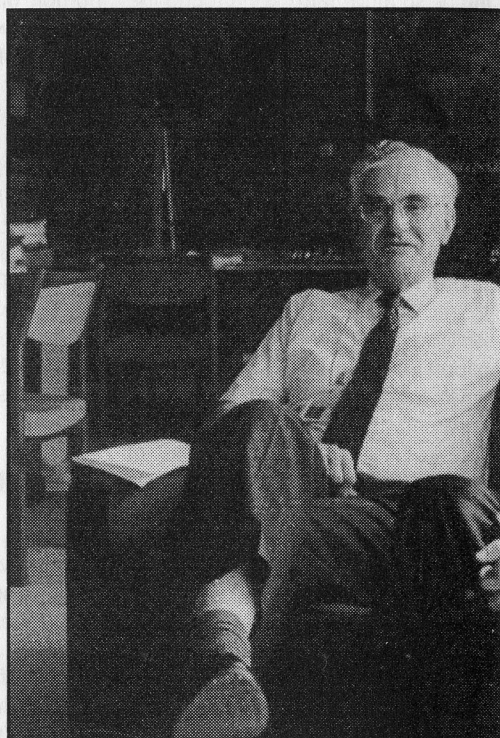
Elsewhere, the College "continues to look towards the use of housing associations", and by "taking our fair share" of the UL Halls allocation we have gained 100 extra rooms.

What's the current thinking on the RSM refurbishment?

It's a mammoth task that will cost "up to £100 million to do it properly". Construction work will be split over three phases, "beginning in a couple of years". As yet, however, "we haven't found the ideal architectural solution".

Moving on, do you agree that academic staff are underpaid?

"Yes, they are undoubtedly underpaid".



What's your current position on Imperial's membership of the University of London?

Any suggestion that he is in favour of disaffiliation is based entirely on a "mischievous" article in the Financial Times - and "there's no prospect of IC leaving UL for the foreseeable future".

So what are the benefits of membership?

In short, Sir Ron feels that we get a lot out of UL. However, the principle advantages are probably: greater access to cheap sporting facilities; easier collaboration between College's (which, for example, allows us to award joint MSc's); and we can co-ordinate our approach to distance learning - which might not be a big thing for IC at present, but will undoubtedly become important in the future, particularly with Wye College so highly regarded in Africa for its distance learning courses in Agriculture.

Which moves us onto the topic of mergers, both past and future...

The forthcoming Wye merger is "proceeding well", with only Royal Assent required before the bill comes into force (the two institutions are due to become one in August next year). "It's certainly a lot easier than previous mergers". Meanwhile, the med-

ical merger is "meeting expectations", but there's still much more to do. All in all it's currently "satisfactory".

Can you explain what's going on with Project 99?

"We needed a re-think on how information should flow around the College", rather than relying on "expensive and only slightly more reliable" replacements. Hence Project 99 (which is possibly now being re-named ICIS), which intends to be a thorough overhaul and reorganisation of the College's administrative IT provision.

With a little over a year to go until you retire, any thoughts on your successor?

"As far as I'm aware, no one has been appointed yet".

And what does the future hold for you, personally?

"I'm not sure - I don't believe in making long-term plans". However, he has some commitments lined up - and there's always that seat in the House of Lords.

In conclusion, how would you sum up your time at Imperial?

"It's been very enjoyable".

STAFF REQUIRED FOR 99-00

WE ARE LOOKING FOR NEW STAFF TO WORK IN THE ICU SHOP ON SHERFIELD WALKWAY

THE JOB IS IDEAL FOR POSTGRADS NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY

CONTACT THE SHOP ON 48473 OR CALL IN AND ASK FOR DETAILS

So should we introduce performance-related pay?

"In one sense it is irrelevant". Expanding on that simple statement, Sir Ron explained that, importantly, Imperial is "probably the only university that has no limits on promotion" (grade quotas are common). Moreover, he genuinely believes that under the current system, "more money would probably result in fewer academics".

In reality, he explained that the current problems in the pay structure are at the top and bottom - "Starting salaries are not sufficient for those wishing to start a family", whilst at the other extreme, "some other universities are offering "silly" pay packages for those at the top".

What's your position on Tuition Fees?

In the medium term, they're "an inevitability". Instead, the Rector suggests a system of vouchers, such that some universities would charge at or below the voucher value, whereas better institutions could charge more. However, this would require a system of scholarships and low-cost loans running in parallel with the scheme".

Most importantly, Sir Ron stated that we need to preserve "free education for all who could benefit from it".

How do you feel about IC's climb up the National League Tables?

They're "a mixed blessing". In reality, he feels that they're "not particularly useful", noting that IC could become number one by simply awarding more 1st and 2:1 degrees. Nevertheless, we "shouldn't look a gift horse in the mouth...and there's no cause for complacency".

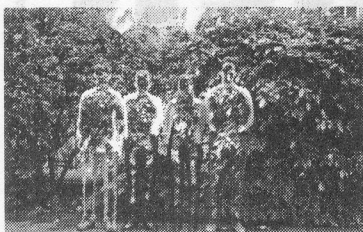


NEWS REWIND

October

The year began with good news: London Transport announced its student discount deal, now used by students throughout the capital. There was a flip side, however; mature students were not to be included in the scheme, a decision strongly opposed by ULU president Matt Hyde. David Hellard, ICU President, hoped that the agreement could be extended to older students at a later date; he was to be proved right before his presidency was over.

There was bad news for CCUs as the term began. Resignations caused numerous problems, particularly in the RCSU, who were rapidly running out of committee members by the end of the month. The BUSA hybrid entry debate was still rumbling on from the previous year, causing a certain amount of friction between ICSMSU and ICU. The only conclusion that everyone agreed on was that merging institutions takes time. Lots of time. Relationships weren't helped by allegations concerning financial mismanagement of the Charing Cross summer ball, accusations fiercely denied at the time by Nick Carter, the former Deputy President of ICSMSU.



RCSU Exec slowly faded away

Meanwhile ICU had its own problems. Adam Cherrington, who was to be Deputy President (Clubs & Societies), was forced to resign over the summer. His position was eventually taken by Marie Nicholaou late in the Autumn term, but not before significant problems had been caused by the lack of a sabbatical. RAG also found itself without key players, but recovered spectacularly as the term went on, under the leadership of Sarah Coburn.

College, too, faced difficulties. The BMS building was almost but not quite finished as freshers started to arrive, prompting criticism from academic staff and Felix writers alike. Even when the Queen came to officially open the 'Sir Alexander Fleming' building there was a last minute panic, as one of the outside doors collapsed hours before she arrived, taking a sizeable chunk of a concrete pillar with it.

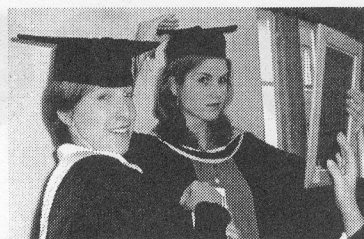


The Queen was Impressed with the BMS

Controversy over the new building didn't end there, however. The discovery that the BMS and bookshop flowerbeds, and associated 'aesthetic enhancements', were going to cost in excess of £100,000 caused a storm in Felix, finding its way into the letters pages, columns and editorial, and became an institutionalised joke for the rest of the year.

The major story for freshers was the introduction of tuition fees, which put them at a severe financial disadvantage compared to their older peers. A glimmer of hope came in the Rector's announcement that Imperial would not charge top-up fees, particularly welcome now it appears that Oxford are thinking of introducing them 'by the back door' for some of their courses.

On a happier note the extension of dB's into Felix's former home, including the construction of a new bar where the Print Unit resided, was just completed in time for freshers week. Sighs of relief from the corridors of ICU could be heard in Battersea.



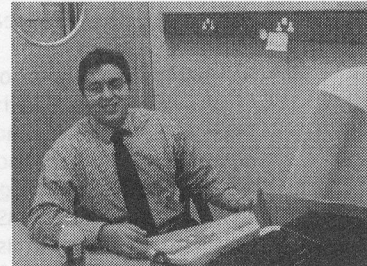
Commemoration Day

November

Allegations of anti-medic reporting in Felix grew darker with the days. An article entitled "Racism Rife in Medical Schools" caused a stir on the letters page, prompting retaliatory letters from the South Ken community. The slanging match culminated in a petition signed by over one hundred medics, ruffling Felix's fur somewhat.

Both sides had their own problems, however. ICSMSU lost three exec members in a month, prompting questions over the competency of the ICSM Presi-

dent, Wade Gayed. It became clear, however, that difficulties were partly caused by the merger of the medical campuses. Wade Gayed rode out the storm, despite extreme pressure from all parts of the college.

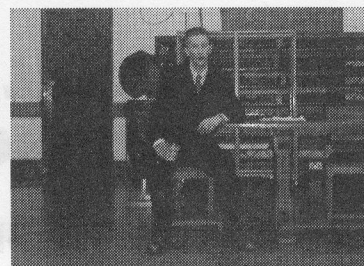


Wade Gayed kept his head down

At the same time Felix was threatened with disciplinary action over the now infamous Viz-style comic strip. After various letters and editorials Felix's editor admitted defeat and withdrew it. Similar pressure saw sport return to the back page. Felix was not the only student newspaper facing criticism, however, as the editor of Kings College's 'Roar' was suspended following publication of the "Carry on Cottaging - Basement Boys use Bogs for Buggery" issue.

On a happier note, RCSU finally elected a president (Simon Torn), rumours of a 1999 summer ball began to circulate, and David Hellard announced his 'Discount Day', which has since led to some decent reductions in many High St Ken shops. RAG week had to be cancelled after the College refused to allow the annual Beer Fest to take place in the newly refurbished JCR, but by the end of the month RAG was starting a slow recovery, setting up a 50p cloakroom for Ents nights.

Stuart Cook was the only candidate to stand in the DP(C&S) election, which attracted minimal interest even by Imperial standards. In the end he quit an hour before the end of voting, his decision coming after ICU Exec refused to allow him to play football on Wednesday afternoons should he have won.



Stuart Cook faces the music at St Mary's

increased following reports that the Beit project, which has now manifested itself in the form of hoardings in the Quad, could leave the Union substantially worse off for space than they had expected. The flowerbeds fiasco culminated in a letter from Ian Caldwell, Director of Estates, to Felix; Simon Baker responded with a sharp critique of College's record on such matters in his column, The Voice of Reason.

Looking further afield, students from South East Asia, noticeably Malaysia, were facing troubled times, as the economic crisis of the region worsened, leading many to fear they may have to quit their courses for financial reasons.

In early November LSE held a referendum on whether to leave ULU. Although Felix sources predicted a substantial 'yes' vote, the students gave a resounding 'no' to the idea. At the time questions were being asked as to the role of ULU, and LSE's decision must have been welcome relief.

November will be remembered at Imperial, however, for more serious reasons. The tragic death of an undergraduate from meningitis shocked students and staff alike, and led to fears that an epidemic similar to those experienced at other universities may be on the way. Fortunately the tragedy was not repeated at the college, and if any good came of the event, it was hopefully to remind students to take the threat seriously this and every year.

December

The second attempt to elect a DP (C&S) saw two candidates stand. Tim Traylor, however, stepped down in the middle of the campaign, leaving Marie Nicholaou opposed only by the omnipresent New Election. She went on to win a comfortable victory, although the turnout was less than enthusiastic.



Marie Nicholaou won her election easily

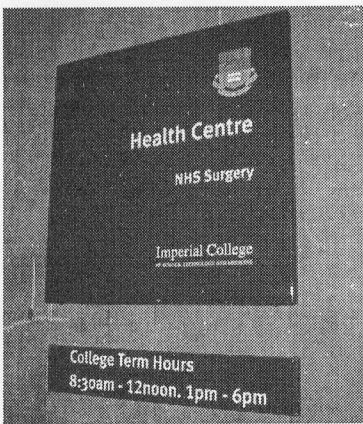
College again came under fire - this time the Health Centre took the flak.

Friction between Sheffield and ICU

Ed Sexton Looks Back at the 98/99 Academic Year

The Stories that Became Issues, as Reported and Debated in the Pages of Felix

Although the centre had been closing on Tuesday afternoons for some time, a serious accident on the afternoon of 1 December prompted a barrage of criticism, noticeably from Health and Safety reps. The debate attracted the attention of Simon Baker and David Hellard, the latter pursuing the matter for some time and even threatening protest action.

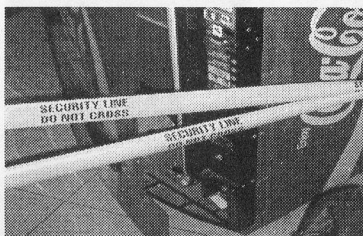


The Health Centre's sign lied...

However, the ICU President came under fire himself after presenting proposals concerning CCU clubs to ICU Council. Hellard suggested that such clubs should be moved to ICU control, an idea immediately condemned by CCU exec members. Despite attempts to justify his position and some support from within the Union, it was clear that this was one issue CCUs were not easily going to be defeated on.

A minor news story at the time revealed that STA Academic Travel were to be replaced, and questions were being raised concerning the way the new service provider was being chosen. Rumours of financial discrepancies were rife, but without any actual facts the issue subsided until resurrected by Simon Baker late in the Summer term.

Trouble on campus was also a theme for the month, with several thefts affecting the Union and Electrical Engineering. Violence erupted after a Tamil night on College premises, although it was later revealed that the perpetrators had not been members of the college.



ICU suffered a vandalised Coke machine

January

Violence unfortunately marked the start of the Spring term also, as a member of college's catering staff was attacked in the JCR. The men responsible took off with a substantial sum of money, but luckily the victim was not seriously injured. Bad news also came in the form of another meningitis case, leading to the hospitalisation of a first year, but fortunately the student concerned recovered.

Wade Gayed, ICSMSU President, began to enjoy a much less stressful life, after Felix revealed that £55,000 originally thought to** have gone 'missing' from the medics' reserves had in fact been lost due to an accountancy error by the college. The medics also enjoyed a very successful RAG week, although there was some trouble when a group of students attempted to hitch a lift on the M1.

Meanwhile ICU RAG faced a set-back with the announcement that there would be no beer fest in RAG week, which had been rescheduled for the end of January following similar problems in the previous term. The Sponsored Nude Kamikaze Parachute Jump, however, was more successful than last year, with sixteen blokes running naked from Harrods to the Union and raising over £1,000 in the



SNKJers heading for glory

process.

Inside ICU the politics was hotting up. The CCU v Hellard debate raged on through another meeting of ICU Council, with the President facing letters of complaint and criticism from all the CCUs, most notably from RSM President Alastair Fox. College announced that the Union would get the East and West wing basements of Beit Quad when the redevelopment was finished in the summer of 2000, allaying the fears of the previous term. Sabbatical elections were approaching rapidly, with the current sabbatical team determined to increase awareness of their importance within the student populace. This year also saw the creation of a new sabbatical position,

that of DP (Education & Welfare).

January also saw a short letter complaining about the lack of a social area at Clayponds Hall in South Ealing. More was to come, and eventually the residents would have their way, but at a price...

February

This was elections month. In the end an unprecedented fourteen candidates stood, with seven for ICU President. On paper the similarities between the candidates outweighed the differences, but Natasha Newton, being the only medic, was always going to be the favourite. Robin Pitt stood out as the only candidate with a strong political agenda, favouring a closer association with the NUS, and Dennis Patrickson ran a good campaign, based on communication, communication, communication.

It seemed that the current sabbs' dream had been realised, and students were further encouraged by the offer of £1 a pint beer at the South Ken hustings. Ian Clifford (standing for DP(F&S)) turned up to hustings in drag, fulfilling a promise made at the RAG slave auction earlier in the year. Stuart Cook, standing for ICU President, preferred the minimalist approach, and didn't turn up for



Prospective Presidents prove their worth

hustings or mount a campaign.

The results, though, were fairly predictable. Both Kevin Butcher (DP(E&W)) and David Roberts (Felix Editor) won easy victories over New Election, while Tim Traylor defeated Duncan Field in the contest for DP(C&S). Natasha Newton was elected as ICU President, thanks largely to a large medic vote, with Dennis Patrickson the only other candidate to come close. Numerous recounts eventually elected Ian Clifford as DP(F&S), his winning margin being just one vote.

Sports grounds were on the agenda this month, with rumours circulating that College planned to sell Teddington in the not too distant future. A College proposal suggested Imperial should aim for just one ground and, as Harlington is the

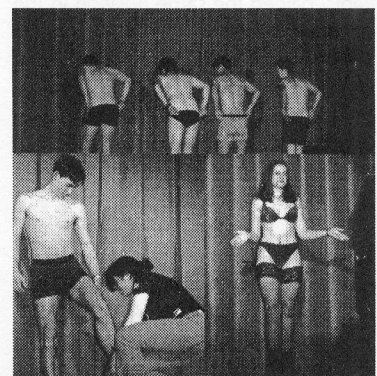
only one large enough, Cobham looked like it would be up for sale too. Clearly Tim Traylor will have work to do next year. Meanwhile Chelsea FC suffered a terrible fate at Harlington during a training session, when various Rolexes and thousands in cash were stolen from the players' changing rooms.

Early on in the month ICU Council decided that ICSMSU should keep its sabbatical officer for another year, meaning that a successor was needed for the 2000/01 year. Senior sources at St Mary's reported to Felix that Glaxo were intending to buy several floors of the medical school - allegations vehemently denied by other senior sources in ICSM. Clearly there was, and probably still is, some sort of power struggle going on within the corridors of power.

The annual problem of bike theft raised its head again, starting with a few letters accusing security of not doing enough to combat the problem. Ken Weir, Head of Security, fought back, maintaining that the college was doing all it could, and that the sheer number of bikes on the South Ken campus meant it was always going to be a target.

The first signs of problems for the Summer Ball came in the form of a £16,500 deficit on their budget, which had to be made up with sponsorship. As the term drew on and no definite sponsors appeared, the event looked in doubt... Early signs of possible exam disruption in the summer also appeared, as the Association of University Teachers threatened strike action in its pay dispute, which continued unresolved throughout the term.

ICU's RAG was announced to have been a success, raising £5,000 for charity and providing a good few laughs along the way. Amusement was also provided by a spate of Felix imitations, started off by Guildsheet Editor Dinesh Ganesarajah. After considering legal action, Felix decided that imitation was



RAG goes the Full Monty...



the highest form of flattery...

March

This was Imperial's month for sport. It started with the momentous defeat of Cambourne by RSM, and went on to include a victory for ICSM rugby in the UH cup for a second year. IC's men and women also won both UL cup and league titles in hockey, football and rugby, with the latter also winning the Gutteridge Cup. Athletics and fencing



The Football Team stand victorious

also excelled as the competitions continued.

There was less good news at home, however, with plans for the new sports hall coming under heavy criticism from local residents and building authorities. The Beit redevelopment was also caught up in the debate, but managed to disentangle itself without being rejected. The cause of much of the residents' anger was a succession of incidents in Southside in which objects were thrown out of hall windows into the mews below, causing severe damage in one case. This later led to the introduction of 'locks' on the windows, even though it appeared Southside residents were not responsible for the damage.

After a seven year wait, it finally looked like the Village Hall at Clayponds would be built. There was a catch, however - College wanted the cost to be passed on as increases in rent, claiming that the Residences Budget could not fund the project. Back at South Ken a man was arrested for bike theft, which must have been a blessing for Ken Weir and reduced the number of letters written to Felix on the subject.

There was yet more student politics to be had, with the CCU elections taking place a mere few weeks after ICU's elections. Becky England was comfortably elected as ICSM President, while Will Bently gained the same position in the RCSU, although RCSU's below par year continued with an electoral turnout of less than 5%. Dinesh Ganesarajah successfully moved from Guildsheet Editor to C&GU President, in a result which surprised many hacks around the college.

Meanwhile at ULU Matt Butt was elected as President for next year, and Tom Belton hands over the reigns of London Student to Chris Campbell this July. Elsewhere in London there were successes in the tuition fees campaign, with an occupation by students of administrative buildings forcing Goldsmiths to

retreat from their threat to expel any students who didn't pay up. They have now agreed not to expel students who cannot afford the fees. A similar situation at UCL also forced a college climbdown, although the lack of support from UCL's



Students celebrate their victory

student union caused much controversy amongst the protesters.

Back at IC the term ended with both good and bad news. IC applied for an FM license for May, which was unfortunately turned down over Easter. Meanwhile negotiations with London Transport were yielding results, with it now looking likely that the discount scheme would be extended to mature students. Finally Chris Ince (DP(F&S)) announced that Union curries would increase in price by 10p to £1.20, making the old '£1 curry' slogan from last year seem somewhat out of date...

April

Students may go home over the Easter holidays, but Imperial keeps going, and by the start of the summer term the Summer Ball had been confirmed as definitely going ahead. ICU had underwritten the event, taking a gamble that ticket sales and sponsorship would avoid a loss in excess of £20,000 - a gamble that in retrospect may look foolhardy.

ICSM's football team had the First Division Championship taken away from them, after entering a doctor no longer on a course in their team. An appeal brought them no joy, and they finished the season third. Back on the South Ken campus a fire over the holidays narrowly avoided damaging Biochemistry's basement, while Joint Maths and Computing students gained Chartered Engineer status upon graduating.

May

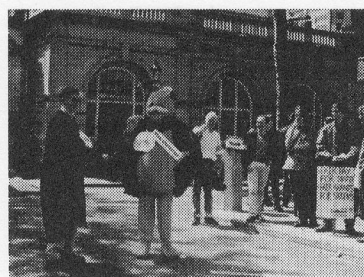
Felix came under fire from all quarters this month. An article about the private housing office, claiming that they had engaged in what amounted to a vetting service, was sharply denied by Catherine John, the lady in charge of such matters.

More evidence came to light that Teddington will

indeed be sold to finance the new sports hall, although both College and ICU authorities denied that any decision had been made. The sports centre proposals themselves came under heavy fire from local residents, putting the entire project in jeopardy.

There were problems in halls as well. Southside residents came back from the holidays to find that the windows overlooking the mews had been barred, prompting a string of complaints as students attempted to study in stifling conditions. A leaked college document showed that Imperial was going to be somewhat short of hall rooms in a few years time, particularly when some Wye students are living at Imperial.

Imperial itself increased its rankings in the Times league tables to number two, demoting Oxford to third place. The AUT confirmed and went ahead with its



The AUT strike made its point. Just.

strike, although the disruption to exams and services was minimal.

ICSM announced details of its summer ball, which is to take place the day before ICU's. Questions were asked concerning why the college refused to help fund the ball, the response being the standard 'our money is for educational purposes only'. There was better news for ICU in May, however, as London Transport confirmed it was to include mature students in its discount scheme from next September. ICU's Annual General Meeting rounded off the month, and was quick and efficient, with none of the farcical events associated with last year's.

June

And so we arrive at the last few weeks of the year - a time for tying up loose ends. Clayponds was finally given the go ahead to be built next year, although questions still remain as to whether it is right to expect students to foot the bill. Staying with halls, Southside residents met with Pro-Rector Tim Clark and persuaded him to re-evaluate the

worth in barring students' windows. Students stand to lose out elsewhere in Southside, however, as it was revealed that College plan to take over Southside gym while the sports centre is expanded, starting in twelve months time. Worse still, they plan to keep it once the work is finished.

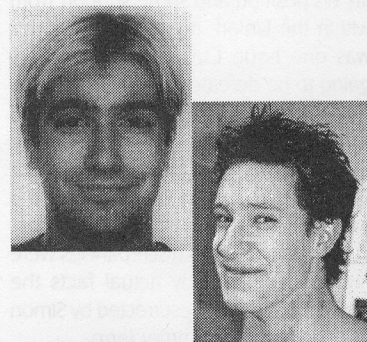
ished.

The fallout from the AUT strike included a small debate as to the role of students in such disputes, while college refused to give the strikers' pay to student hardship funds. Further action is planned to disrupt admissions procedures this August. On the subject of financial disputes, the College are planning to expel forty students who have yet to pay all their tuition fees if the money isn't received by the end of September. Although it seems likely that many of them will pay, ICU will hopefully offer its support to those who can't, and follow the precedents set by Goldsmiths and UCL if the college refuses to listen.

More economic question marks have been raised around Sheffield, with more information now available on the replacement of STA Travel by Portmans. Once again facts are hard to come by, suffice to say that there is something very suspicious, if not downright corrupt, about the deal. Plans to refurbish the SCR have been unveiled, with the projected cost running much higher than most people expected.

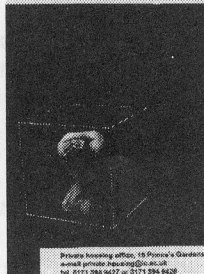
ICU also seems likely to suffer financial set-backs, with poor ticket sales causing problems for the Summer Ball. As it stands the Union could lose upward of £20,000.

Lastly, Imperial's Rector Sir Ron Oxburgh was made a peer in the Queen's birthday honours list. Although he admits to doing very little these days, Felix would like to congratulate him on an undoubtedly deserved reward, and would urge him to use his remaining time as Rector here to help the students who, at the end of the day, should be at the core of every university.



The 1998-1999 sabbatical team. Anti-clockwise from top right; Dave Hellard (President), Chris Ince (DP(F&S)), Marle Nicholaou (DP(C&S)) and Ed Sexton (Felix Editor).

NEED SPACE ?



Private booking office: 18 Prince's Gardens, 4th Floor, London, W2 2AB, UK. Tel: 0117 286 9627 or 0117 286 9628

if not us then who?

Recently four members of Imperial College's Pimlico Connection, Trevor Graham, Zeenab Rabak, Jessica Smith and myself, Elin Thomas, had the chance to go to the 'if not us then who?' conference in Salt Lake City, Utah. It is a conference bringing together 2000 students to discuss community service programmes run by COOL. The conference addresses a whole range of issues ranging from hunger and homelessness through to education and the environment. We went to share our ideas by giving a 90 minute presentation on the 'Frustrations of Tutoring', and to collect ideas for the Pimlico Connection. I'm happy to say we were successful in doing both.

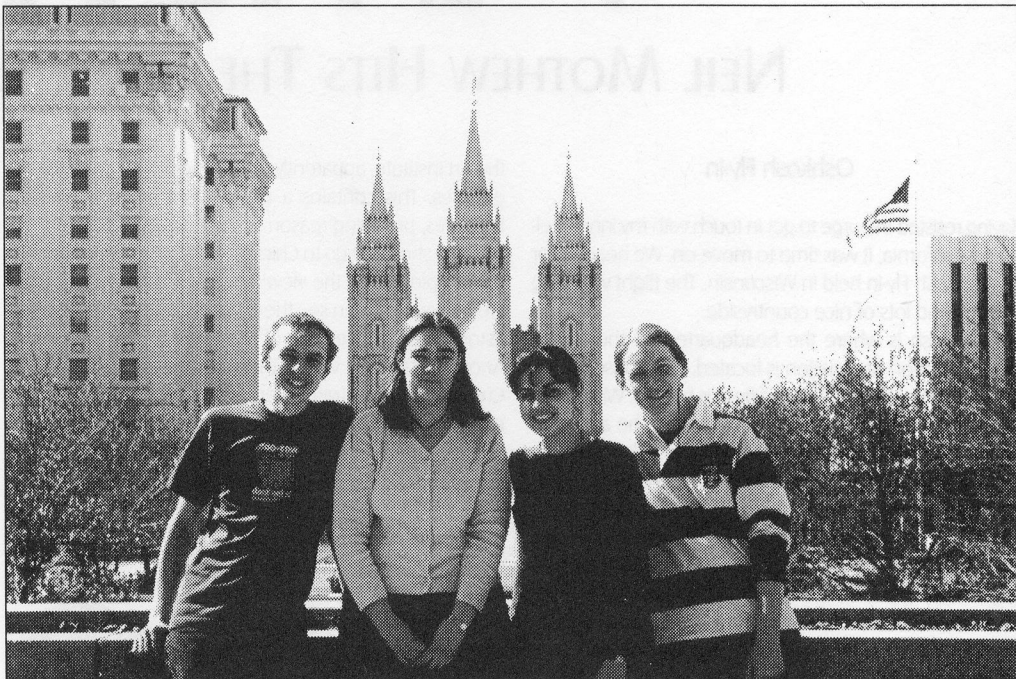
Wednesday morning, with a general dazed feeling, we head off to Heathrow. It's just after 6 o'clock - It seems none of us have got up this early in weeks! It still hasn't really sunk in that I'm going to Salt Lake City on the other side of the States. I had been waiting for this day for the last month, unfortunately I'd have to wait almost 24 hours before arriving in Utah. Stopping a stones throw from New York on the way, we were disappointed we couldn't spend a few days visiting. But before we could catch our breath it was on to Denver, before the last leg of the journey ending up in Salt Lake City.

Three flights later, we finally arrive, tired but excited. It is late at night, so we find a cab to take us to Utah University, a typical yellow cab with the maddest driver I had ever met, excluding a bus driver we met later. The University is the other side of the city, so he gave us a guided tour of the city on our way. On arriving at the University it wasn't at all clear where we were going to spend the night. I think by this point all we wanted was to sleep! While waiting for a COOL representative we met some of the first students who had arrived for the conference. We were shown to a gym floor, where we were to sleep for the next four nights.

Early the next morning we were awake and ready to go and check out the city. It was a gorgeous day; we had expected it to be under 10°C, however it was closer to 25°C. We did some site seeing, including Temple Square, the State Capitol building (modelled on the White House) and Salt Lake's shopping centre. We attracted quite a bit of attention due to our accents. This varied from strangers talking to us in the street, being preached at by 'Latter Day Saints' and a bus driver telling us about his hobby of breeding budgies. The city came across as a strange mix. The Mormons were really friendly, never missing a chance to tell us about their religion.

In the evening the conference started. There were three hours of introductory talks, including an introduction to COOL and some very thought provoking speakers. The speakers had all been heavily involved in campaigning for issues all around the world. One in particular came to talk about his political involvement in Burma; he described his experiences of being arrested for trying to stir the people of Burma to rise up against the regime. By the time we arrived back at the gym it had filled up. There must have been about 200 students sleeping on the floor. This gave us a fantastic chance to meet a really wide variety of people.

Friday was our turn to help the community of Utah. We all set out in opposite directions across the State to



spend a few hours helping out. I was assigned to Red Butte Gardens, an extremely beautiful conservation park in the mountains surrounding Salt Lake City. Here I helped with the weeding and the set-out of a plot for endangered species of plants. The jobs of the 2000 students at the conference varied enormously, from cleaning the apartments of mentally handicapped people, painting bookshelves in primary schools through to planting trees.

That evening we attended our first workshop. I went to a very good one on students tutoring science in schools in the States. It was interesting seeing the big differences between education in the States and our own. It seems that we have a better basic science education than the majority of Americans. Again there were more talks in the evening and a count of the number of students attending from each state. This ended up turning into a riot of people shouting for their own state. It was this evening that we met an extremely mad girl, Amanda, and her friends. When we realised there wasn't a sign for the UK she made us one and became determined to embarrass the four of us, by letting the COOL representatives know by screaming. It was great to meet some one so uninhibited and easy to get on with.

The next day we presented our workshop, which went very well. In fact the 90 minutes flew by and we managed to create a large amount of discussion on the difference between tutoring schemes in the States and in the UK. Our workshop was based around the frustrations inherent in tutoring. It seemed an appropriate topic as every time we go into the classroom we are faced with varying situations that uncover new frustrations. We used a variety of methods to present the material, including overheads, role-plays and a video of some of the stuff we get involved with. Most of the discussion created was focused around the differences between the Pimlico Connection and tutoring schemes in the States. Tutoring schemes in the States tend to be very different to the Pimlico Connection. They are mainly run after school and tend to function as more of a mentoring ser-

vice than we do. We hoped to educate the Americans how we overcome the frustrations we face tutoring, and to pick up new ways of approaching the frustrations we face in the UK. I think that the biggest frustration that we face is the aspect of time. We are lucky to have Wednesday afternoons as a free slot in most people's timetables, as this is something that Americans don't seem to have. They find it very difficult to dedicate a regular slot of time to a tutoring scheme, especially as their University fees are high and the majority of them have to work to pay for their education.

The rest of the day was spent attending different workshops and in the evening the 'Oxfam Hunger Banquet'. A particularly good workshop I attended was on 'Building a better team'; I am hoping that some of the ideas from the workshop can be used by the Pimlico Connection's committee. The 'Oxfam Hunger Banquet' stirred a large amount of debate about the issues of hunger and homelessness. Each of us were given parts to play. About 10% got to eat a three course meal, another 15% a meal consisting of rice, beans, bread and water and the rest of us, representing the majority of the world's population, got a bowl of rice and a glass of water. It was a thought-provoking activity, which I would like to see more of in the UK.

Sunday marked the end of the conference. After another workshop and a closing talk people started to make their way back to their home states. Inspired, we left for the UK; it was another 24 hours before we would arrive home.

I greatly appreciated the chance I had to go to the COOL conference. Four days concentrating on community service related issues gave me quite a few ideas I want to try and implement in the UK, in particular ideas that may be able to be co-ordinated into the Pimlico Connection. It also allowed me to make new friends and to meet a large variety of enthusiastic people who care about issues in their community. It is an experience I would love to repeat.

Elin Thomas



AMERICAN

NEIL MOTHEW HITS THE HOME LEG ON HIS CIRCULAR

Oshkosh Fly-in

Having resisted the urge to get in touch with my inner feelings in California, it was time to move on. We headed for the Oshkosh Fly-in held in Wisconsin. The flight was long and covered lots of nice countryside.

Oshkosh is where the headquarters of the Experimental Aviation Association is located. This is also where the world's largest airshow and fly-in is hosted. When I say fly-in, that is over 70,000 aircraft flying into the airport in the space of a few days. This is not an easy task - it requires the USA's finest air traffic controllers to deal with the densest airspace in the world. Indeed, it is considered the highest honour for an air traffic controller to work at Oshkosh for the week. Watching them in action is excitement in itself - landing planes at the rate of ten a minute - often 3 abreast, in formation. Normal radio procedures are not followed: the controllers give the commands on the radio and the pilots have to acknowledge they have received them by wagging their wings.

Oshkosh attracts all types of aircraft from all over the world. They are extremely friendly towards international visitors, and even throw a party for us with free hot dogs and beer.

The airshow is incredible. Once you have been here, and seen these world-class aerobatics displays, you might be disappointed by any other airshow. Both the United States Air Force and world-class acrobatic pilots put on the most incredible air display. There is something for everyone. Organisation on the ground is equally as efficient as it is in the sky. Aircraft are grouped on the ground by type - the old warplane flightline is a must-see, with easily enough aircraft for an air invasion of an Eastern European State.

As well as the manufacturers of General Aviation aircraft, there are such diverse trade stands as the Bahamas tourist board, who lend out wetsuits and employ Bahamian babes to give a free half-hour diving lesson in a swimming pool. Just what I needed on a hot day.

Chicago

Those familiar with Microsoft Flight Simulator might recognise the airport we flew into. Migs Field, located adjacent to Downtown Chicago, is the default airport on flight sim, and as such, I had flown in hundreds of times in the virtual world. On landing, we noticed several discreet black minivans drive past our plane and then move on. Apparently Bill and Hilary were in town that weekend for the Democrat conference and they were merely checking us out.

As if Oshkosh wasn't enough of an airshow for us, we were given the pleasure of a display by the 'Blue Angels' over the harbour. This is the US Navy's variant of the Red Arrows, only much better, with more daring stunts.

Our first few hours in Chicago were spent walking from the airport and getting orientated. We stumbled upon

the Art Institute, apparently one of the world's premier art galleries. This contains a magnificent collection of art treasures, providing reason enough to visit Chicago.

You shouldn't go to Chicago without experiencing the ear-popping lift to the viewing deck of the Sears Tower. From there, you can see the cityscape and appreciate the astonishing architecture of the surrounding buildings. Another place we visited that is well worth a trip is the Chicago Board of Trade. Here you can witness the fracas of one of the World's busiest futures and options dealing floors.

Once again we avoided expensive hotels by staying



with friends. They also took us for an eventful ride on Lake Michigan in their speedboat. Like a bad Baywatch plot, this resulted in us helping in a search and rescue for a drowned lady. To cut a long story short, the coastguard helicopter was called out and she was eventually located 10 ft under water by another boat's 'fish-finder'. Seeing the frogmen go in and winch her out of the water put a lump in my throat that lasted to the evening.

Just before leaving, we toured the Shedd Aquarium, next to Migs Field. A massive assortment of finned, gilled, amphibious and other aquatic creatures swim here, as well as Beluga whales, white-sided dolphins, seals, sea otters and penguins.

Toronto

We flew into Toronto City airport, a mere two-minute taxi-ride to downtown.

We got a great deal in a 4 star hotel just overlooking the CN Tower and harbour. There are so many hotel rooms in this city that during slack times they reduce the rates

to a fraction of the normal cost just to boost occupancy. It turned out cheaper to stay here than to stay in the youth hostel.

A trip to see the spectacular view from the CN tower is well worth it. The lift to the top is free if you book a table at the rotating restaurant. Surprisingly they didn't have arm-and-a-leg prices and it turned out that the main dish we had was priced at only a pound more than the ride up the lift to the viewing gallery. The food was absolutely excellent though the service was somewhat rushed by a team of Chinese waiters, eager to squeeze another sitting between the first and the second. We took our time eating.

Ottawa

National capitals are renowned for being the least interesting places to visit in any country, though recent developments to address this has made Ottawa an exception.

We stayed at the youth hostel near to the city centre. Located in an old jailhouse, we enjoyed the novelty of sleeping in former prisoners' cells. If you really want to, you can even view the gallows where the last public hanging in Canada took place. Despite its history it was quite a cheery hostel. Close to Ottawa's lovely and lively downtown, there are so many restaurants and bars in a nearby market that will make your head spin.

The city's beauty stands out in both its architecture, landscaping, parks and monuments. The parliament buildings gentrify the city and the public transport system is as much an asset as the beaver tails served in a market kiosk.

We ate the 'Blue Plate Special' breakfast at Zaks Diner. This filled us up for, mmm, about two days. The Z-Z-Top hairstyled waiter wasn't lying when he said it was big. After that fill up, we caught the bus back to Ottawa International airport and needed the full length of the runway to take off.

Montreal

Although there is quite a large Anglophobic community in Quebec, Montreal is extremely cosmopolitan and almost everyone speaks English. Funky bars and clubs line the streets. Montreal rocks.

The Quebecois are proud of their French heritage. This is manifested through their driving (like maniacs). If you are a pedestrian in this city, be aware that the 'WALK' signal on pedestrian crossings means nothing. Just remember to look both ways before crossing the road.

Hungry? Montreal is excellent for eating out and is full of restaurants. One of the culinary specialities of Quebec are Poutines (pronounced 'poo-teens'). These are french fries topped with gravy and cheese curds. To the uninitiated, this might sound disgusting. To my doctor, it might sound like instant cardiac arrest. However, after a night on the town, they are absolutely delicious and I thoroughly recommend eating them no more often than once in your



AIRLINE

TOUR OF THE USA - AND IT'S TIME TO GET TOURISTY

lifetime.

We took a guided tour of the Olympic Complex, built for the 1976 games. Apparently the city is still paying back the three billion dollars (in 1976 money) it cost to build. It never ceases to amaze me how much is paid for masses of ugly grey concrete.

Quebec City

Again we spotted the French temperament enroute to Quebec City. Protesting pig farmers decided to bring their livestock out for a day trip and as a result blocked the motorway between Montreal and Quebec City.

Looking totally out of place in North America, Quebec City is an old walled city. You can actually sit on top of the old ramparts to eat and look out on the gorgeous St Lawrence River. A car is definitely not required.

The city is so neat and tidy, I felt I was in Disneyland. Nevertheless, there is nothing Mickey Mouse about this town, and it's worth a visit simply for its quaint beauty and attempts at French cuisine.

Boston

To avoid Boston International airport's expensive landing fees, we flew into a small local airfield (Norwood) and rented a car to get us into town.

Boston was an expensive overnight stay. We arrived at the time when terms for US colleges start simultaneously - and as such had to pay top-dollar for what was perhaps the last available room in town. To compound this, we were also awarded a parking ticket for being on a metered space after 6pm, when, according to the small sign (pointing the opposite direction, 100m away), metered spaces turn into residents parking only. Still, the ticket cost less than it would have done in the hotel's car park.

If you are a masochist, then driving in Boston will be a high point in your life. The car was a bit of a mistake - I recommend using the 'T' - Boston's answer to the tube.

Boston is a walker's town. We followed the two and a half mile Freedom Trail, which links over a dozen historic sites. Some of the historic buildings are so well preserved and neat, you could be forgiven for thinking you were walking in Disneyland. Conversely, the town's atmosphere was extremely dusty. Aply named the 'Big Dig', the city is presently investing about \$1 billion per mile in routing its freeways underground.

If you need to shop, Boston is a great place to go. With a sales tax (VAT) of only 5% and a good selection of stores, some terrific value can be found. The aircraft was somewhat heavier when we took off for New York.

New York

Not all the good air traffic controllers were in Oshkosh. I managed to get clearance to fly the Hudson River Corri-

dor, directly past the Statue of Liberty and the skyscrapers of Manhattan. It will take an awful lot to top that experience.

We landed in Teterboro airport, just north of town and caught a bus to Manhattan Island. Hotels in New York can be a bit pricey, so we were fortunate to use a friend's apartment just a couple of blocks from the Empire State.

Wherever we went, we felt like we had been there before. Of course, we had to make the trip to all the iconic places: the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State Building, Central Park, Times Square and Wall Street. Climbing the 354 steps to the Statue's crown is over-rated, and I suggest



spending the time going to the Staten Island Museum of Immigration instead. Most of Manhattan is extremely easy to navigate, thanks to a grid system of named or numbered avenues running the north-south length of the island, cut across by numbered streets that run from east to west. The atmosphere was not far removed from that of London, so I felt at home immediately. Overall, we found our stay in NY to be an in-your-face, exhilarating experience.

Washington DC

We landed at College Park, a historic airport close to the city, in which the Wright Brothers used to be based. From here you need only cross the road to a Metrorail station, making the transport into town pretty much a 'no-brainer'.

Again, we stayed with friends, this time from Georgetown University. We also got the timing right: during freshers week. We managed to hit about three parties in just one night. For those interested, being a mainly arty college, Georgetown has an inverse male/female ratio to

IC. The students there also seemed to be extremely wealthy (you need to be to afford the fees), with about half the females I met having their own personal sports trainer.

DC has some incredible museums and most are free. The Mall is home to some of the capital's most famous museums, in particular the Smithsonian Institution. Of course, we had to visit the Smithsonian's National Air & Space Museum. This is packed full with historic air and spacecraft, including the Wright brothers' plane and the Apollo IX command module. We also visited the US Holocaust Museum, which isn't part of the Smithsonian, but is one of the city's best museums. It's a haunting memorial to victims of Nazi tyranny, covering the period 1933 to 1945.

We wanted to take the tour around the FBI building but they wouldn't let us in. Maybe it had something to do with being closed on Saturday.

Be warned: Washington's tree-lined avenues and grand buildings create a surprisingly warm, almost cozy atmosphere - though Washington is notorious for poverty, crime and racial segregation in the shadow of glorious monuments proclaiming "equality for all". As a result, DC can be quite a dangerous place, and tourists are often targeted.

Hiltonhead Island, South Carolina

Never before have I seen such a beautiful, deserted beach. Apart from the many golf courses and executive homes, Hiltonhead Island is an unspoiled paradise. Wildlife is prevalent. Throw a rock and you might hit a pelican. However, finding somewhere to eat is quite difficult. So long as you don't mind eating pelicans, you're fine here.

Savannah, Georgia

Don't tell me about living life on the edge. The nice weather at Hiltonhead was the calm before the eye of the storm. A hurricane that was supposed to hit the Bahamas changed tack - and the eye of the storm was now heading for us in Savannah. What we briefly saw of this historic southern town was very pleasant - shopkeepers boarding up their windows, and families leaving their trailed parks with wide-screen TV's strapped to roof-racks was our cue to get out. We checked the weather carefully and then took advantage of a high altitude tail wind to push us home.

Back to Meacham Field, Fort Worth

As we taxied to the ramp at Meacham Field, we were sad to finish the journey. So much ground covered in so little time. Still, there's plenty of time left. Hopefully our future Bahamian Island-hopping plans won't be wrecked by hurricanes.



By Ed Sexton

It's 4am. You're in a tent. In a field. Lasers and strobes are strafing across the crowd of 5000 souls you're embedded in. Suddenly an unmistakable melody floats towards you from the dozens of speakers positioned in the corners. You smile. 5000 people smile. Paul van Dyk looks out from behind the decks with a mischievous grin on his face, before dropping in the beat from yet another classic trance tune. The crowd go wild - dancing, jumping, waving, screaming - as waves of euphoric music flow through you and with you. Everything is right in the world. There is no place, no time, you'd rather be. Welcome to the dance festival experience.

Held somewhere near Winchester on 29 and 30 May, this was always going to be a dance festival not to miss. Sure, it may cost £50, but with seven tents and two sound stages hosting over 100 DJs and live acts for seventeen hours, it was always going to be worth it.

One of the great things about one-day festivals is how little you need to take. We left London on a sunny Saturday morning with only the best driving tunes, some food and spending money. And we were of course, as Hunter S Thompson would say, armed to the teeth...

Although gates opened at midday, there were no acts on to 1pm. We used the first hour to orientate ourselves and generally prepare for the marathon dance event that lay before us. So many excellent soundsmiths were scheduled for Homelands that there was only one way to survive: Dance till you drop, and then dance some more for good measure. Not all of us were going to make it...

2pm Black Star Liner: Choque Hosein was up there exhibiting the usual signs of someone whose taken one too many grammes of speed, prancing round the stage to a crowd of several hundred. The fact that all but ten of them were sitting down didn't seem to bother him much. They played a respectable selection of dubby tunes, however, including the excellent 'Yemen Cutta Connection'. Why weren't they on in the early evening?

3pm Danny Rampling: Now this is silly. Danny Rampling playing to a dance crowd of twenty-something? Dance music at its best is a fusion between crowd and DJ: Good DJs choose tunes on the fly based on the crowd's atmosphere, and Mr Rampling definitely suffered from the lack of Dionysian input. Still, someone has to play the afternoon sets...

3.30pm Gilles Peterson: We had been promised 'unprecedented sound levels', due to the site being situated in a natural bowl, and we weren't disappointed. Some foolish person had left the bass on far too high for Peterson: You didn't so much hear the techno as feel it shaking the vertebrae of your spine. There was only one thing for it; lie back on the grass, absorb the beats, and chill...

4pm Brandon Bloc: While Peterson was vibrating the MixMag tent from its foundations, a large crowd had gathered in the Slinky tent for some upfront house. And upfront it was, with Brandon Bloc wearing, well, nothing really. The first real dance session of the day, this increased the tempo for the night ahead.

4.30pm Les Rythmes Digitales: It isn't just Felix reviewers who think they're French; apparently the organisers hired a French sound technician for the event. Doh! Anyway, we raced back to the Home tent to catch some very funky tunes, including the now overplayed 'From Disco to Disco'. If you get the chance to see them, take it.

By 5pm it was time for a short pause and reflection. And more importantly, time for baked potatoes - the only food I eat at festivals. Sitting under the smiling inflatable five metre man that marked the meeting point, we realised how much there was to do. There was a fairground. There was a bungee. Further investigation revealed that within the Ericsson tent (guess the major sponsors) one

could obtain a free massage, phone anywhere in the UK for free, and purchase a mobile while you were at it. Ironically you could barely get a signal on the site.

There were stalls selling everything from blankets to bongos. There was the Bud Ice Bus (yes, a real bus), one of the two outdoor sound stages, playing weird funky stuff all afternoon. There was the bar, playing Salsa and other Latin American genres, open all the time. And then, in front of us, there was Judge Jules on the Radio 1 Stage. Damn it, we've missed the **Jungle Brothers**...

7pm Faithless: So there has to be one cock-up, and unfortunately for Faithless it came in the form of a blown sound system. The prolonged wait killed the atmosphere somewhat. 'Insomnia' got the crowd going, but many left a few songs later. All the same, it's not every day you see Faithless live.

Dusk brought on a mad panic. Seven acts to see, all playing at the same time??? There was only one solution; dance your way from one tent to the next, taking in a few tunes in each. So here it goes... **DJ Shadow** in the Home tent was cool, but completely undanceable, prompting a swift exit to the MixMag tent, where **Red Snapper** were shaking down the jazzy beats of '4 Dead Monks'... Meanwhile **Judge Jules** had moved over to the Slinky tent and **Danny Tenaglia** had started his mammoth 10 hour set in the D tent (so-called because its three acts were **Danny Rampling**, **Deep Dish** and **DT**); across on the other side of the site **Justin Robertson** was driving the Bus Ice Bus for all it was worth, but I was caught by **Dave Angel** in one of the two End tents, mixing his own brand of hard house and techno, and thus missed **Roni Size** in the other End tent. **Asian Dub Foundation** had started up in the Home tent with a collection of tunes that were, well, dubby. We could only stay for a few tunes, though, as news came through that next door in MixMag Underworld had dropped the first beat...

10pm Underworld: Karl Hyde can dance. I mean really dance. Every joint in the man's body must be dislocated. Through the ecstatic heights of 'Moaner' and 'Push Upstairs' he urged the crowd, which stretched out of the tent and beyond, to new levels of madness. When they dropped 'Born Slippy' in somewhat unexpectedly the normal cheers and hand waving didn't happen; everyone was already beyond fever pitch anyway. The only downer was that to get near the front required levitation skills.

Almost running into the Essential Mix tent, I suddenly found myself dancing to the uplifting mixing of **John Digweed**. A welcome break from the intensity of Underworld, Digweed was playing the kind of trancey house you'd expect. Moving onto the Slinky tent I found **Seb Fontaine** had set up a small cheese shop, complete with scantily clad female dancers and fake olympic-like flames. I had to indulge.

A quick mooch around the far corner of the site revealed that fairground rides at night are cool, festival toilets at night are dangerous and Danny Tenaglia still had a long way to go until 6am. I headed towards the meeting point, where apparently a message awaited me, but was distracted by **Dave Pearce** at the Radio 1 stage.

Imagine approaching an open air stage, with around three hundred people dancing in front of it. Behind you 'Ericsson' is emblazoned on a hillside in huge 'how-many-kilowatts?' white light. In front of you there's a silly inflatable man, who in the last remnants of dusk seems to be dancing to the house/trance coming out of the sound system. You dance your way to the front and suddenly think "wouldn't it be cool if he played Greece 2000: Three Drives next?" If you were listening to Radio 1 that night, the cheers over the first few beats may well have been mine...

Sometime around midnight one of our group decided to fork out £50 and do a bungee. At night. After dancing in a field all day. After taking God knows what in the way

of consumables. Silly fellow. He survived the drop, however, describing the experience as "quite cool". Clearly too many drugs...

Meanwhile in the tent nearest us DT is approaching the half way mark. Suddenly I realise I've missed **Paul Oakenfold**. Doh. Fortunately he is on again later in the night. Then I realise what we're really missing. **Sasha**? No, that will have to wait until next year - now is the moment for... **1am The Chemical Brothers:** So who doesn't like 'Hey Boy, Hey Girl'? I thought so. Ed and Tom know so, and thousands crammed into the tent to witness their skills. They were, of course, superb. The only criticism, however, is that their old tunes don't seem to work well alongside the newer stuff, leading to a slightly disjointed set. The last tune was 'The Private Psychedelic Reel', stretched out with rises, riffs and ridiculous 303 noises, climaxing in an almighty beatless screech of synth as the lights came on full and the crowd roared. Whatever they lack in continuity and dress sense they more than make up for in sheer performance.

2am Fatboy Slim: Following directly on from the brothers in the Home tent, Monsieur Cook played a fairly reserved set, sticking to the bread and butter of Leftfield and how own tunes, occasionally adding some diversity. Good stuff, but I still reckon he's better at making music than mixing it.

Somehow we all managed to find each other around 3am and plan the last few hours. I had missed **Dope Smugglaz** and **Pete Tong**, but you can't have everything in life. **Carl Cox** was playing hard house and techno in an End tent, the atmosphere of which was reminiscent of those heady first year days at Club UK's Friday nighters. A quick look in at **Basement Jaxx** in the Mixmag tent revealed, well, not much - who hyped them up to me so much? At this stage the Union flu was beginning to take its toll, as was the lack of sleep, and I found myself shivering in the pre-dawn chill.

Some coffee and a walk later, I suddenly realised... I had missed Paul Oakenfold! Again! Double doh! I waited around for the Radio 1 sound stage to start up again - **Annie Nightingale** was supposed to be playing a dawn set - but it remained dormant until the close for reasons I have yet to discover.

Meanwhile **Laurent Garnier** and **Swift** were finishing off the last two hours in the End tents, but our heads were in no state to take hard beats, so we opted for the more uplifting trance of **Paul van Dyk**. Although I spent much of the last hour huddled under a blanket in the middle of the dance floor (a very strange perspective on club culture indeed), most of our party stayed upright to the rather sweet end, and danced, jumped, waved and screamed to 'For an Angel' and whatever else the Dyk threw at us.

I felt three drops of rain all night which, considering half of southern England experienced monsoon-like storms, was quite good. To paraphrase NME, God may not be a DJ but he's certainly not averse to a spot of dance music in a field. The heavy sponsorship from Ericsson and very good organisation gave the entire event a very professional, ultra-modern feel. I couldn't even grumble at the half hour wait to get out of the car park - after all, it takes time to move 30,000 people who have been dancing all night.

The technology was awesome - each tent had cameras stationed behind the decks and around the arena, broadcasting images of the DJ mixing onto huge screens at the front. In the Ericsson tent you could see what was happening in all the arenas at once on a selection of TV screens. The laser and light set up was, well, expensive.

And best of all, everyone enjoyed it - even the First Aid tent was chilled when I popped in at 2am to get some paracetamol. If you are around in September, I would recommend Homelands near Edinburgh. If not, I'll see you in a field next year...

Glastonbury

25-27 June, £85, Worthy Farm, Pilton near Glastonbury, Somerset

www.glastonbury-festival.co.uk

0906 708 0808 (Tickets 0115 912 9129)

With around 100,000 people attending Glastonbury, it is still the festival everyone talks about. This could be the last year for Michael Eavis, so if you want to go grab the chance now!

Bracknell Festival

2-4 July, South Hill Park, Bracknell
01344 484123

Larmer Tree Festival

8-11 July, £50 (weekend including camping), £16 (Thurs), £12 (Fri), £26 (Sat & Sun), Larmer Tree Gardens, Salisbury, Wiltshire
www.larmertree.demon.co.uk
01722 415223

Four stages host Jools Holland, Lunasa, Martyn Bennett and Cuillin Music, Tarika, FOS Brothers, and Rhythm Collision among others.

Fleadh Festival

10 July, £30.50, Finsbury Park, London
www.fleadhfestival.com
0181 963 0940

A twelve hour festival heavily influenced by Irish bands and musicians. Highlights include Van Morrison, Elvis Costello and The Pretenders.

Big Day Out

10 July, £31, Elfield Park, Milton Keynes
0115 912 9115

Two stages running from noon to 11pm will host Metallica, Marilyn Manson, Terrorvision, Placebo, Sepultura, Ministry, Creed, Symposium and Merciful Fate.

T In the Park

10-11 July, £62 (weekend, add £8.50 for camping), £35.80 (one day), Balado, near Kinross

www.tinthePark.com

0141 339 8383 (also ticket line)

Two stages and a dance tent form the centre of this weekender. The lineup includes Shed Seven, Blur, Stereophonics, The Beautiful South and many many more.

Guilfin Ambient Picnic

11 July, £0 (Parking £5), Shalford Park, Guildford

www.guilfin.org/festivals/picnic.html
01483 572362

A contemporary arts festival worth checking out, featuring Michael Dog, Temple of Sound (Transglobal Underground), John Otway and others.

Music in the Square

17-18 July, £0, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth
www.btinternet.com/~themagiccat/square/square.html
01705 357593

Various bands and DJs TBC for this two day event.

Womad

23-25 July, £65 (weekend including camping), £17 (Fri), £30 (Sat), £30 (Sun) - Student Discounts available, Rivermead Centre, Reading
realworld.on.net/womad/festivals/event_info/reading
01225 744494

For all of you who secretly want to be hippies, Womad is a family-friendly weekend of fun fresh from the freezer. The line-up is constantly changing, so check the web-site for updates.

Guildford

23-25 July, £52 (weekend, add £20 for camping), £18 (Fri), £27 (Sat), £25 (Sun), Stoke Park, Guildford
www.guildford-live.co.uk
01483 454159 (tickets 01483 444555 or 0171 771 2000)

Originally a blues festival, Guildford has grown over the years and this summer will feature four main stages.

Brighton

31 July - 1 August, Stanmer Park, Brighton
Not a lot of info as far as I could find. Can anyone help me out?

Sunsplash

31 July - 1 August, Victoria Park, London
www.reggaesunsplash.co.uk

Essential Megadog Festival

5-11 August, £99 (including camping), Newnham Park, Devon
www.proteusuk.demon.co.uk/beach.htm
0870 444 4224

15,000 people will gather for Megadog's eclipse festival, with five stages and accessories. The line-up includes System 7, Banco

De Gaia and Dave Angel.

The Bulldog Bash

6-9 August, £25, Long Marston Airfield, Stratford Upon Avon
www.bulldog-bash.co.uk
01582 454718

One for the bikers, with bands including Rockbitch, The Hamsters, Slingshot, Seven Little Sisters, BabeWatch and Red Hot UK.

The Enchanted Garden

6-8 August, £55 (add £18 for camping), Larmer Tree Gardens, Salisbury, Wiltshire
www.bigchill.co.uk
0171 771 2000

When they say chilled, they mean chilled. Artists include A Man Called Adam, Mixmaster Morris, Squarepusher and The Grid.

Sunshadow

6-15 August, £85 (including camping), Torpoint, near Dobwalls, Cornwall
www.klasol.demon.co.uk/sve99
01503 230387 (tickets 01752 210099)

Five main arenas for this eclipse festival, hosting The End Sound System, Osrick Tentacles, Juno Reactor, and the Carwash and Escape from Samsara crews.

Totality Dance Festival

6-15 August (events 9-11), £150 TBC, Between Summercourt and Newquay, Cornwall
www.totality.co.uk
tickets 01637 871999

Three main arenas host a plethora of DJs and some bands, including Future Loop Foundation, Sasha, Digweed, Blue Amazon, Grooverider, Paul Van Dyk, LTJ Bukem and others.

Lizard Festival

7-12 August, £125 (including camping), Rosuic Common, Goonhilly Downs
www.lizard.net
0906 701 2725 (tickets 0870 1252959)

With a capacity of 20,000, sixteen tents and beach access, this event looks likely to be an eclipse favourite. The talent includes Kula Shaker, Sasha and Return to the Source plus circus and comedy acts.

Moonshadow

7-15 August, £99, Whitsand Bay, Crafthole, Cornwall
www.moonshadow.co.uk

Music and films provide the backdrop for this eclipse experience. Lots of rides including a bungee and the longest death slide in Britain. And, of course, a very large beach.

Solar Eclipse Event

9-13 August, £150 (including camping), Carlyon Bay, near St Austell, Cornwall
www.nighttime-concerts.com
0906 363 5409 or 0161 953 4107

Organised by Nighttime concerts, this eclipse event will feature the usual activities plus a range of water sports. Music is provided by the Happy Mondays, 808 state and the 21st century orchestra plus many DJs.

V99

21-22 August, £60 (weekend, add £10 for camping), £35 (one day), Hylands Park, Chelmsford & Weston Park, Wolverhampton, Staffordshire
ds.dial.pipex.com/a.j.warr/v98frame.shtml
0171 287 0932

You know the score - the days swap between sites, so you get to see everything at each one. Dozens of bands you'll have heard over the last few years.

Reading/Leeds 99

27-30 August, £78 including camping, Reading & Temple Newsam, Leeds
www.readingfestival.co.uk
tickets 0541 500 044

OK, this time everything at Reading appears a day later at Leeds. The strong lineup includes The Chemical Brothers, Reef, Gene, Apollo 440, Blur, Catatonia and Fun Lovin Criminals. And that's just one stage.

Creamfields

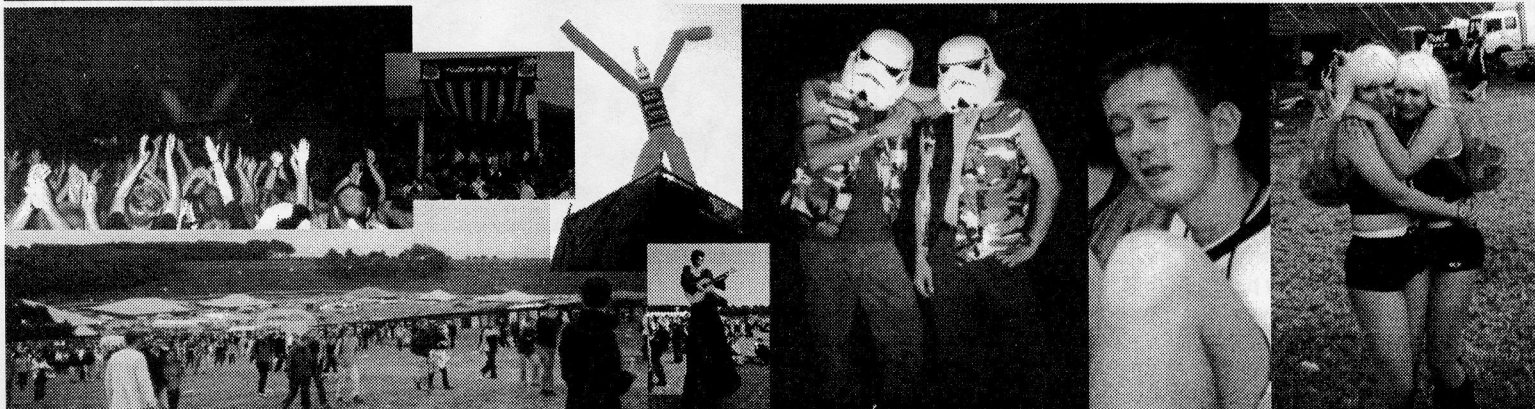
28-29 August, £37.50, The Old Liverpool Airport, Speke, Merseyside
www.cream.co.uk/first.htm
0151 709 7023 (tickets 0151 708 9979)

Cream have moved their festival up north. They've also added an outdoor swimming pool and cinema. Six arenas host the Pet Shop Boys, Basement Jaxx, Coldcut, plus the usual top notch DJs.

Homelands

4-5 September, Around £40, Royal Highland Exhibition Grounds, near Edinburgh
www.homelands-uk.com

Not many acts confirmed as yet, but The Chemical Brothers are headlining, with Carl Cox, Pete Tong and Sasha in support.





Reviews

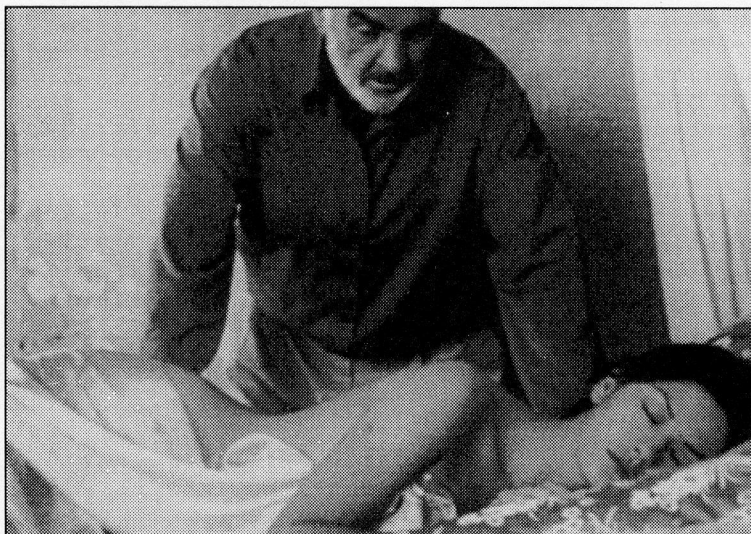
Entrapment ★★★★★

Starring : Sean Connery, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Ving Rhames, Will Paton

Director : Jon Amiel

In her first screen appearance since her feisty, swashbuckling role in *The Mask of Zorro*, Catherine Zeta-Jones discards the corset and dons a power-suit, playing Virginia 'Gin' Baker, an insurance investigator. Following the theft of a priceless Rembrandt (valued at \$24 million), she tracks down the prime suspect in the form of legendary art thief, Robert 'Mac' MacDougal (the obsession with trendy nicknames was irritating to put it mildly). In order to expose his crimes, Zeta-Jones goes undercover posing as a fellow felon. The bait is an ancient mask protected by a supposedly infallible security system, in the spirit of the unsinkable Titanic. The artefact is shielded by a lush jungle of laser beams... Impenetrable to mere mortals, but not to our blindfolded, catsuit-clad heroine.

This cunning obstacle is a blatant excuse to have her perform several moments of slow-motion pseudo-erotic gymnastics in a skimpy, slinky outfit. Male viewers will not complain. Nor will female audiences. Even though Sean Connery sports a beard, a receding hairline and more wrinkles than an unironed



Age gap? What age gap.

shirt, he still remains the object of many father-figure fantasies. In fact, Connery has become more distinguished with maturity. The age gap between the leads might appear unrealistic and unsettling – well, he is old enough to be her grandfather – but the sizzling on screen chemistry is undeniable. The sex-

ual tension is handled with more class and subtlety than your average Hollywood blockbuster (more *From Here to Eternity* than *Basic Instinct*), as the couple engages in an 'electric pas de deux of wariness and attraction'.

This film obviously managed to spend every penny of its travel kitty.

The exotic locations include the New York skyline, the Scottish Highlands and the wonderous grey cityscape of London. The Petronas Towers in downtown Kuala Lumpur also form the backdrop to one of the best heart-in-the-throat action sequences since *Mission: Impossible's* Channel Tunnel scene. Several hundred feet up and dangling precariously from a string of light bulbs, Connery and Zeta-Jones are guaranteed to induce vertigo in even the most height-hardened of climbers.

Millennium mania has even infected this film, with a high-tech heist set on midnight of New Year's Eve 2000 – very topical, indeed. The casting of Sean Connery as a Scot was an inspired stroke of genius, considering his immutable trademark accent. Sadly, however, Zeta-Jones' americanised twang is cringe-worthy, in the league of Dick Van Dyke's cockney impersonation in *Mary Poppins*.

Dodgy accents aside, *Entrapment* is a thoroughly enjoyable thriller, riddled with twists and turns – a veritable cat and mouse game of trust and deception. **F**

Helena & Gary

Analyse This ★★★★★

Starring : Robert De Niro, Billy Crystal, Lisa Kudrow

Director : Harold Ramis

Robert De Niro's status as a screen icon is long since assured - there must be countless student households adorned with the manically grinning image of Travis Bickle enquiring if we are, rather unwisely, looking at him. However, it seems that the fire in the belly of the youthful De Niro responsible for his intense screen presence has dwindled to barely a smoulder, as he seems content to phone in performances in pretty undemanding roles and scarper with a fat cheque. Why else did he bother with *Wag the Dog* or *Ronin*? Bobby fans will rejoice, then, when *Analyse This* reaches our screens in late August, featuring the man in top form in a slightly unexpected role.

Though his best known performances should be filed under painstaking method realism, he has occasionally strayed into the realm of comedy, notably with the hilarious *Midnight Run*. His latest film finds him aiming for



Billy Crystal seems to have stolen Joe Pesci's rightful place. Brave man.

laughs once again, though trading heavily on his image as everyone's favourite mafia hard man. He plays Paul Vitti, head of a New York crime family and a

man used to inspiring fear in his friends and enemies alike. Not really a nervous introspective candidate for psychoanalysis, but when the pressure of out-

manoeuvring his rival mobsters begins to cause anxiety attacks, he is forced to seek the help of a psychiatrist. The reluctant shrink, Dr Ben Sobel (played by an in form Billy Crystal) rapidly has to get used to his new patient's habit of turning up with a bodyguard and a gun rather than an appointment, and very soon his private life is affected. His fiancée (Lisa Kudrow with a performance which could probably have been cobbled together from a selection of *Friends* episodes) certainly isn't too keen on Ben consorting with members of the criminal underworld.

The on screen pairing of De Niro and Crystal is a huge success, both expertly handling the one liners along with the development of their unusual doctor/patient relationship. Though the plot looks a little flimsy at times, the jokes are the sort which make you laugh out loud, and isn't that the most effective form of therapy? **F**

Simon

Place Vendome ★★

Starring : Catherine Deneuve, Emmanuelle Seigner, Jacques Dutronc
Director : Nicole Garcia

A sad shadow of a woman drowning in the throes of desperate alcoholism? Nope, not Jennifer Lopez after tragically failing to break into FHM's Top 10 Sexiest Women. Nope, not Radio 2's Sarah Kennedy either. Well, who then? Marianne Malivert, that's who. *Place Vendome* pivots around the character portrayed by Catherine Deneuve, best known for her part as a young siren in the late sixties film *Belle, Du Jour*. Sparked back into reality by her husband's death, she goes against the wishes of her relatives and takes up the reigns of the jewellery trade.

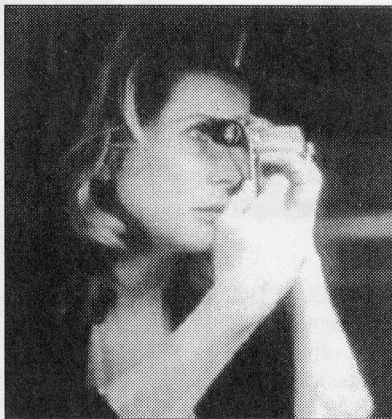
What we have here is essentially a one woman show. Other characters are merely tools to bring out more depth in the interpretation of Marianne. The young, beautiful and talented jeweller, Nathalie, employed by her husband, is an echo of her own youth. The mysterious Jean-Pierre, who seems to keep cropping up whenever she's on business, highlights both her insecurity and her determination. In fact, she doggedly refuses to take the advice of any of her old friends, leading her into a world populated by the Russian mafia and a former

lover who betrayed her love for him in the now distant past.

Despite a synopsis that sounds intriguing and dark, the film never really grabs and keeps your attention. Don't get me wrong. Deneuve is superb and highly believable as the heroine of this story. It's just that no sympathy is really generated for the character. At the end, I didn't care whether she came out on top or not. The whole film seemed to lack any pace. Perhaps the French like to

linger over near-silent scenes for minutes on end before ending it with a pseudo-cryptic line. However, this approach does not lift up my skirt. It stifles the atmosphere. It clogs up the story-telling arteries. It leaves me frustrated and ultimately unsympathetic towards the lead character. *Vendome* is an intense and complex film, but it lacks the punch that could turn it into a top notch suspense thriller. Channel Five beckons. **F**

Dennis



Not bad for a 56 year-old.

Croupier ★★★

Starring : Clive Owen, Kate Hardie, Alex Kingston, Gina McKee
Director : Mike Hodges

In attempting to recapture the mastery of the stylised slow-burning thriller which made him famous, Mike Hodges has produced a sadly hit-and-miss movie. Whilst *Croupier* has occasional moments of charm, it's embedded within a distinctly ethereal atmosphere which certainly won't correspond to any London you're familiar with.

The problem, I suppose, is that Hodges wants to recapture his own heyday, which came in the form of 1971's *Get Carter* (although some would undoubtedly argue in favour of kitsch classic *Flash Gordon*) - and that kind of movie simply doesn't work in a modern day setting. Consequently, he tries to manufacture a stylised vision of London by basing the action around a casino, where struggling writer Owen finds a job. Irritatingly moralistic, he refuses to gamble himself, however, and instead gets his thrills by jumping into bed with every woman he meets,

before getting involved with some local gangsters who want to rob his place of work. However, whilst the scenes based around the casino are tensely observed, the sexual encounters are unconvincing and the local gangsters are simply

hammy. Worst of all, however, is Owen's internal monologue - it's obvious why he remains a struggling writer if his cliché-ridden thoughts are anything to go by. **F**

Dave



The atmosphere became tense at the World Snap Championships.

VIDEO RENTAL RELEASES UPDATE

The Mask of Zorro

The late nineties may not have produced many great movies, but they can at least take a little credit for opening out the action genre to more than just the guns 'n' ammo brigade. Integral to this change are movies like *The Mask of Zorro*, which ditches big explosions and high-tech wizardry in favour of style and entertainment. Antonio Banderas is the young pretender to the black hat and mask, whilst Anthony Hopkins is the original Zorro, charged with teaching his young protegee the art of swordplay and the triple-swoosh trademark. Add Catherine Zeta-Jones and *Goldeneye* director Martin Campbell into the mix and you're left with near perfect entertainment. Brilliant.

PI

Bleak, dark and almost irritatingly gothic, *PI* is a strong contender for one of the year's weirdest movies to date, complete with de rigueur nightmarish, ultra-paranoid visions of a technocrat's world gone mad. The intricate black-and-white photography is effective, and the end result chillingly clever, but it's still a little short on ideas, meaning that writer/director Darren Aronovsky is clearly at full stretch to fill the minimal eighty minute running time. Nonetheless, considering this is his debut feature, it's still damn impressive stuff - and it's a shame that you know that he'll never make it into the big-time if he continues to make movies like this.

Hope Floats

Sandra Bullock should definitely employ someone else to pick her movies for her. OK, so if you view acting as a job then I guess you should simply take whatever parts you're offered, but even so you have to draw the line somewhere - and clearly Ms Bullock draws hers far too close to the bottom of the barrel. *Hope Floats* is a fine example of such random choices; attempting to feed her core audience, she picks a slushy, low-concept rom-com, co-starring Harry Connick Jr. Consequently, we're left with yet another movie which isn't so much bad as depressing. For hardcore fans only.

Dave



STAR WARS EPISODE 1: THE PHANTOM MENACE

THE ULTIMATE PREVIEW

THE CAST



Obi-Wan-Kenobi Ewan McGregor
Hollywood's favourite Scotsman dons posh accent and silly ponytail to play Anakin's mentor. The real hero of the piece, he is a strict follower of the Jedi Council, and spends most of his time fighting off the bad guys with his trusty blue lightsabre.



Qui-Jon Ginn Liam Neeson
Taking on the Jedi master role portrayed by Alec Guinness in the original, Liam Neeson gets to dole out sage wisdom and sabre thrusts in equal measure. As a senior Jedi, it's obviously his duty to offer protection to Queen Padme in her hour of need.



Anakin Skywalker Jake Lloyd
Essentially taking the saga back a generation, Jake Lloyd's part is basically a younger version of Luke in *A New Hope*. Having been rescued from obscurity on desert planet Tatooine his big moment comes in the reputedly stunning Pod Racer sequences.



Queen Padme Natalie Portman
The future mother to both Luke and Leia, Padme is the elected Queen of the Naboo, who faces opposition in the form of the evil Trade Federation. Their attempts to kidnap her in order to force her to sign a crippling treaty must be foiled at any cost.



Darth Maul Ray Park
One of George Lucas' real talents has always been the creation of genuinely scary villains, and Darth Maul looks to be no exception. Armed with double-ended lightsabre and assisted by fellow Dark Lord Darth Sidious, he's intent on wiping out the Jedi.



Yoda Frank Oz
Owner of everyone's favourite *Star Wars* catchphrases, Yoda represents pretty much everything that's good in the Universe. A senior member of the Jedi Council (exile on Dagoba presumably arrives at a later date) he's long on wisdom and short on stature.



Jar Jar Binks Ahmed Best
Pushing out the envelope of effects technology has resulted in the inclusion of Jar Jar, a completely computer generated character. Purveyor of most of *The Phantom Menace's* humour, he traipses around the galaxy as Qui-Jon's Chewbacca-esque sidekick.



Senator Palpatine Ian McDiarmid
Reprising his role from the original movies, McDiarmid's Palpatine will eventually become the ultra-evil Emperor. Although he's destined to rule the Galaxy, at present he's an outstanding senator from the peaceful, neutral, planet of Naboo.



Mace Windu Samuel L. Jackson
Alongside Yoda, Windu is one of the most respected members of the Jedi Council. Giving Jackson an opportunity to fulfil a life-long dream, the role of Windu is really only a cameo, appearing briefly in sage discussion with the small green one.



Finally, the most over-hyped movie of all time is about to arrive on these shores. By that I don't mean to say it's no good - like most of the rest of you I haven't seen *The Phantom Menace* yet, (although considering the number of bootleg copies around, avoiding it is becoming problematic) - I simply mean that it's just not possible for any movie to live up to that kind of expectation.

Viewed with the benefit of hindsight, *Titanic* went down a storm largely due to the fact that everyone expected it to be truly awful, and thus when it finally arrived it seemed like a classic - *The Phantom Menace* faces the same effect in reverse. Our combined expectations are already so vast that (try as hard as we might) we're almost certain to find it something of a disappointment. Similarly, nothing but the best will be seen as good enough by the movie's backers Twentieth Century Fox. Consequently, despite breaking all kinds of box office records and grossing over \$300 million within a month in the US, it's still being viewed as a let-down by execs frustrated that their confident assurances that it would easily outstrip *Titanic* in the all-time box-office charts might not be borne out in reality.

So does that make it a bad movie? No, of course not. George Lucas is a master of the grown-up kiddies movie (at the end of the day, *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi* are really little more than family-orientated, U certificate fun) and I'll be amazed if *Episode*

One isn't incredibly enjoyable. The point is that none of the previous movies were anything more than that, so if you book your ticket in the expectation of seeing something that will change your life you're almost certain to be sorely disappointed.

Anyway, enough with the doom and gloom - what's it going to be like? Well, if the trailers and pre-publicity are anything to go by, *The Phantom Menace* will be top entertainment on a broad sweeping scale, complete with mesmerising pod races (skimming across the barren landscape of Tatooine), underwater cities, robotic soldiers, lightsabre duels and the mandatory attack on a space station. Plus a cast who, unlike those who graced the first three movies, are actually familiar with the art of acting.

In reality, the only danger would seem to be that it's far more effects driven than the previous movies. Sure, *Star Wars* owed much of its success to some stunning effects, which were so far ahead of their time that they still look damned impressive today, yet the effects helped the story to stick to its epic flow (Lucas' opus is frequently compared to classic westerns in terms of both its scope and style), rather than acting as the centre of attention. This time around, however, the effects would seem to be at the core of the movie - indeed Lucas frequently claims that the cause of the sixteen year delay between *Return of the Jedi* and *Episode One* was simply the need for effects technology to advance to a level where he could

fully realise his vision.

Consequently, we're faced with the first completely computer generated character to appear in a live-action movie (in the shape of the much-maligned Jar Jar Binks), an entire army of CGI invaders (the cartoon-y battle droids), and wall-to-wall blue-screened backdrops. Indeed, such was the scope of the technological wizardry at play on the set of *The Phantom Menace* that when Natalie Portman sprained her ankle during shooting, the CG animators managed to show her walking normally. More to the point, rumour has it that the next installment (due to go into pre-production in Australia sometime soon) will be so dependant on digital effects that there won't be any 'real' sets at all. And whilst all that might sound like a movie packed full of the amazing visuals that we're all hoping for, the danger is that the effects act as a distraction from the plot which they bind together - or, worse still, that Lucas simply replaces genuine depth and characterisation with the might of Industrial Light and Magic.

Ultimately, however, the power and mysticism that the *Star Wars* movies hold in our collective conscience will make *The Phantom Menace* into this summer's most memorable movie, no matter what the finished product's really like. And, at the end of the day, with some of the world's finest talent, \$125 million and sixteen years behind it, do you really believe it's possible for *Star Wars: Episode One* to be anything less than stunning?

THE PLOT

Star Wars
Episode 1: The Phantom Menace

A long time ago
in a galaxy far, far away...

Turmoil has engulfed the Galactic Republic. The taxation of trade routes to outlying star systems is in dispute.

Hoping to resolve the matter with a blockade of deadly battleships, the greedy Trade Federation has stopped all shipping to the small planet of Naboo...

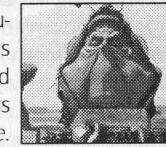
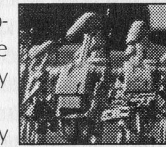
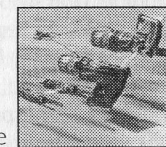
With imminent conflict brewing between the powerful Trade Federation and the peaceful planet of Naboo, Qui-Gon Jinn and his apprentice Obi-Wan Kenobi travel to the sparsely populated planet to warn the Queen of the danger that faces her, and of the galactic fallout which is to follow. Joining them on their journey is Qui-Jon's co-pilot, the floppy-eared outcast Jar Jar Binks, and the powerful Captain Panaka.

Once on Naboo, the Jedi must convince young Padme of her impending fate, and convince the planet's other inhabitants - the amphibious Gunguns, who live deep beneath the oceans and are lead by the formidable Boss Nass (voiced by the forever-shouting Brian Blessed) - to come to their aid.

Their mission fails, however, and Naboo is invaded by hordes of battle droids, forcing the Jedi to evacuate the planet with the Queen and her court. Battling their way through the Trade Federation blockade, they travel to the lonely desert planet of Tatooine where they meet a young boy called Anakin Skywalker who is evidently as one with the Force. Anakin and his mother are slaves, owned by short-tempered junk-dealer Watto whose principle trade is selling droids and spares to the teams competing in the (highly dangerous) local pod races which take place in Tatooine's least desirable residence, Mos Espa. The two Jedi enlist his help in fighting the war, with Obi Wan believing him to be "the one" spoken of in legend who will "bring balance to the force".

With their quest now agreed, the group heads to Coruscant - centre of the known Universe and home to both the Jedi Council and Galactic Senate - where young Anakin is introduced to Yoda and Mace Windu. It's here that we'll also find the revered Senator Palpatine, who represents the sector that includes Naboo and will later become the evil Emperor.

Ultimately, the Jedi will be called upon to confront the Dark Lords behind the invasion, controlled by the sinister, double-ended light sabre wielding, Darth Maul. Meanwhile, his master Darth Sidious, the last of the Sith, continues to lead the invasion whilst unseen by any of the principle characters - and thus it is he who represents the true *Phantom Menace*.





July

Despite the warnings of studios fleeing in the wake of *The Phantom Menace*, there's still a decent raft of movies coming our way in July, with big budget hits like *Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me*, *The Mummy* and *Entrapment* (page 24) just the tip of the iceberg...*Wing Commander* is the big-screen version of the computer game of the same name, starring Freddie Prinze Jr and Matthew Lillard - like all game conversions, it's probably pretty awful...not as bad, however, as *Rogue Trader*, the dramatisation of Nick Leeson's fifteen minutes of fame, which finally arrives two years late, due to the packed schedule of workaholic star Ewan McGregor...on a grander scale, *The Thirteenth Warrior* is the latest Michael Crichton adaptation to make it to the multiplexes, which features Antonio Banderas and a bunch of Vikings attempting to defeat the flesh-eating 'monster of the mists'...on a lighter note, *10 Things I Hate About You* is yet another high school set romantic comedy, starring the regulation set of incredibly good-looking hot young things in a movie that's billed, bizarrely, as an adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*...from similar territory comes *Varsity Blues*, starring James Van Der Beek (familiar to all Dawson's Creek fans) and Jon Voight - this time it's College Football providing the inspiration...the month's least family orientated movie comes in the star-studded form of *Ravenous*, where Guy Pearce tries to avoid becoming Robert Carlyle's dinner when he's posted to an isolated fort in the blizzard battered old-west...a more traditional western comes in the form of *The High-Low Country*, with an eclectic cast which includes Woody Harlson, Patricia Arquette and Billy Crudup...the only movie to go up against *Star Wars* on the 16th is *The Polish Bride*, the story of a woman who escapes her enforced work in a brothel, only to find her past won't leave her alone...*The Match* comes straight from traditional Brit-flick country, with a novelty cast that includes Ian Holm, Tom Sizemore, Neil Morrissey and Richard E Grant as the members of two pub soccer teams playing to settle a century-old grudge...much weirdness can be expected of *Last Night*, which sees a group of people with very different ideas of how to face the end of the world come together with only six hours until the world is expected to end...finally, *Le Dîner de Cons* is this month's token foreign language film, which (in typically off-beat French style), revolves around a weekly meal at which all the guests have to bring an 'idiot' with them - whoever brings the 'idiot of the evening' wins...

THE SPY WHO SHAGGED ME

RELEASE DATE : July 30

STARS : Mike Myers, Heather Graham, Robert Wagner, Rob Lowe

DIRECTOR : M Jay Roach

For any fan of *Austin Powers*, the news that Mike Myers' big-toothed hero is back comes as a God-send - particularly as, this time around, producers New Line have given Myers free reign (and a hefty budget) to exercise his warped view of sixties London.

With Liz Hurley choosing not to return, kooky Boogie Nights star Heather Graham takes up sidekick duties as the subtly named Felicity Shagwell. Meanwhile, Myers himself pops up in four different roles - as Powers, his arch-nemesis Dr Evil, a strange 60's guru and as a henchman going by the name Fat Bastard. As Tony the Tiger would say, Grrrrrrreat.

As far as plot is concerned, it's time-travel time once again, with Powers forced to return to the sixties to recapture his mojo (which Dr Evil has stolen in an effort to incapacitate the testosterone driven crime-fighter). Joining him on this quest are a variety of biz-



zarily named characters: Ivana Humpalot (*Third Rock From The Sun*'s Kristen Johnston), Mini-me (a three foot tall version of Dr Evil) and Robin Swallows (played by Gia Carrides). Plus Robert Wagner (Number 2), Mindy Sterling (Frau Farbissina), Seth Green (Dr Evil's troubled son Scott) and Cindy Margolis (one of the incredibly un-PC Fembots) all return from the first movie.

Anyhow, all that really matters is

that the enforced return to the sixties will provide no-end of excuses for outrageous costumes, randomly placed dance-routines and, of course, much hilarity. Indeed, despite the general track-record of comedy sequels being less than enviable, the word from the States would seem to be that *Austin Powers 2* is just as funny as the original, making *The Spy Who Shagged Me* a definite must-see.

THE MUMMY

RELEASE DATE : June 25

STARS : Brendan Fraser, Rachael Weisz, John Hannah

DIRECTOR : Stephen Sommers

It wouldn't be summer without a handful of movies based around some nifty effects and pretty much nothing else - think *Twister* or *Lost In Space* - and this year that grand tradition is kept alive by *The Mummy*.

Owing a not inconsiderable debt to the *Indiana Jones* trilogy, *The Mummy* follows ex-Foreign Legionary Brendan Fraser and brother-and-sister treasure hunting team Weisz and Hannah as they trek across twenties North Africa. Their goal is to rediscover The Hidden City of Hamunaptra (which Fraser first stumbled on several years earlier), and hot on their trail are a group of unscrupulous Americans, intent on securing the City's treasures for themselves. But - surprise, surprise - the City is cursed (are all lost cities cursed or something?) This time around, high priest Imhotep has been hanging around for 3000 years, having been mummified alive for getting a little too friendly with Mrs Pharaoh - and, understandably, he's a little miffed.



So, the tomb is opened, and Imhotep unleashes all the power at the effects crew's command - man eating scarabs, a massive sandstorm, and, of course, the CGI mummy itself. However, despite even the best efforts of Industrial Light & Magic it's still going to be a very hollow story. There's no romance (an integral part of any Indiana Jones caper) and all three stars (particularly the usually reliable Hannah) are

apparently sorely underused. Ultimately, however, the greatest failing is to deliver a grandiose big-budget period tale, shot in a variety of beautiful locations, that's totally devoid of atmosphere. Nonetheless, if zillion dollar action is your thing, or if you're looking for an easy means of escape from rainy-day London, then check-in with the first of this year's summer hits to make its way across from the US.



THE WILD WILD WEST

August

RELEASE DATE : August 13

STARS : Will Smith, Kevin Kline,
Kenneth Brannagh, Salma Hayek
DIRECTOR : Barry Sonnenfeld

Rapidly becoming something of an institution, the Will Smith summer event movie is one of those rare things in Hollywood - a movie that can't fail. His massive following around the world, coupled with wall-to-wall charisma and screen-filling presence mean that even a complete dog of a script is guaranteed to turn a tidy profit. Consequently, despite some bad word-of-mouth drifting across from the States, it'll still be a major surprise if this doesn't turn out to be an entertaining action-driven smash hit.

Based around yet another long forgotten cult sixties TV show, *The Wild Wild West* is based around the adventures of two top-secret government agents - wise-cracking ladies man Smith (as the eponymous James T West) and his gadget-laden sidekick Kline - assigned to protect President Ulysses S Grant from nutty British cyborg inventor Dr Arliss Loveless (Kenneth Brannagh in gloriously over-the-top form). Oh, and Salma Hayek



is on hand as love interest Rita Escobar. Whilst this may all sound like fairly standard Western-fare, it's far from it. You see, the original series owed much to Jules Verne style contraptions, so Loveless' plan is to stomp on the President with a giant steam-powered mechanical tarantula - and the end product is described by Warner Bros as a comedy sci-fi western. Make of that what you will.

However, as it's directed by *Men In*

Black helmer Barry Sonnenfeld it's likely to play on comedy first and foremost - and should thus come as something of an antidote to this summer's more serious effects based offerings. With a massive budget in place (rumours circulate of figures between \$150 and \$200 million) and featuring an array of top stars including Smith, Kline and Brannagh on hand, you wonder how it can possibly go wrong.

THE THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR

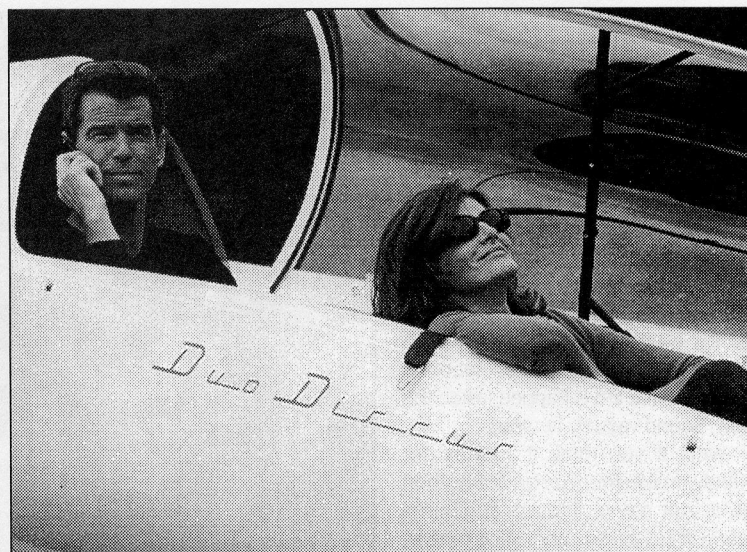
RELEASE DATE : August 20

STARS : Pierce Brosnan, Rene Russo,
Denis Leary
DIRECTOR : John McTiernan

Pierce Brosnan continues his attempts to escape from Bond typecasting (a feat only previously achieved by Sean Connery) with this remake of Steve McQueen's 1968 caper movie.

Brosnan easily steps into the roll of dapper wealthy playboy Thomas Crown, who decides to steal an incredibly valuable Monet oil painting to enliven his predictable billionaire lifestyle. *Lethal Weapon's* Rene Russo is the insurance agent sent to investigate (a role played by Faye Dunaway in the original) who, predictably, falls in love with Brosnan. Denis Leary is also on hand as a New York cop, whilst Jon McTiernan (of *Die Hard* and *Predator* fame) settles into the director's chair.

Movies like this rely almost entirely on a balance between top-notch action and chemistry - and *The Thomas Crown Affair* looks to have oodles of both. Early footage suggests big-budget high-tech action, filled with the kind of gadgets and gizmos you'd expect a billionaire thief to



have at his disposal. Moreover, with McTiernan calling the shots there should be no danger of the action falling flat. The only problem could be that he's hardly known for his dazzling ability with romance - however, the reportedly sparkling on-screen chemistry between the two leads should make up for any problems on that front.

Consequently, the only big stumbling block that would seem to face

Thomas Crown are it's similarities with *Entrapment* (Sean Connery is the gentleman thief, Catherine Zeta-Jones is the beautiful agent on his trail). Although it's possible that the public may not be enthusiastic about two Raffles-esque movies in the same year, similar suggestions were made about *Deep Impact/Armageddon* and *Antz/A Bugs Life* last year - and all of them went on to rake in massive box office...

As ever, August is packed full of this year's big-budget outings and no-brainer star vehicles, with *The Wild Wild West* and *The Thomas Crown Affair* two of the biggest - but not necessarily the best...sadly for all the Claire Danes fans out there, seventies throwback *The Mod Squad* is, by all accounts, truly awful, despite a good-looking and talented cast and wall-to-wall style...on the other hand, Eddie Murphy vehicle *Life* has gone down a storm in the States with its depiction of Murphy and co-star Martin Lawrence as wrongfully convicted felons laughing their way through a sixty year sentence...more promising is *Pushing Tin* which charts the battle between rivals John Cusack and Billy Bob Thornton to prove that they are the best air traffic controller in the west - Cate Blanchett and Angela Jolie co-star...Hugh Grant is troubled to discover that his father-in-law (James Caan) is the Godfather in comedy-thriller *Mickey Blue Eyes*, the latest movie to come from the Grant/Hurley production company Simian Films...this summer's token low budget Jennifer Aniston rom-com comes in the form of *Office Space*, in which the *Friends* star teams up with her work mates to trounce their greedy boss...massive box-office receipts are, sadly, guaranteed for *South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut*, thanks to the massive following behind the adventures of the 2-D foursome - plot details are at present sketchy...the heist-gone-wrong premise re-emerges via Brit-flick *You're Dead*, which stars John Hurt and Rhys Ifans in a movie simply described as 'Pulp Fiction meets Monty Python'...Hurt also stars in *All The Little Animals*, as a badger rescuer who takes up with retarded man Christian Bale, who has recently escaped an abusive, hateful stepfather who has killed his pets one by one...little explanation is required for *Muppets From Outer Space*, which sees Ray Liotta, Andie MacDowell, Gates McFadden and David Arquette attempt to help Gonzo to find his rightful place in the Universe...*Dudley Do-Right* stars Brendan Fraser and Sarah Jessica Parke and thus, on principle, can't be bad, despite the fact that it's a live action version of a cartoon about a Canadian Mountie...*Drop Dead Gorgeous* is a movie about beauty pageants starring Denise Richards - quite frankly, those few words alone should be enough to guarantee a profit...bizzarest concept of the month goes to *Being John Malkovich*, in which a puppeteer (John Cusack) discovers a door in his office that allows him to enter the mind of John Malkovich (played, unsurprisingly, by John Malkovich) for 15 minutes - which he then attempts to turn into a small business...



September

EYES WIDE SHUT

RELEASE DATE : September 17

STARS : Tom Cruise, Nicole Kidman,
Alan Cumming, Sydney Pollack

DIRECTOR : Stanley Kubrick

Stanley Kubrick's long delayed return to the director's chair would read like a movie script in itself if it wasn't for the tragic ending - he died just five days after handing over the completed movie. The roller-coaster eighteen month shoot (the longest on record by far) has now become the stuff of legend - Harvey Keitel and Jennifer Jason Leigh were dropped along the way, whilst conservative estimates suggest that star Cruise has lost in excess of \$100 million thanks to his decision to sign up for the movie. More to the point, two years after production started, virtually no-one on the planet actually knows what *Eyes Wide Shut* is actually about.

Shrouded in secrecy, all that's known at present is that Cruise and Kidman star as two married psychiatrists who are cheating on each other with their patients, leading to their lives becoming intertwined with some of the shadier parts of the 70s New York under-



world. Probably. It's also believed to be shockingly erotic - we're talking censor-troubling degrees of realism - touching on S&M, masturbation and Tom Cruise cross-dressing along the way. The trailer - which consists of Hollywood's most successful couple making out naked in front of a mirror - certainly suggests that the movie to come will be of a fairly 'adult' nature.

Quite how audiences will react is

uncertain, but coupling the world's biggest star with one of the greatest directors of all time (witness *Full Metal Jacket*, *The Shining* and *2001* if you disagree) surely represents a thoroughly bankable movie? If nothing else, the prospect of Cruise and Kidman getting hot and steamy should draw in a fairly hefty crowd, even if the movie itself turns out to be another *A Clockwork Orange*.

ED TV

RELEASE DATE : September 10

STARS : Matthew McConaughey, Woody
Harrelson, Ellen DeGenres

DIRECTOR : Ron Howard

Matthew McConaughey is Ed, the boy-next-door type chosen to star in a round-the-clock docu-soap designed to boost a US TV station's flagging ratings. At first he (naturally) finds the chance to broadcast his every whim live to the entire nation utterly amazing, but soon he finds his entire life is trapped inside the show. Sound vaguely familiar?

Well, if you think it sounds not entirely unlike *The Truman Show*, then you're not alone. The US audiences clearly thought so, and stayed away from the movie in their droves, despite the combination of an amazingly talented cast (Harrelson is Ed's best mate, DeGenres the desperate TV exec in charge of the project, and Martin Landau, Liz Hurley and Rob Reiner all appear in supporting roles) and a big-name director (*Apollo 13*, *Far and Away*, *Ransom*, *Parenthood*, *Cocoon*).

On this side of the Atlantic, with both *Truman* and *Pleasantville* little more than dim and distant memories,



it definitely looks like it'll be worth a look, with the trailer suggesting a much darker tone than last year's Jim Carrey starrer. You see, with his relationships broadcast across the nation, 24 hours a day, he starts to learn about the evils of TV - his friends desert him when publishers offer big bucks to dish the dirt, and random assorted bimbos congregate around him in search of their fifteen minutes of fame. Understandably,

Ed, his parents and his girlfriend are far from happy, and he begins to plot his revenge. Nonetheless, this being a Ron Howard film there's bound to be a happy ending at the end of it all, and plenty of decent gags along the way.

Of course, there's always another possible reason for the appalling box-office in the States - would you fork out \$10 to see a movie with a Bon Jovi title track?

September sees cinema output take a more serious turn, with *Eyes Wide Shut* and *Ed TV* the month's headline acts...meanwhile John Travolta returns with *The General's Daughter*, wherein he attempts to lift the lid off the corrupt elements of the US military (*A Few Good Men*, anyone?) via a script from uber-scribe William Goldman...*The Astronaut's Wife* blends sci-fi, horror and a good-looking cast, with Jonny Depp as the recently returned spaceman who's started acting weird and Charlize Theron as his paranoid and pregnant wife...the latest Shakespeare adaptation to wing its way to our screens is deficient in one vital respect - Kenneth Branagh is nowhere to be seen - instead *A Midsummer Night's Dream* stars Michelle Pfeiffer, Kevin Kline and Calista Flockhart...*The Haunting* kicks Hollywood back into genuine blockbuster territory, with Liam Neeson and Catherine Zeta-Jones attempting to breath some fresh life into old-style things-that-go-bump-in-the-night horror...meanwhile *Lake Placid* prefers to opt for the Kevin Williamson school of horror, with Bill Pullman, Bridget Fonda and Oliver Platt running away from a 35 foot alligator in distinctly tongue-in-cheek style...Anthony Hopkins moves back into nutty psycho genius territory with *Instinct*, with Cuba Gooding Jr playing the shrink who attempts to fathom the reasoning behind his brutal crimes...on a lighter note, it's back to teen comedy for Drew Barrymore's latest vehicle *Never Been Kissed*, with the *ET* star playing a journalist forced to go undercover at a high school to research a feature...of similar bent is *Gregory's 2 Girls*, which picks up John Gordon Sinclair's eponymous English teacher eighteen years on from the original, now caught in a love triangle between one of his 16 year-old pupils and another member of staff...Bill Murray's on career defining form in offbeat rom-com *Rushmore*, collecting critical acclaim and a Golden Globe nomination for his portrayal of a lovesick steel tycoon caught-up in a complex love-triangle...*Go* is Doug Liman's follow-up to *Swingers* which follows a disparate group of twentysomethings attempting to pull off a heist - it's attracted comparisons with *Pulp Fiction*, so watch out...with a cast-list headed by top pairing Kate Beckinsdale and Claire Danes, *Brokedown Palace* promises a big-budget look at the tribulations faced by a pair of holidaymakers thrown into a Thai prison for drugs trafficking...three film students travel to Maryland to make a student film about urban legend the Blair Witch, and are never seen again - a year later their footage shows up, and is compiled to form *The Blair Witch Project*...

THE TALENTED MR RIPLEY

October

RELEASE DATE : Mid October

STARS : Matt Damon, Gwyneth Paltrow, Jude Law, Cate Blanchett

DIRECTOR : Anthony Minghella

Bring together Matt Damon and Gwyneth Paltrow. Add the director of *The English Patient* and stir in some beautiful Italian scenery. What do you have? A surefire winner, that's what.

Based on a Patricia Highsmith novel (which was also the inspiration for the 1960 French classic *Plein Soleil*), *The Talented Mr Ripley* sees Damon extending his range as a sociopath sent to turn-of-the-century Italy to entice a wealthy young playboy (Jude Law, last seen in *eXistenZ*) to return to his family in the US. However, his desire to be like the man he's sent to 'rescue' leads to murder. Damon then assumes the identity of his dead friend, and attempts to live his life and win over Paltrow.

Despite the amazing cast (which also includes Oscar nominee Cate Blanchett and *This Life's* Jack Davenport) and multi-award winning director, it's worth noting that adaptations of good French movies have a tendency to



become appallingly bad once Hollywood gets its hands on them (*Les Diaboliques* and *Nikita* spring to mind). Damon's fanbase aren't going to be too happy about their hero playing an evil psycho either.

Nonetheless, Minghella's back on familiar territory - big budget, beautifully shot, densely plotted romantic thriller - so expect an end product not unlike *The English Patient*. The socio-

pathic subtext should help to keep the pace up too, so hopefully there isn't any danger of Minghella drifting into the slow-moving, overly long format which was the only flaw in his previous film.

Bring all these pieces together and you're left with a movie which looks like a sure-fire favourite for at least a few Oscar noms, making *The Talented Mr Ripley* one of this Autumn's big movies.

Moving into the colder months usually signals a spate of movies released with one eye on the Oscars, and whilst *Deep Blue Sea* may not fit that description, *The Talented Mr Ripley* certainly does...as does *The Fight Club* which re-unites Brad Pitt with *Seven* director David Fincher, in a dark broody tale in which Pitt and co-star Ed Norton set up a club where young men can relieve their frustrations by beating each other to a pulp...at the other end of the scale, *Big Daddy* star Adam Sandler presumably gave up caring about the critics years ago, and instead churns out another entertainingly idiotic tale in which he adopts a five year-old boy in order to impress his girlfriend...similarly, any movie which stars Eddie Murphy and Steve Martin isn't going anywhere near an awards ceremony - so don't expect too much of *Bowfinger*, in which Martin is a nutty director following Murphy around with a camera crew...still in the no-brainer comedy vein, *Mystery Men* stars *There's Something About Mary's* Ben Stiller as a member of a group of wannabe superheroes who have to stop Geoffrey Rush from taking over the world (natch)...moving back into serious moviegoing territory, *Angela's Ashes* tells the story of a downtrodden wife (Emily Watson) and her alcoholic husband (Robert Carlyle) as seen through the eyes of their 12 year-old son...*Killing Mrs Tingle* marks Kevin Williamson's directorial debut, and has already kicked up a massive storm in the States, where its story - underachieving school-girl (Katie Holmes) goes on the rampage, kills her classmates and kidnaps her teacher - was deemed to be in less than the best possible taste...*Mad Cows* stars Anna Friel as a single mum attempting to fend off the social workers after she's thrown into jail on a trumped-up shoplifting charge...Disney's next project is an animated version of *Tarzan*, repleat with comedy sidekicks (an elephant and a female gorilla), evil hunter (voiced by Brian Blessed) and hardly any decent gags...this year's cheese award will almost certainly go to Harrison Ford vehicle *Random Hearts*, in which Ford and Kristin Scott-Thomas are brought together by a plane crash which kills their respective partners, and then proceed to fall in love - have the hankies on standby...Spike Lee's back in the Bronx with *The Summer of Sam*, which looks at the way a 70's killing spree affects those touched by the murderer...Winona Ryder and Ben Chaplin discover a conspiracy that will allow Satan to walk the Earth in supernatural thriller *Lost Souls*...

DEEP BLUE SEA

RELEASE DATE : October 22

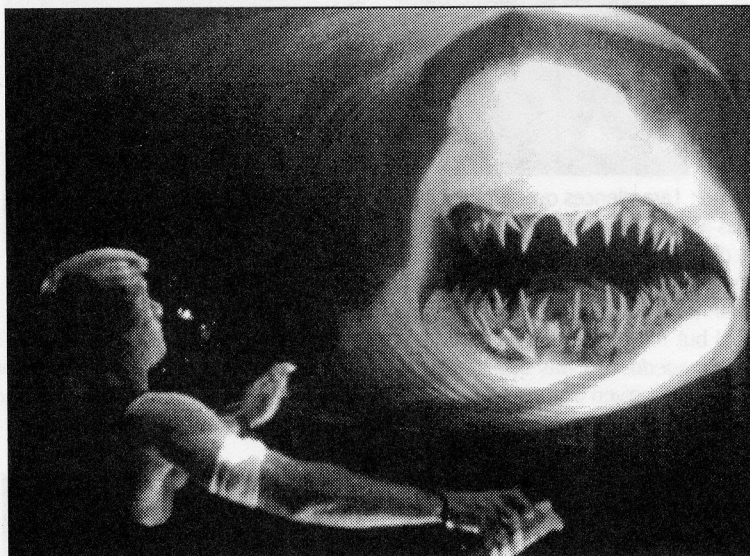
STARS : Samuel L Jackson, Saffron Burrows, LL Cool J

DIRECTOR : Renny Harlin

Don't be fooled by anyone who tries to tell you otherwise - *Deep Blue Sea* definitely is another *Jaws* movie. OK, so this time the sea monsters in question aren't made out of plywood and cardboard, but it's blatantly a Spielberg rip-off nonetheless.

This time around, however, the sharks aren't just big and toothy. Oh no - they're clever too. You see Samuel L Jackson has apparently invested \$200 million into a special project to fight brain cancer, and medical biologist Saffron Burrows uses this cash to genetically modify shark's brains to produce cancer killing enzymes, which can then be harvested. With me so far. Obviously, it all goes pear-shaped (like all the best genetics research) and the killer fish become intelligent and decide to leg it before their brains get diced...

Silly it may well sound, but director Harlin's fairly adept at dealing with such hokum nonsense (see *Die Hard 2* and *The Long Kiss Goodnight* for prime examples). However, he's also no stranger to



turkey city (*Cliffhanger* was bad, *Cut-throat Island* was painful) so it's difficult to know what to expect. Nonetheless a stellar cast that includes Stellan Skarsgard, Jacqueline McKenzie and, er, LL Cool J trapped alongside Jackson and Burrows in a rapidly flooding underwater lab should provide enough impetus to overcome any directorial madness.

Ultimately, however, movies like this live and die by their effects - and it's here

that *Deep Blue Sea* comes into its own. The implausibly large budget has allowed Harlin to hire the same giant Mexican water tank Jim Cameron used for *Titanic*, and the shark attacks themselves (which merge real-life Great Whites, CGI trickery and state-of-the-art mechanised monsters) are reported to be seriously scary. A difficult one to call, *Deep Blue Sea* could either be great fun, or simply too eighties for its own good.



A Year in Providence

(What's been keeping us at the mice, controllers and keyboards...

the good, the bad and the completely weird as seen through the twisted minds of Danny and Gary)

Some time ago our Beloved Games Editor and I were sitting in Da Vinci's discussing life, the universe and everything, in the way that people do when they've had rather more IPA than is strictly necessary, when our Beloved Games Editor suddenly had a brilliant idea. "I know" quoth he "why don't we do a review of the year for the last issue? We can tell people how the games we've reviewed have stood up to the test of time: what is and isn't still on our hard disk." My response is unrecorded, probably because I was at that moment sliding beneath the table, a glazed but happy look in my eyes.

A few months and several additional IPAs later, and here we are; the last issue under current management. For obvious reasons we, the writers, are devastated. We feel as though our world has disintegrated about us. We spend many hours of hard labour creating a thing of beauty and fascination for you and now it's all gone. Except for this final issue. We have to soldier on; to grit our teeth and wipe away the tears until our duty is done and we depart the office into the lonesome twilight bemoaning our empty shell-like lives and cast aimlessly around in search of an alternative raison d'être.

I quite enjoyed writing that. But to the games...

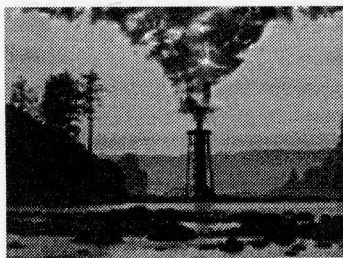
The early days of light

Cheers for that Danny. Well it all started for me as far back as ECTS in September, the twice yearly excuse for software companies to spend lots of money on entertaining the UK's finest writing talent and several assorted newspaper journalists. The mood was upbeat even if Sega and EA couldn't be bothered to strut their stuff, possibly because Eidos treated us to the real Lara Croft.

But yes, the games. The first five issues presented us with a odd assortment of games. There was the rather excellent *Red Alert - Retaliation* for the Playstation. A game that started a thousand arguments and led to an illegal betting ring in my flat. With just 2 PSX's and 2 TV's you too can start your own border conflict knowing that the only collateral damage sustained will be the controller hitting the floor after your mates beat you for the umpteenth time. Then there was what Westwood Studios did next, or what they did a long time ago but this time a little prettier, *Dune 2000*. It was a

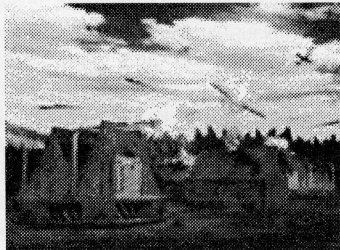


Lara silences over enthusiastic autograph hunters at ECTS.



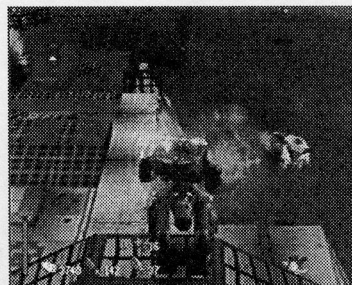
bit of a disappointment, rather like having fancy body panels on a old ford car - it might look flash and cool but the guts inside were old and tired. *Carnageddon 2* was brutally under-scored and only given a single star (at least three stars less than its actual worth in my opinion), but the true holder of the golden turkey turd award was *Creatures 2*, which combined the excitement of watching grass

grow with the need for constant attention that a nuclear power station requires. Not even trying to kill the fake fur creatures in original and painful ways livened up the hours I battled with tedium. The weird game of this era - though there was never time for a review - was *Kula World*, a bouncy ball in a 3D world. A puzzle game well worth getting worked up over, under and round the bend for. Weirdness oozes from it, with time pills that make the screen go all wibbly and wobbles the dual shock pad, and munchy sounds when the ball eats fruit... one for the after pub sessions and not the cold light of day.



Red Alert: very special - enough said.

The short good Christmas days

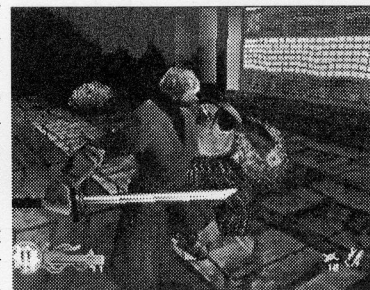


Futurecop : LAPD
Big guns, big machines, big fun.

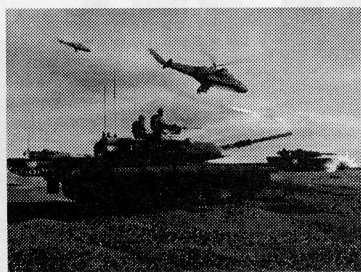
This was a time when every game from the western hemisphere gets released within a four week period, or at least that's how it started to feel. The five issues up to Christmas was also a rich and bountiful time for the four and five star brigade with *Actua Golf 3*, *Tenchu*, *Medievil*, Microsoft's *Combat Flight Simulator*, *TOCA 2* and *Heretic 2* all getting the fours while *Futurecop - LAPD*, *Wargasm*, *Settlers 3*, *Populous - The Beginning* and *Grim Fandango* getting top marks.

Of all those some of them have been burning their images into the screen longer than others. *Tenchu* is still near the top pile of PSX games in the living room, if only for the pure grim and dark nature of watching the ninjas perform the special instant death moves on unsuspecting employees that get in the way. *TOCA 2* also occasionally gets an outing, though only when I have trouble finding *Grand Turismo* and need a quick car fix.

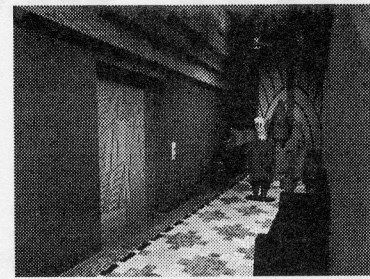
From the five star crew I have to admit that only *Futurecop - LAPD* gets regular outings especially for the two player battle game, and usually to settle the argument of whose turn it is to clean the flat (A fairly regular argument really). *Wargasm*, while being impressive graphically, was just too difficult for my console soaked brain,



Tenchu : Stealth Assassins
The knife is not just for cutting bread



Wargasm
It sounds rude.



Grim Fandango
LucusArts' finest go 3D.

though part of the problem could well be the force feedback joystick turning my arm muscles to the consistency and strength of jelly within moments. *Grim Fandango* disappeared off to Hong Kong with David Howell - a bit too far to travel for the occasional and casual game. *Populous*, well that was Danny's.



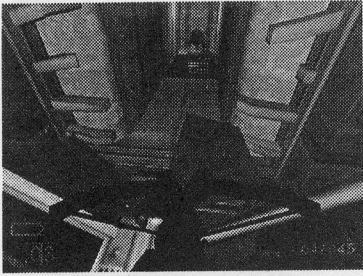
Populous - The Beginning
God Sims : The Previous Generation

My initiation into the world of Felix reviewing was *Populous - The Beginning*, which I rated quite highly at the time. It still resides on my hard disk, although I can't claim to play it continuously. It's still an enjoyable chunk of code, and the graphics are very nice, particularly when you have a 3D card to help things along. But it gets damn hard very quickly, and I don't know anyone who's finished it.

Among the rest of the mass of 3 star games Bruce Willis put in a performance in the shooter *Apocalypse* - absolutely nothing to do with asteroids and blowing them up. That was Activision's updated *Asteroids* game - something still good for the occasional and quick blast.



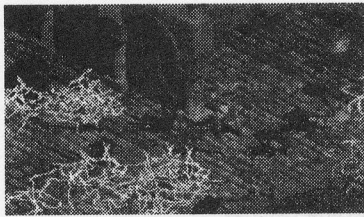
The long dark winter months



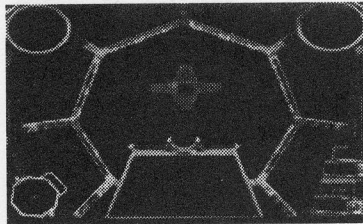
Halflife :
A little knowlege is a dangerous thing

Lucasarts Star Wars cash cow turned out another arcade-like 3D flyby shooting game, *Rogue Squadron*, which while being very pretty was not especially long lasting and did not really have the addictive gameplay of the better Star Wars games.

Eidos changed the rules of the management game with *Gangsters*, which appealed to the player who prefers information overload with their violence, especially watching several goons attempting to harass opponents, rob banks and generally do bad. It's not a bad game, just lacking the edge of a truly excellent addictive management game. It was also during these months that the compilations sprung up in the shops like early flowers. Danny got to draw the short straw and got Blizzard's and LucasArts' back catalogue.



Diablo :
Hidden depths found in Dungeon !



Tie Fighter :
Creaking its way into a early grave

good, but *Diablo* has proved itself superior to both.

X-Wing Trilogy. These are gone. This shouldn't really come as a surprise as they've been replaced in grand style by *X-Wing Alliance*. Quite apart from which all of these games are at least two years old and things have moved on. Still worth buying if your PC can't run *Alliance* though.

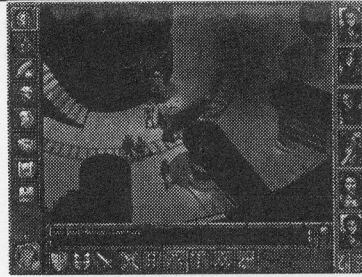
But there were original games out. *Thief* took the sneak-em-up genre of *Tenchu* - where running into a fight was a sure way to be left bleeding on the floor - and added an almost perfect audio engine to a superb graphics chassis. If there is one game this year which sums up atmosphere in a game, and demonstrates how a game can completely absorb the player within itself then this would be it.

Tenchu finally got replaced as my action game for the Playstation by *Metal Gear Solid*. It might be spaced over 2 CD's, have very cheesy dialogue and plot lines transparent to anyone over the age of 10, but its detail and gameplay is very difficult to imagine being beaten on the Playstation - ever. Roll on the Playstation 2. There was also a severe dolop of excellent strategy games. As ever these were the realm of the Dan man.



Metal Gear Solid :
Never has combating global terrorism been so exciting.

Baldurs Gate has proved itself in style. This is a very nicely put together game, and will run and run for sometime. I still play



Baldur's Gate :
Dungeons and Dragons for one

mention. This was the worst game seen this year. Not only was it tasteless - not necessarily a crime in itself - but it was the worst excuse for a 3D accelerated game ever. The Gold Turkey Turd prize goes to this and this game alone. May every copy be left in the bargain basement bin in Electronic Boutiques all round the country.

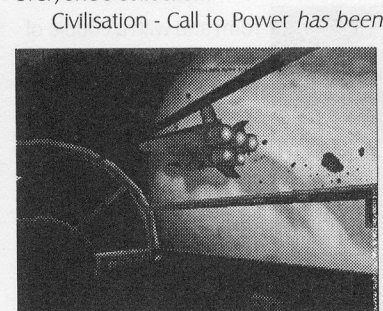
The Sharp Spring shocks



Warzone 2100 :
The smell of gunfire is never far away

64 was one of two race games to get a maximum score. It might be an enhanced version of the old PSX *Wipeout 2* but its quality shines through. Danny unfortunately had to wade through a crop of four star games.

X-Wing Alliance. It would be very surprising if this had been replaced, and it hasn't. It is the best spaceflight game out there at the moment (although it's not long until Microsoft release *Starlancer*, which promises to give *Alliance* a run for its money) and as such deserves to be in everyone's collection.



X-Wing Alliance :
The force is back

and *Alpha Centuri* are responsible for various states of lack of sleep induced hallucinations - and should carry strong government warnings.

Finally I would thank the rest of the reviewing team. Despite a complete lack of regular review material and meetings the review copy kept flowing - even if it was just preview info or compilation reviews. So thanks to Bill Tung, Mark, Ronny Tan, Nick Dalgiannakis, Magpie, Viv, Beel, Jason, CM, David Howell and last but definitely not least the hidden talent that is Danny.

Stay tuned next year for the mostly all new crew.... Gary S

it and am still intrigued by the story line. Definitely one for the collection.

Alpha Centauri. Again a stayer. I stand by my over-the-top review. Buy it and cherish it. Real life is far less interesting.

There was also *SimCity 3000*. With spiced graphics and options aplenty it was now possible to build your own city, and destroy it in extreme detail.

Finally *Natural Fawn killers* deserves a mention. This was the worst game seen this year. Not only was it tasteless - not necessarily a crime in itself - but it was the worst excuse for a 3D accelerated game ever. The Gold Turkey Turd prize goes to this and this game alone. May every copy be left in the bargain basement bin in Electronic Boutiques all round the country.

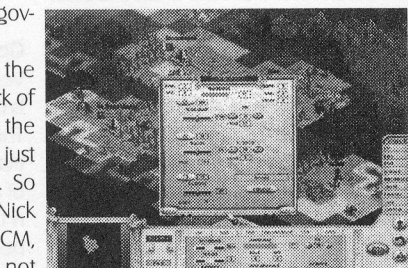
So hope springs eternal. Only three games this term managed to get top dog scores. *Warzone 2100* managed to take the Red Alert Crown which Westwood Studios had left unguarded for so long. With the ability to design and build your own force out of custom components and then view the battle field from what ever view you want, it still stands as the game to beat - and with 2 CD's of the single player game there is a large amount of game to beat. *Wipeout*



Wipeout 64 :
Top banana

Civilisation - Call to Power has been gathering bouquets from the rest of the games press. I still think *Alpha Centauri* (or come to that *Civilisation 2*) are superior. It ain't taking up space on my machine any more.

Over the eighty or so reviews the games got noticeably better, or perhaps by the fickle finger of fate the review team somehow has managed to avoid most of the year old rancid bad egg releases - well all except that *Natural Fawn Killers* game, something that will take many years to forget. Games like *Metal Gear Solid*, *Half-life*



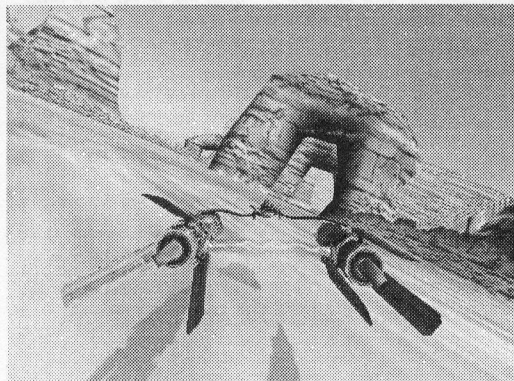
Civilization Call to Power :
Civ 2.5 to you mister.



Star Wars - Episode One - Racer (N64)

Lucasarts

★★★★★



One line summary

Lucasarts turns the handle and another game plops out of the Star Wars cash cow.

What's it all about

The race scene from Episode One is turned into a race game for the Nintendo. These are not normal cars though. Imagine a bath-tub being pulled by two jet engines on long pieces of spaghetti - oh and they manage to hover about a metre off the ground. Having the engines in front and attached by wet spaghetti means that the engines tend to get banged about a lot and have a habit of snapping off at the slightest hint of a shunt. They also run a little bit fast, 400-600 mph, and that's before turning up the gas and kicking in the afterburners.

Good Graphics

Take Wipeout 64, take out the darkness, speed it up a fraction and place Star Wars characters in this slippery swift moving world. The animation of the craft bouncing over the rough surfaces is sublime. View it from far behind, close behind, from the driver's seat or even looking backwards from the front - though this tends to end

with a pile of twisted metal within a few seconds

Seraphim Sounds

It is a Lucas Arts star wars games, so lots of orchestrated space themes in the background. Jake Lloyd (Anakin from the film) and other characters are sampled for phrases which rapidly become repetitive and tiresome - unless you are drunk, then they become very funny, honest. The other sounds are just as impressive and many are taken from the actual film, such as when the racer glances the surfaces and the edges of the track, producing scraping sounds that are a second cousin away from the finger nails dragging down a blackboard classic. A sound to absolutely convince you something is very wrong.

Great Gameplay

Over 20 tracks, over three different race series, with most tracks having various little secret short-cuts - well not so much secret as very difficult - this game will not be finished in a day. Many tracks also feature obstacles which will play

hell with the engines, and while you can repair on the move, it slows down the racer - avoid them. The control method is smooth and simple with the analogue controller, within minutes you will be sliding the bathtub, sorry, pod racer into corners on the easy circuits - on the expert circuits you will still be smashing into the walls with the rest of us mortals.

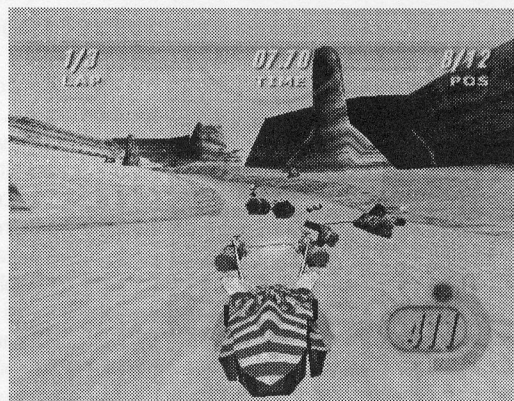
Sex and Violence

1> This is Star Wars
2> This is Lucasarts
3> The main character is only a young boy.

Not even a hint of a kiss at the end of a race.

Best bit

Losing an engine and watching the tub lose control at 400 mph. The crash is spectacular in the least.



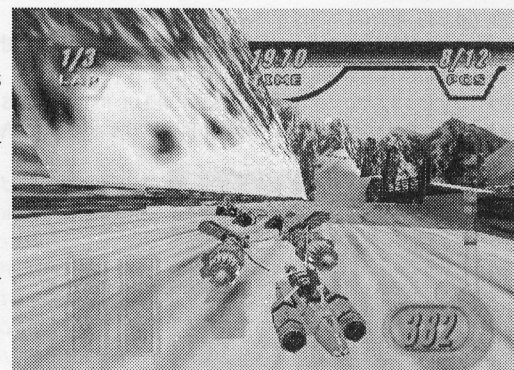
Worst bit

The kid's voice shouting "it's working" when repairing; it does start to tire.

So who will get it

Race fans, N64 owners wanting another good game, Star Wars fans. Just try it in Virgin and not buy it there and then - I dare you.

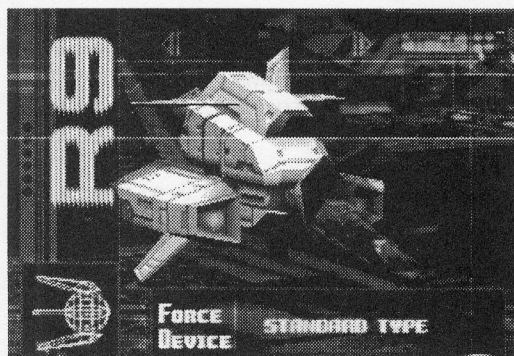
Gary S



R-Type Delta (PSX)

Irem

★★★



One line summary

The 2D shooter from the arcade is back at home.

What's it all about

Back at the dawn of time a 2D shooter game ruled the roost of the arcades. Flying the R9 craft you start with a simple gun and beam weapon that charges the longer you hold the button down. Shoot enough baddies that pop out of the ground, the sea, anywhere a baddie could possibly pop up and you can upgrade the weapons on the ship.

Well it's back in both its original

form and with a couple of friends (with new and different weapons). All of which have a force unit, an indestructible buddy in the form of a weapon loaded ball. The ball can dock with the front, the back of the ship or be sent off to attack the enemy at the corners of the screen. A very useful tool - getting the force unit to cover

your tail is one task worth learning.

Good Graphics

Very colourful... graphics-wise the game is not going to be pushing for any prizes. They might be smooth but are not particularly complex. Being a home version of an ancient arcade game though doesn't mean that the graphics have not been skipped on. The 2D nature of the original have been worked over so that the bad bosses weave in and out of the screen, even if your ship is unable to take advantage of the third dimension.

Seraphim Sounds

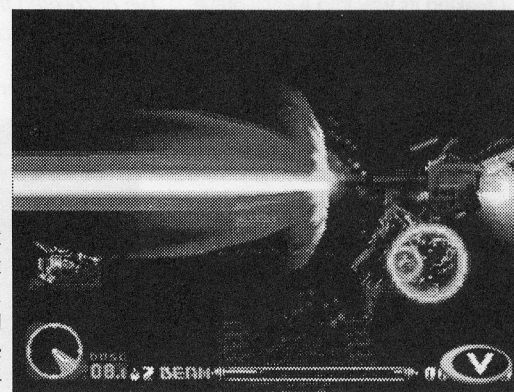
It's based upon an old arcade game shooter. Once again it is not exactly going to contest for audio track of the year. The standard bangs and pops form almost the whole auditory entertainment. There is a nice touch when you change your environment and the background tune changes - enter the water and it all goes mellow.

Great Gameplay

I was brought up in the 80's where side-on arcade shoot-em-ups ruled the arcade games. Beat-em-ups were for the weird crowd. The gameplay of R-Type Delta is not that different from other side on shooters - you either love them or you hate them. I love this even if it starts to become a case of learning which waves of enemies come from which direction.

Sex and Violence

Violence against aliens doesn't really



count... they ask for it every time.

Best bit

Absorbing enemy fire with your force unit until you can use the delta weapon. A complete orgy of destruction.

Worst bit

The slowing down of the game when too many things appear, a price paid because of the large and colourful ships.

So who will get it

The Playstation owner who wants to relive the old arcade days, or wants a decent side-on-shooter - it's the best of its kind.

Gary S

The Final Preview Ville of the Year

Tennis, fighting, and escaped Apes are just some of the Previews

Anna Kournikova's Smash Tennis (PSX)

Namco

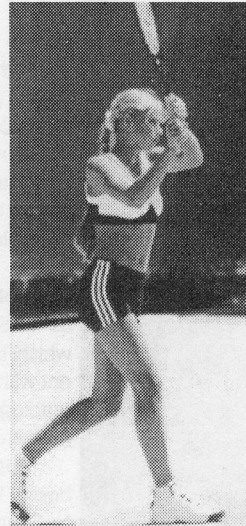
Actua Tennis has been the tennis game on the playstation for absolutely ages. Namco has decided that it is time to shift it from the throne, and, in an attempt to shift a few more copies with the male audience, got Anna to appear naked on the front cover. OK, so I'm joking about the front cover.

Where most of the current crowd of Tennis games use real characters, all motion captured and displayed perfectly, Namco has decided that this is much too adult. Instead of motion caption AKST has echoes of earlier arcade tennis

games. The players are all caricatures of the players, Anna is even blonder and cuter than in real life (if that is possible). There are also several other cartoon players, male and female - some looking more like actual tennis players than others. All of the courts are also cartoon real and imaginary courts. Along with the grass of Wimbledon (called the United Kingdom court), here is a Westminster court placed right next to Big Ben, complete with a main road at the end of the court - a decent serve can produce a loud bang if you hit a nice big routemas-

ter bus.

The actual gameplay is much more difficult to pick up than the Actua game. The placement of the shot is very sensitive to the timing of the shot and the position of the player - and with the smallish players it can be diffi-



cult to work out exactly where the ball will end up. The serve, for instance, is difficult to control in AKST, and is less precise. Serving an ace will take ages to perfect.

If you want a simple but pretty arcade tennis game AKST is OK. If you want a good all round Tennis game, something without the cartoon element that is simple to pick up and play, stick to the Actua Tennis game. It might not have the famous name but it is the better game.

Gary S

Bloodlines and Ape Escape (PSX)

Sony

Sony hasn't completely given up on the playstation yet. Coming to a machine near you is Bloodlines and Ape Escape.

Bloodlines is an attempt to turn a simple game of school tag into a computer game. Set in an arena you and your opponent attempt to capture more towers than each other. The first person to reach a tower gains the initiative and then rushes to claim the rest of the towers on the level. The opponent can attempt to stop you by tagging you (you make it easier to catch someone by slow-

ing the opponent down by shooting them). When tagged, the tables are turned and it is your turn to chase and tag the opponent while they go for the towers. An original concept and one that works better when playing against people rather than computers. The 3D graphics are also very impressive and very detailed.

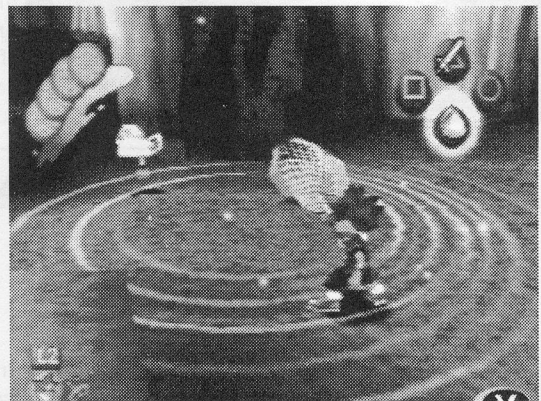
Ape escape is Sony's attempt to produce a cute Mario style game. You play a character who has to go through time sending escaped monkeys back to the

present. While the graphics are very pretty, the gameplay and control method are excellent. Using both the analogue controls, the digital controls and the microswitch in the analogue control it is possible to pull off quick and supple motion on the ground, in the air, and in the water.

With the correct difficulty level this

should keep everyone happy, even the most hardened of Tenchu maniacs.

Gary S



Capcom Generations and Star Trek : New Worlds (PC)

Virgin Interactive

Capcom Generations is not as much a preview as a postview. Capcom is well remembered not just by its range of 2D beat-em-ups but also by its wide library of 80's and 90's arcade games. Well finally they're coming out legally (you might have been playing them with one of those top arcade emulators but as it is technically illegal to use the ROM images unless you own the ROMs I would keep

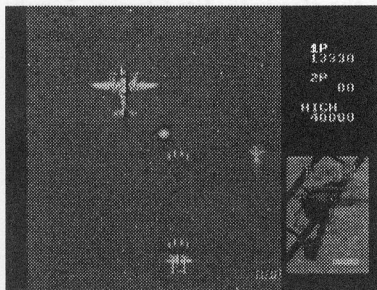
it quiet if I was you). So classics like 1942 and Commandos will be available for all. Now all I need is a broken joystick to really relive those dodgy arcade experiences.

Star Trek : New Worlds is set after the pesky Romulans mess up an experiment and create lots of new planets all ripe for the race that can get there and colonise the planet.

Playing the role of either the Federation, Klingons or Romulans it is your job to build, maintain and defend your base against the other two races and anything else that is out there. Very Battlezone 2000.

The graphics look superb, but we all have to hope that the game is as good as it looks.

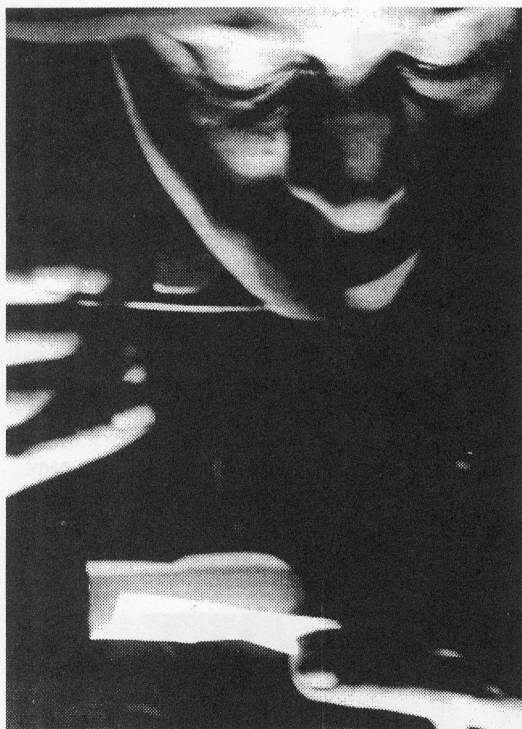
Gary S





NOVEL WITH COCAINE

by M. Ageyev



Novel *With Cocaine* was written in the early thirties, but this is the first time it has been published here. This edition contains an introduction by author and literary critic Will Self, which is heavy on psychological musings, and worth reading for its description of the book as "a text the genesis of which is exactly congruent with its own queered ontology." Answers on a postcard...

This is a strange book in many ways. Nothing is known about the author, and it may or may not be autobiographical. It follows the life of a young Russian, Vadim, as he finishes school and becomes

addicted to cocaine, set in 1917 Moscow.

This is, in essence, a remarkably modern story of teen angst; drugs, women and self-loathing are superimposed onto school and domestic life. The different parts of the story seem to be tacked together without any regard for one another - there's little absolute timeframe, and the locations are vague. However, the plot is reasonably straightforward and the book is a fairly easy read.

Vadim, the protagonist, is a rather unlikable character; he's selfish and arrogant, behaves very badly towards his ageing mother, and his self-pitying introspection evokes distaste rather than sympathy. He's a complex and well-drawn character, just not an especially nice one. The overall effect is to detach the reader from him, leaving the book a little flat and vaguely depressing.

On the other hand, the quality of writing is excellent. Vadim's first expe-

rience with cocaine, in particular, is evocative, realistic and its analytic style is fascinating. The approach of an intelligent mind attempting to dissect and make sense of what is happening to it has been used before and since to great effect; here the attention to detail and rich descriptive writing make the sequence vivid and absorbing.

The writing alone makes this a worthwhile read; the story isn't exactly gripping, but it's a fascinating book. This is a vaguely cautionary tale, but the blame is placed more on Vadim's personality than any inherent dangers of drug usage. This will sit nicely alongside *Naked Lunch*, *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* and *Trainspotting* as a good example of the genre's roots.

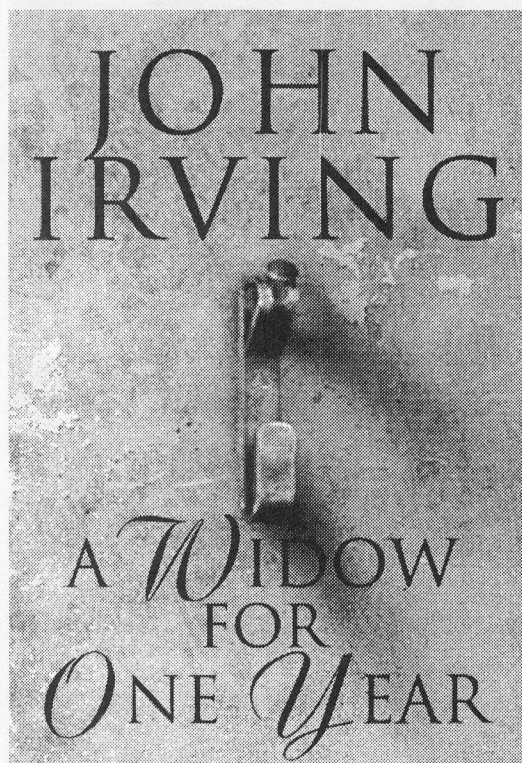
Gareth

Penguin 20th Century Classics, £7.99



A WIDOW FOR ONE YEAR

by John Irving



The book is split into three sections spread over a 40-year period starting in 1958. The characters in the book are all writers (or aspiring writers) and the story is concerned with the complex relations between them. In 1958, a young college student begins a vacation job as a writer's assistant to a famous children's author, who is going through the process of separating from his wife. The student comes of age, as he becomes a pawn between them. The relationships described are very intense and the story ranges from the sad through to the funny. The summer ends badly but the

John Irving wrote *The World According to Garp*. Now I haven't read this but I have heard of it, so he must be quite famous. With this in mind I started reading his latest novel expecting it to be at least well written... and it is.

events have a long-term effect on the student and the writer's four-year-old daughter.

The next two sections of the book are set in the 1990s and the characters have all moved on in the world. Our young 'hero' from the

first section is an average writer whilst the much younger girl is highly successful. The author again focuses on the relationships between the characters, although this time the ages of the characters are reversed.

My main annoyance with the book is a tendency by the author to leap about as the story progresses. The timeline is therefore quite disjointed but not particularly difficult to grasp.

One of the things I did like most about the novel is the fact that all the main characters are writers. This means that the main text is interspersed with readings or chapters from their own books. This proves to be both entertaining and a useful tool for explaining some of their motivations.

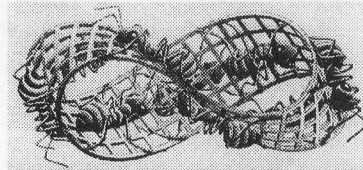
Overall I would say that this is quite an enjoyable book to read and that it will particularly appeal to those with a love of emotive relationships or an interest in writing.

Chris

Published by Black Swan, £7.99



Arts Editorial



I have been informed by the engineers in the office that this is a Moebius strip... To be honest, I was actually more interested in the ants - perhaps (and I apologise for the tenuous link) because promoting the arts at Imperial is often considered something of an uphill struggle. Kindly ignore the ants crawling down the picture, or else my attempt at a meaningful metaphor will suffer! I started out this year as a Felix ingénue, but soon discovered the exhilarating addiction of journalism. Londoners are spoilt for choice when it comes to the amazing variety of cultural events at their disposal, ranging from the obscurely modern to the elegantly traditional. I truly believe that there is something for everyone. Thank you to all the section's contributors, in particular to Dimitri, Demelza, William, Judith, Iain, Ingrid, Etienne, Ben, Gareth and Andy for their infectious enthusiasm and dedication.

Best wishes, Helena.

FRIENDS OF IMPERIAL COLLEGE SUMMER EXHIBITION

Sherfield Gallery



family's financial situation prevented him from attending the Academy of Arts. Instead he became a social worker, specialising in the field of child psychiatry. Three years later in 1983, he found he required a release for his self-expression. Following a Christmas gift of paint and brushes, he instantly finished his social work and started a three-year struggle researching colours and perfecting layering techniques. Since his first Exposition in 1985, he has become well known in the Netherlands and has been included in the books *Lexicon of Twentieth Century Dutch Naïve Art* by Nico Vander Endt and *First Choice*, both of which have raised him to the level of international recognition.

He is one of the leading Dutch artists of the Naïve style, typified by simplified cartoon-like images of people and backgrounds. While the British Naïve artists favour scenes set in either domestic urban or seaside situations, Jan Tinholt depicts arboreal and river scenes pulled from his own subconscious. His characters exist within an almost natural utopia unspoilt by the machines and stresses of post-industrial society.

Jan Hruska began painting late into his life. Born in Lysice, Czech Republic, he

was brought up in a working class family with six other brothers and sisters. He was employed as a shop assistant in a drug store until the age of 47, when he took up painting because he lost his garden where he grew roses and wanted a new hobby. His technique is unique as he uses adapted syringes to apply oil paint to hardboard. Layering these fine strings of colour creates impressive and expressive detail, the whole image resembling the fine needlework found on medieval tapestry. His images are representative of memories from his childhood, scenes from old etchings and prints of Czech cities from the area around Blansko. The images represent a simpler and supposedly quieter existence where the urban environment is blended with the rolling countryside. His work is renowned both nationally and internationally as one of the leading Czech naïve artists, having a permanent exhibition in the Naïve Art Gallery in Litomerice, and displayed in the Folk Art Museum in Boston, Pompidou Gallery and the Musée d'Art Naïf de l'île de France in Paris.

Luce Géas retired from being a University Lecturer, after having studied at the Sorbonne and LSE, to become a full time painter over twenty years ago. She has

exhibited her work in London, Paris, Hong Kong and Washington DC and the Arts Committee of UNICEF has used her work on a selection of Greetings cards throughout the world. Her work is more conventional in style and form, and she uses oil and canvas for most of her images. This exhibition displays a selection of her seascapes and still-life paintings of flowers. The seascapes in particular use vivid blues and greens to form coherent surfaces and emphasise the cold depths of the sea.

Peter Young was born in London and was introduced to painting by the Austrian artist, Margarita Hammerschlag. He first started sketching while doing National Service in Egypt. He later went on to study at the Faculty of Painting Conservation at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna. Returning to England, he was appointed Restorer at the City Art Gallery Bristol before heading the paintings section of the conversation department of the Victoria and Albert Museum. He creates his images using large brush strokes to form pools of distorted colour using the media of oil paints on paper. The completed work creates an image almost entirely opposite to Jan Hruska's detailed composition.

Gary

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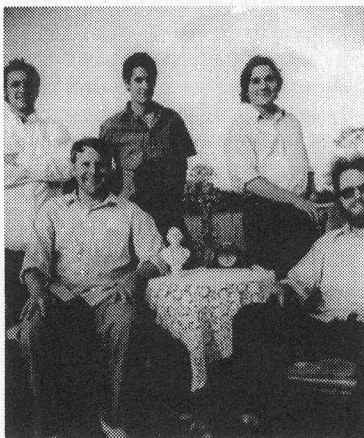
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Albums

PAVEMENT

Terror Twilight ★★☆☆½



Blur want to be these guys?...yeah right!

For some strange reason, Pavement have never really fulfilled their popularity potential on this side on the Atlantic. Each album they have released has been greeted with immense critical acclaim, and featured highly in many magazines' top albums of the particular year they were released, but the sales figures have never scaled the same heights. However, with the release of *Terror Twilight*, the reason for Pavement's underachievement all of a sudden seems to be obvious.

Terror Twilight is Pavement's fifth album and for the first time they've hired a producer. Now Pavement had done well enough producing themselves, but the decision to hire Nigel Goodrich, of *OK Computer* fame, is near enough a stroke of genius. With Goodrich's help, Pavement have produced an album that is definitely their best yet, and considering the quality of their previous albums that's quite an achievement. The distinctive sound of Pavement remains and there's still that slight lo-fi edge to the

sound, but the new production is a revolution. Gone is the oddness that Pavement have sometimes tended to drift into, and welcome to some beautifully produced, arranged and performed tracks that the best Britpop bands can only aspire to.

The first single to be released from the album is the wonderfully titled *Carrot Rope*. Receiving extensive airtime on Radio 1, it's the kind of tune Blur wished they could write. Indeed *Terror Twilight* is the kind of album Blur wished they could write. The album's first track *Spit on a Stranger* kicks it off to an incredible start and the rest of the album seems to just fall perfectly into place. *Major League* is another highlight, as is the uptempo *Billy* whose sound slides perfectly between rough and smooth in a way that only the sound of Pavement can.

With *Terror Twilight*, Pavement are releasing one of the albums of the year, and if you like quality music and beautiful tunes you must have this album. **M**

James

THE BETA BAND

The Beta Band ★★☆☆



The Beta Band relaxing on a day off from the studio.

To call the Beta Band eclectic is something of an understatement; their first three EPs *Champion Versions*, *The Patty Patty Sound* and *Los Amigos Del Beta Bandidos* demonstrated an awesome array of influences, infusing Public Enemy, Neil Young and Krautrock with a hint of any other pop style you care to mention. This album, their eponymous, augments the plan, confirming them to be true visionaries or, it being a fine line they tread, confused musical-alchemists.

Opening track *The Beta Band Rap* submerges a personal account of the band's story-so-far in a dense auditory mosaic of a fairground-carousel tune, stoned funk and 50's rock n' roll. Second track *It's Not Too Beautiful* is truly captivating; opening à la *Sugar Spun Sister* with a chugging guitar, the song runs aground twice on Wagnerian strings whilst mellifluous vocals paradoxically announce *And I Will Fly*, only for the song to be finally sunk by an *Also Sprach Zarathustra* coda.

The marriage of dub-bass, hip-hop drum-beats, samba rhythms, steel-drums, mantras, chants and bedevilled sound-effects emanating from just about anything they could lay their inquisitive

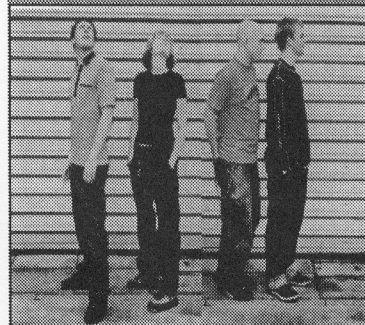
hands upon, across the remaining eight tracks, makes for a bewildering infectious stew.

The seemingly orderless compositions that frame frankly inane lyrics about motorway travel and the band's opinion on Beach Boys' albums appear to make perfect sense. They aren't saying anything new or profound and all the music has been heard before, just not in the same song. And maybe that's the point, maybe the 'Well of Pop-Music' has run dry over the last forty years, the only option being a chaotic scramble from one genre to another. Maybe pop-music was always living on borrowed time, its brief being finite, every nuance of the human condition and facet of human emotion having already been chronicled. Is it time to get virtual? Music is dead, long live the video game? **M**

Chris

FUNGUS

Fungusamungus ★★☆☆½



I'm a sucker for smooth satin things so when I saw the slinky satiny folding card case for this mini album the rose-tinted spectacles immediately fell over my eyes and I wanted to take it to bed. I didn't though because it's only a CD box and I'm not a deviant. I have run my fingers over it many times. I must admit, mmmmmmmmmmm...

Enough! Sweden, eh? That crazy country full of Volvos and lots of depressed suicidal people hell bent on self-destruction. Is that why Volvos are so safe, just in case an irrational Swede decides to do himself in by crashing headfirst into a tree? 'A-ha (or were they Norwegian?)', says the Swedish government. 'Let's keep the suicide rate down by building cars with a million airbags and exporting blonde furniture and even blonder music. Nice.' So we've had Abba. The Cardigans. Kent and now Fungus.

Fungus are a fourpiece who are bald, sad man, moody Cast reject, Nina Cardigan wannabe and chubby adolescent. Still, they pump out some decent tunes along the lines of chunky riffs, plenty of cymbals and shouty vocals. Predictable it may be but listenable never the less. I was quite surprised at how heavy this was because just looking at Fungus you'd say they'd be playing something more akin to Radiohead but with more of a tune. The single *I'd Rather Be A Doll* is without doubt the standout track. It's not too oversweet teeny punk like a few of the other songs (namely *Lollipop*) and it sounds more grown-up. To put it bluntly, it doesn't annoy you after a minute. I think that Johan Lundgren's voice might be to blame for said annoyance with its whiny, brattish qualities, although on tracks like *Lollipop* the epileptic guitar can take some credit.

As debut albums go, Fungus have played it safe. They've stuck with a formula that sells records and, it has to be said, isn't too taxing on the playability front. If they want superstardom though, they're going to have to aim a bit higher.

M

Christian



Albums

SUPER FURRY ANIMALS

Guerrilla



Where can you get a good tank round here?

Guerrilla, SFA's third album, confirms them to be purveyors of protean pop and in doing so raises them to a position of utter relevancy. Their mixed-up, muddled-up tunes seizing the zeitgeist of spiralling-amorphism where pop-music currently resides.

Their *raison d'être* of sculpting unique songs from a melting pot of genres, ranging from dance music to main-

stream pop, is still very much in evidence. From the techno informed *Whenever I Lay My Phone (That's My Home)* and the drum and bass sound of *The Door To This House Remains Open* to the compelling glam-rocker *Do Or Die*. Such diversity is prevalent throughout, *Check It Out* contains a Young MC sample, *Northern Lites* features steel drums and latino rhythms, *Specific Ocean* has synthetically altered vocals and *Chew-*

ing Chewing Gum opens with a jewellery-box piano before transforming into an ethereal, mellifluous sing-a-long.

However, it is the protracted and more reflective songs that are of the greatest interest, disclosing a world-weariness first made evident on their previous album *Radiator* (for similar *The End Of The World Is Nigh* intonations listen to the Beta Band's self-titled debut). *Something's Come From Nothing* and *Turning Tides* hint at unrest and disillusionment, painting a somewhat resigned outlook.

This is by far SFA's most emotive work, adding a new precision and clarity to their lyrics; the honeyed *Fire In My Heart* refrain of 'I got pins and needles for you/I've got butterfly stomach for you/And as clouds fly by, I just break down and cry' pricks the tear ducts from its angelic package of a tune.

While the similarly polymorphic Beta Band offer apparently extemporaneous, yet courageous and worthwhile, fare, SFA exude an air of calculated purpose amid the confusion. Show some faith and buy this record. **M**

Chris

LO FIDELITY ALLSTARS

On The Floor At The Boutique ★★★★★



Comparisons with Fat Boy Slim in abundance.....that's something to cheer about!

get their hands on, for without exception The Boutique DJs play the music the crowd want to hear. The music selection in turn inspires the crowd to dance as crazily as possible, get as fucked up as possible (on drink or drugs) and just have an absolutely amazingly great time.

With the *On the Floor at the Boutique* series, the Skint label is trying to create a take home package of the feeling of their club by providing compilations created by their mixing maestros. The first in the series was compiled by none other than Skint super artist Fat Boy Slim, and now the second comes from the equally talented, if not quite as popular, Lo-Fidelity Allstars. Following in the steps of the Fat Boy is not as easy job for anyone to handle, but the Lo-Fidelity Allstars have done themselves proud. Their mix is as seamless as one could possibly hope, and the tracks chosen remain perfectly complimentary to each other, while still managing to surprise with tracks you would never expect to hear in a club.

Of course, the beats remain as big as possible throughout the entire mix

and who would expect anything else? There are contemporary tracks from the wonderfully English (not French) Les Rythmes Digitales, Skint's own Indian Ropeman, and the Lo-Fi's also manage to throw in a couple of their own offerings as well. However, it is the selection of the old tunes that really lift the mix from the average level that only the best dance mix compilations manage to surpass. The listener is treated with classics from the Jungle Brothers, Sugarhill hip-hop granddaddies Trouble Funk, and some further inspired choices including consecutive tracks from The Tams and The Prodigy where *Be Young Be Foolish Be Happy* is mixed into the stonking *Outta Space*.

This second release in the *On the Floor of the Boutique* series thus proves to be exactly everything it sets to be. Although are no funny little three diamond stamped pills in the package, or a voucher for copious quantities of alcohol, this mix cd is the first step to creating your own Big Beat Boutique at home. **M**

James

FUZZ TOWNSHEND

Far In ★★★★★

Now I don't know about you but Fuzz Townshend rings a bell with me. But I can't quite put my finger on it, did he do some track I heard last year? Was it a remix? I just can't remember. (Well that says something at least, doesn't it?!). This frighteningly, cocked up *Déjà vu* continues through the album, but back to that later.

Fuzz Townshend produces a kind of funky, multi-style infused big beat. *Original Boom*, the second track on the album, features the interestingly named Ranking Roger and is a funky stroll through 'the rude-track, ambient, dub-reggae sound'. Hmm quite. However by the fourth track, *Smash It*, that hazy *déjà vu* somehow comes filtering back. *Smash It* is an excellent Big Beat track, more funky than the Big Beat Bandit himself, Fat Boy Slim, whilst maintaining that powerful jump up and dance feel. Now was it this track that I had heard before? I think so!! But where?...An advert? Maybe, but you don't want to get me started on that again anyway!! No doubt all those clever chaps out there that write in to correct us lowly music reviewers will be sharpening their pencils at this very moment, so answers on a postcard for next year's first edition, eh!!

Back to the music. Well in the gap between *déjà vus*, a few good tracks go by, especially *Boogie Too* which contains the most honest of lyrics for a thumping, or should that be humping, dance-floor filler, 'I want your body, don't want your mind'. And we are up to track number nine, *Get Yourself*. Again it's *déjà vu* time. I'm sure I've heard this before as well. A *Trainspotting*-esque number that is certainly catchy with its vocal listing style. It's only a short sprint to the end of the album from here passing through the groovy *My Day* and the crazy *Tasty Big Ed* (Is that a comment about our very own Felix editor do you think?! Again answer in on a postcard from anyone that knows!) *Far In* is a good big beat album, very varied, gets you going, but at the same time is intelligent enough not to bore you if you just want to listen. There are plenty of excellent tracks on the album that I haven't mentioned much about so get out there and buy yourself a copy for summer, you haven't got anything else to do!! **M**

Ramzi



Albums

KRISTIN HERSH

Sky Motel ★★☆☆



Smile!

Following last year's disappointing *Murder, Mystery and then Goodnight*, *Sky Motel* represents something of a return to form for Kristin Hersh, melding the vibrant and dizzying electricity of Throwing Muses with the mellower, yet equally intense, acoustic sound of her subsequent solo work.

Echo, the first single from the album, bounces fluidly from organ to guitar, stops, restarts and all the while enfolds you in its delicious melody. Hersh's voice, idiosyncratic as ever, ensnares whilst betraying her troubled battles with bipolar depression; 'I'm loving everybody, and hating everyone I see...I'm scaring everybody, I'm wearing everybody down'.

The common theme that transpires across the twelve tracks is the loss of love and a desire for its rediscovery; 'All I want is you, smiling/Faithful to the finish, I'm grateful to be in this with you/A fucker of a lifeline/ A mother of a lifetime with you'; 'Made you not believe/ Made you lose your faith in the afterlife/ And all that breathes'.

The English language being what it is, the second person you being descrip-

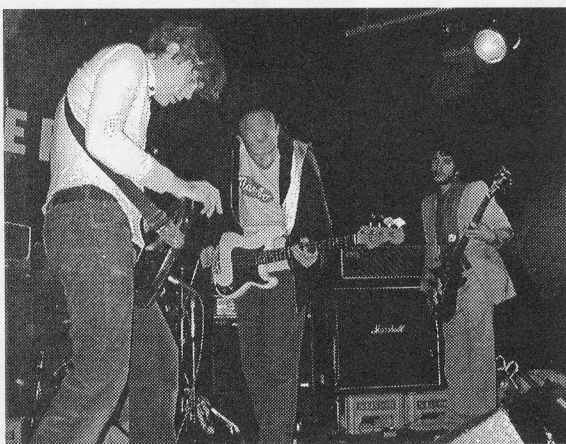
tively interchangeable with the first person I, it's difficult to decipher self-reference from comments on others. Kristin's out-pourings of love and vitriolic spite may be aimed at others, quite probably aimed at herself.

The more robust sound could be attributed to the return to the fold of David Narcizo, the percussionist and drummer from Throwing Muses, or just Hersh's desire to revisit the former glories of the late '80s. Nostalgia was a particularly prevalent theme on her last album, it being a collection of Appalachian folk songs from her childhood. *The Ghost of Times Past* can be felt here too, this album presents Hersh as the person we all know, cathartic to the bitter end, searching for redemption, searching for justification. **M**

Chris

BILLIE MAHONIE

The Big Dig ★★½



The band take a momentary break as they look for a spare plectrum

This is a purely instrumental album, with the instruments being mainly of the guitar flavour. Oh how misleading the first few tracks are. The opening track, *Watching People Speaking When You Can't Hear What They're Saying*, is good (although not as impressive as its title), but the second is called *Glenda* and is blindingly attractive. The guitars are strummed so delicately and is put together naturally with the drums. The tempo varies constantly throughout the track but never throws the piece off, resulting in a blissful yet energetic sound. With the calm and mellow ending to the third track, although it is a very interesting number, we begin to witness the fairly rapid decline into the land of repetition.

The remainder of the album does have its subtle differences among the tracks but these are not enough to characterise each one as individual; they all seem to start off in a not too impressive similar manner and that pattern is essentially present till the end of each track.

The final track comes as a bit of a surprise though, and its policy is more along the lines of the opening tracks. But it's too little too late I think. I'm not really sure what this album is trying to achieve; some parts of it sound a bit like dream-music but that doesn't hold for very long and quickly breaks down into a dull blunder. There is nothing groundbreaking or clever about this album. I've listened to the album a few times over (mainly because the nine tracks total just a tad over forty minutes) and I don't think I'll ever do it again. This is one of those albums that will find itself in the reduced price category (three for £20 maybe) in no time at all. **M**

Asad

HEFNER

The Fidelity Wars ★★☆☆

Hands up who likes Space? Come on, there must be someone out there. Nobody? Nah, I don't like them either, I think they're shit. All their music sounds like they're taking the piss with those horrid strangled vocals and clichéd lyrics. Cue Hefner on the strangled vocals front. I just can't shake off images of Tommy from Space when I hear Hefner, which is a shame because the lyrics aren't at all clichéd, in fact they are terribly open and clever.

It seems that everyone loves Hefner. They're one of those bands that people deem cool, if you read NME you'll find out what I mean. There are a few bands that music journalists latch onto and extol the virtues of until the next one comes along and at the moment, Hefner are that group of people. I wasn't impressed.

Hefner don't stand next to Cast in line for a beating but the music they produce isn't anything special. *The Fidelity Wars* is mediocre indie-pop. Nothing more and nothing less. It's this type of mundane pop that is so difficult to be enthusiastic about, whether it's enthusiastically calling it bobbins or gushing praise. It generates apathy in me and I hate that when I have to write stuff.

Hefner have been called 'awe-inspiring in their naked honesty' a-hem. I wouldn't go that far. The most important part of the music is certainly the lyrics which are very intelligently written with some astute, stark observations that in part make up for the lack of originality ever-present in their sound. *The Hymn For The Cigarettes*, which is the current single, is the best track on the album. It combines a simple structure with some lovely lyrics that make you smile to yourself at their insight.

I was looking for something more from this album. From what I'd heard about the band they were the boys ready to take the crown of the indie scene and storm the charts. From *The Fidelity Wars* I can't see either of those two things happening. What people have mistaken for the sound of vulnerability in Darren Hayman's voice to me sounds weary and untrained, and the music is too run-of-the-mill to ever be referred to as genius. Hefner have produced a decent indie album that a lot of people who want to look cool will go out and buy, but in terms of content it leaves much to be desired. **M**

Christian



Singles Round Up

Peshay - Switch

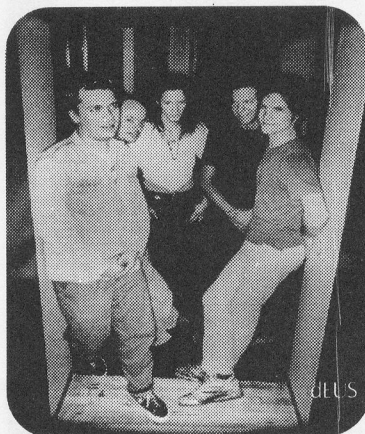
This track begins with an opening nearly exactly the same as which Adam F prefers and then leads into a fairly standard step up drum and bass. It's pleasant enough but probably best left to the dance floors and not to your stereo at home.

The Auteurs - The Rubettes

Although *The Rubettes* contains The Auteurs' distinctive sound which even tinges a cheerful song with their trademark subtle darkness. *The Rubettes* sounds like the name of an early '60s band and you guessed it, so does this song.

Hefner - The Hymn for the Cigarettes

A song about your girlfriend smoking fags in bed, quitting those packs of twenties and being in love, all done with a typical sub-standard indie sound. There is a bonus however as one of the band members wrote a recipe for meatballs in tomato sauce inside the sleeve. Now why hasn't this been done before?

**dEUS - Sister Dew**

This is the second release from dEUS' recent LP, *The Ideal Crash*. It has the semblance of a ballad and strives for epic like proportions but does not quite reach its goal. Don't expect any chart success, instead go out and buy the album, you won't be disappointed.

Cut La Roc - Makin' It Hot

T. C. Islam is featured on this track released through the Skint record label, the home to your Big Beat faves. As with the Peshay track I'd be up there dancing away to this in a club but for listening at home this just doesn't cut it.

Solex - Randy Costanza

This is not easy to categorise, and admittedly I don't like to do so, but the closest description that comes to mind is 'quirky lo-fi indie'. I believe a clarinet is used along with the traditional guitars, drums and bass, which are all spoiled by a singer with one of those extremely annoying voices. **M**

Jason

Bellatrix - Crash

They look like a band that would play alternative music but I was surprised to hear hard and fast beats carefully put together with a lavish helping of sharply vocals to produce a fresh sound that would probably go down a storm in a club (but minus the vocals though). Their sound could be deceiving though; the b-side reveals the expected indie.

Shed Seven - Disco Down

Taken from their forthcoming greatest hits album *Going For Gold*, this has got that '70s feel to it, but the Shed's manage to pull it into the nineties with style. This will quickly get you into the flares and out to a disco (and you better hurry if Shed 7 get their way - they want to burn all the discos down).

Another Level - From The Heart

Feature song to the new Hugh Grant/Julia Roberts film *Notting Hill*. I don't know, I guess I have to be a girl to appreciate these boy-bands and especially these cheesy love songs. The song isn't too bad, but it isn't too good either. In any case, why would anyone want to buy this and listen to this over and over?

Kristin Hersh - Echo

Singer, songwriter and producer, and not a bad one at that either. The varying tempo keeps you on edge - the soft parts entertain a familiar keyboard arrangement but before you fall off the edge the drum beats battle with your eardrums. She teases: "Do you hear the loudest sound?" - er, yes, thanks Miss Hersh.

Wide Angle - Diablo

Wide in angle perhaps but definitely narrow in mind - don't they know that recording crap music will earn them no fans. This is just guitars making the typical melody we get in rock and the vocals are not earth-moving. They should probably have switched tracks one and three. *The Blood* is a much better tune - the guitars are finely played and the vocals ride on a cool melody.



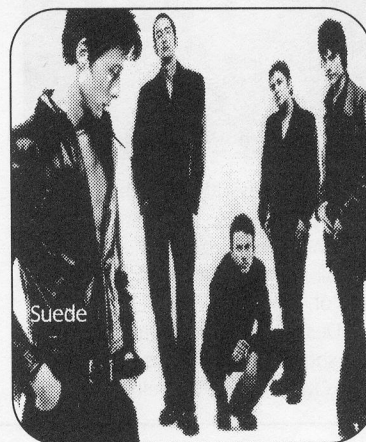
Jamiroquai

Luscious Jackson - Ladyfingers

A fresh slice of pop from a charming all-girl New York threesome. Known to be friends with the Beastie Boys but their lyrics are definitely much sexier, although we may expect some experimental traits to rub off onto them. I can't wait to get hold of their forthcoming album *Electric Honey*.

Jamiroquai - Canned Heat

I don't really need to say much about this one. Entered the chart at No. 4 and probably still doing the rounds in the charts by the time you read this. A stunning summer song and Jay Kay's vocals are still



Suede

as uplifting as ever - the opening line "You know this boogie is for real" just says it all really. Their album *Synchronized* will probably also be released by the time you read this.

New Electrics - Get Together

This track opens with vibrant guitars but the vocals are really dull. It does get better as the track progresses and with a few more listens. At exactly three minutes long, it not long enough to really get into it and it always finishes just as you do. If the b-side's anything to go by, there's not much more where that came from.

Suede - She's In Fashion

From their current *Headmusic* album, you'll probably buy this anyway if you're a Suede fan. Otherwise, don't bother. This isn't one of their strongest songs and doesn't even sound good enough for a single. Suede can definitely do better than this; I hope this isn't representative of their album.

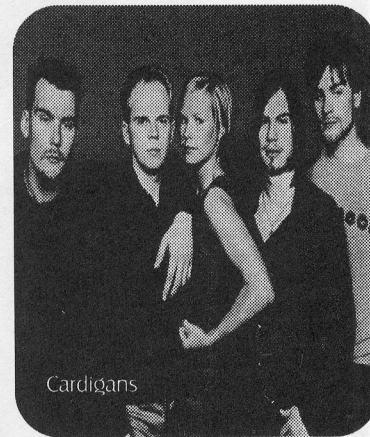
Cay - Prince & Princesses

There were three tracks on this CD and no sooner than I pressed play it was all over. The three tracks total a time of under seven minutes. These are incredibly short songs! Mind you, that's probably not a bad thing for these were not particularly good listening. The presented rock is nothing new and the vocals will not be missed if they were never voiced again. **M**

Asad

Cardigans - Hanging Around

This is an excellent song. Lead singer Nina Personn definitely has got something catchy about her voice. Get this single if you want to snap only this song



Cardigans

off their *Gran Turismo* album 'cos it features no other tracks. Two mixes sound almost the same but the Naid Remix is a bittersweet treat.

Beverly Knight - Greatest Day

I am not very keen on soul and R&B, but I do recognise some familiar selling-points on this single. It sounds kinda good and has an almost Motown feel to it. Feel-good kind of stuff, or is it?

Hurricane #1 - Remote Control

This single has got three remixes of *Remote Control*. I don't quite like the mood of this song and it doesn't strike me as melodic. The band may have some potential though and their album may well be a good one. *Twilight World*, *Don't Worry*, and *Indian Water Song* are also on this single.

Mase (feat. Blackstreet) - Get Ready

This is supposed to be a really cool rap artist! Alas, nothing original, not even decent rehashing of older music. Apart from the title track, the single features *Feel So Good* and *What You Want* which do not help in redeeming the record, though the latter would make a nice cruiser of a song.

Jamella - I Do

Fusion of latin and R&B. That doesn't make it sound less similar to lots of the stuff getting airplay. It just never manages to rise above the mediocre. She can sing, the beats roll, the bass tones swing, but we've heard this a 1001 times before.

Dark Star - About 3am

New British band. Enjoyed the song and the single very much. Confident and dark music with good singing abilities. Dark Star project a similar musical experience to that of listening to Pink Floyd. *Henry Beckett* and *Light Years* also feature on this single. **M**

Ahmed



Albums

ONE LADY OWNER

There's Only We ★★



It's plain to see that One Lady Owner are obsessed with cars, as they provide the backdrop to this their debut album, *There's Only We*. Song titles like *Wheelkings 1973*, *Police Car Sex*, *Mph Is Everything* and *Blue Chrome Zoo* serve to illustrate this quite clearly. The first two of this bunch have been relatively

low-key singles although upon hearing them, you'll realise you're more familiar with them than you think. The rest of this album takes a bit of time to get hold of, though.

Despite occasional road-rage rushes and some very funky organ work, One Lady Owner verge on being Goth-rock.

Dennis

WITNESS

Before The Calm ★★★★★



'Can I get a witness? I said, can I get...'
The Reverend Black Grape - Sean Ryder

The last time I heard an album like this was exactly this time last year. Dripping with arrogance and grandeur, Embrace's *The Good Will Out* was a record that demanded repeated listening. Witness are a very different sound to Embrace but the impact they have on the listener is bound to be the same.

Tracks are built from simple beginnings and rounded off into beautiful songs. The lyrics are all aching to be taken seriously. They're also delivered almost effortlessly, feeling no need for vocal acrobatics. It's a fine line between

pretentiousness and genuine humility but I think Witness perform the tightrope act almost to perfection. I say almost because throughout you do get the feeling that they know that they're something special waiting to explode. They don't flaunt it, though. Metaphorically, they sit around in a room with knowing smiles, happy with what they've created.

And happy they should be, for what we have here is a glorious collection of sound that transcends the crowded sonic marketplace that is music's current climate. Haunting chimes crop up throughout the album, adding to tracks by emphasising their delicacy and fragile nature. In fact, *So Far Gone* is so delicate, you feel like it's about to break down right before your very ears. It's perfect comedown music. *Before The Calm*, clever title though it is, is probably not the most accurate description of this album. I think right slam bang in the centre of the fuckin' calm would have been more appropriate. *Cause and Effect* maintains the self-pity: 'Why do you still hang around when you've let all your friends down?' This song however, builds into a screeching crescendo before descending and returning to the beginning. *My Friend Will See Me Through* makes up for the apparent negativity of *Cause and Effect* and at the end of the day, the

(Yeah, I bet you'd forget all about that, hadn't you? Sisters of Mercy and all that.) The vocalist is far too dreary - at times you begin to wonder why you aren't actually getting your head down for some much needed kip instead of force feeding yourself a dose of bland rock.

However, I can see this being some people's cup of tea. It just doesn't do it for me, that's all. Tracks seem to blend into each other making one seem unrecognisable from the other. I'm sure people think the same sort of thing about Embrace, though.

In summary, this is a dark atmospheric rock album with a tendency to occasionally hit the throttle but more than happy to purr through the music streets. I recommend you don't use it for long journeys, though, as it may cause drowsiness. As for heavy machinery, I'd steer clear of that, as well. **M**

Dennis

BOYZONE

By Request

How fitting that the last album review on the music pages of this Felix year be filled with perhaps one of the greatest bands of this millennium. It's hard to understate the importance of a band like 911 [What? Boyzone? Oh, right.] It's hard to understate the importance of a band like Boyzone. Their impact isn't just nationwide - it's global - some say inter-galactic.

It's hard to imagine a world without the vocal talent of Ronan Keating and that other one. Also, the lip-synching techniques of Mikey and the other two that do nothing are now being copied the world over. In Japan, special Boyzone karaoke bars are being set up where customers are recorded six months previously, digitally altered to sound perfect and then invited back to the bar to mime their hearts away.

And what songs they are to mime to too. Who can forget the sublime magic of *Love Me For A Reason*? Or the sheer arrogant brilliance of *Words* - who would have thought they'd be able to cover other people's material when they rely so heavily on their own writing skills. There was also the popastically fantastic *So Good*. In fact there are so many songs here that didn't quite reach number one that you'd be a fool to be left without a copy of *By Request* when the music stops.

No matter what you say about Boyzone, you have to admit that it would be a far worse place without them. Isn't a wonder, then, that they failed to break the American market. Perhaps, our fellows across the pond failed to notice the post modern irony etched into the hilariously subversive couplet: 'Love me for a reason. And let the reason be love.'

There are three extra tracks for your listening pleasure here and one may have expected them to try and shy away from their crowd pleasing drippy numbers but it's not time to make a change. They've plumbed for their classic soppy delivery on every track.

It's not just their music that has attracted hundreds of admirers though. I'm sure I speak for everyone when I say that we love the way that they love themselves. Boyzone - you are truly music icons of the nineties.

To conclude, *By Request* is a must have album. Superlatives fail me and strangely no words of appreciation seem to fit the bill perfectly. Boyzone are a band that defy categorisation. They have defied their rivals. They have even defied a Felix rating. They are a band that truly defy belief! **M**

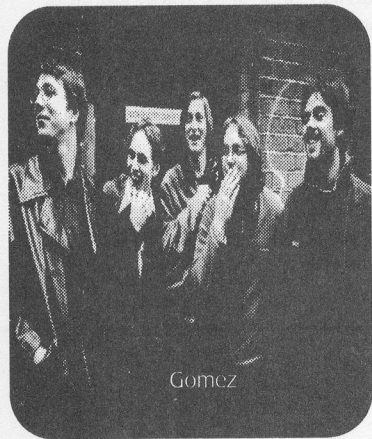
Christine



Singles Round-up

Polanski - *God Only Knows*

Screechy indie band with a very clouded sound, much in the vein of a second rate Mansun, (Oh dear). The male vocalist's singing is constantly lost in the seemingly unstructured 'noise' that the rest of the



Gomez

band makes, with none of the three tracks on the single having any impact or ingenuity at all.

Clinic - *The Second Line*

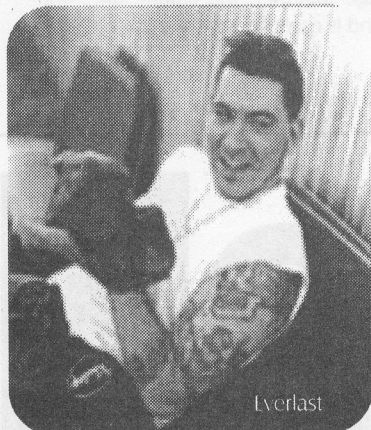
Well, this is different. *The Second Line* has a deconstructed sound that is a blend of the Pixies surf-rock with Arab Strap's mumbling, musing vocal style. The B-sides are very different though, much more rocky and well driven, although I have serious doubts that the lead singer is in fact singing in English!

Me-One - *E.P.*

Produced by the Roots this E.P. is funky and fresh, a smooth and groovy sound for the summer. *Me-One's* rappers sound like a fusion between Bob Marley and a slightly more talented Wyclef (Fugees). The E.P.'s production shies away from the hard beats of much of the hip-hop around at the moment and comes with a mellow jazzy flavour. Pretty good.

Fridge - *Of EP*

Now I quite like Fridge, I've reviewed two of their albums in the past but this single, confusingly named the *Of EP* is a



Everlast

slight departure from their highly minimal musical style. *Version*, the first track on the single, is driven by a big bass beat

and is infused with all sort of clicks and twitters, as well as some funky vocal samples.

Gomez - *Bring It On*

Well you've probably heard and seen this single all over the place already. It's a strong retro inspired funky indie track. The balance between the guitars and drums complement the rough vocal style of the lead singer and it is not a bad little track at all.

Rosko - *Get Out*

Well, a new indie three piece - what a novelty! These three lads look frighteningly like several Imperial College students I know, but let's not hold that against them. The first track *Get Out* is really quite good, and has the sound of many of the seminal early nineties indie bands. The B-sides live up to their position, being somewhat less inspired than the title track. **M**

Ramzi

Liz Horsman - *Just Thinking*

Labelmates with Blur, Liz Horsman does a decent job of mixing grunge-y guitars with some traditional female angst. Just poppy enough to grab the young



Blur

teenager market. Just enough rock to please the indie crowd. However, it could be just a bit too much of the glossy production to really have any deep impact on you. Sonic meat and potatoes.

Everlast - *Ends*

Very good stuff. His album, *Whitey Ford Sings the Blues*, is crammed with tales of urban woe. This single is no exception with some inspired rhymes and poignant themes. 'If you're broke, she spit. If you're rich, she might swallow,' is the type of thing that makes it through to the radio edit. If you've liked his first two singles, I strongly recommend you give his album a listen.

Snow Patrol - *Starfighter Pilot*

Retro-space-rock is probably some sort of oxymoron or something but retro-space-rock is perhaps the only way of describ-

ing this. Entertaining, inventive and innovative with B-sides that drip with oodles more talent than the average white band. A poor man's Gomez.

Freestylers featuring Definition of Sound - *Here We Go*

'Here we go on a ride with the new Freestylers,' rings the chorus in between the rap verses that can't help but put a smile on your face. Feel-good music for a happy summer. Go on, let your hair down and dance like a care-free idiot. Remixes to rock out to, as well. Nice one, lads.



Liz Horsman

Jennifer Lopez - *If You Had My Love*

You know Jennifer Lopez, right. George Clooney got to be crammed inside a car trunk with her in last year's coolest film, *Out Of Sight*. She's the sexy actress with a body to drool over. So what's the deal with this R&B-samba single? Well, it's not a one-off, as there's an album on the way as well. It's also not a complete load of toss either, as far as R&B tracks go. Looks like we'll have to go with Hollywood Star in Decent Single Shocker!

Blur - *Coffee + TV*

Second single off 13 and first single (I think) to feature Damon not on lead vocals. Perfect hangover music. Remixes of the stonking album track, *Bugman*, prove that they can actually fuck about with their sound even more than they did on their album. Sometimes Blur have to be heard to be believed.

Subcircus - *Do You Feel Loved?*

My patience has worn thin. I thought I could get through a whole batch of singles without slating someone. Don't get me wrong. Their now long distant offering, *86'D*, was one of my favourite singles of the time alongside the Stereophonics' first release of *Local Boy in the Photograph*. How the times can change, though. *Do You Feel Loved?* is irritating dumb-rock. Full-stop. **M**

Dennis

Music Editorial

The end is finally upon us. Felix has finished its year in music. We've seen albums from a lot of the big music guns. Blur, Suede and Ash all weighed in with four star reviews though I think it's fair to say that none of the above bunch have made a significant impact on the times. Other notable releases of the year include Fatboy Slim, Eminem and the Stereophonics. Also, although not reviewed by Felix, it is worth mentioning the new Travis album which is a quiet little sparkler of a release.

December saw Felix decide the album of 1998 and Gomez came out as the clear winner. Air's *Moon Safari* battled it out with Embrace's *The Good Will Out* for the second place spot with the Parisian duo eventually coming up trumps.

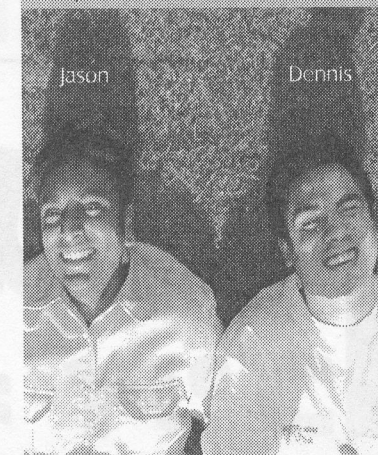
Five star reviews have been few and far between in this Felix year. Prince Paul and Kent managed to notch one up, as did Super Furry Animals. Pavement almost reached perfection with a four and a half and Lauryn Hill was just shy of the famous five as well.

The summer should see the usual collection of quality releases, hoping to cash in on the feel-good summer vibe, as well as the various festival appearances.

It just remains now for us to bid you farewell, as both of us become Imperial graduates. Thank you to Ed for putting up with us never quite finishing the pages on time. Thank you to those in the Felix office who have helped and for liberating computers and scanners at exactly the right time. Thank you to the many press companies that supply us with all their top tunes and a few dodgy ones as well. Thank you to the Union Office for dealing with our chunky mailouts every fortnight or so and last but certainly not least, thanks and much appreciation to our music reviewers. Without you, life as a music editor would be very difficult indeed.

We hope you all have a decent summer and wish you success in your studies.

See you later, then.
Bye.

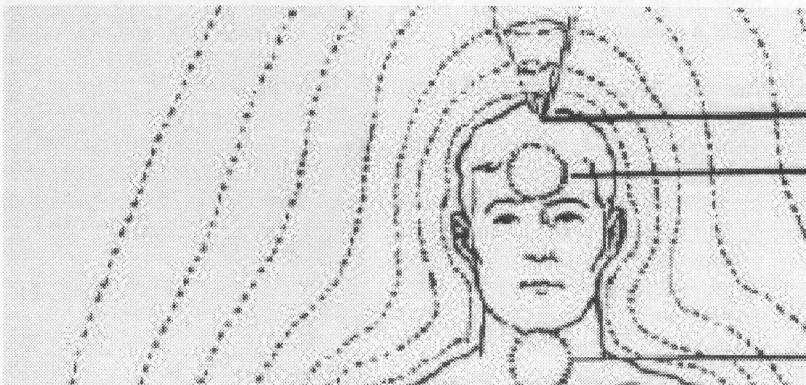


Jason

Dennis



Delerium

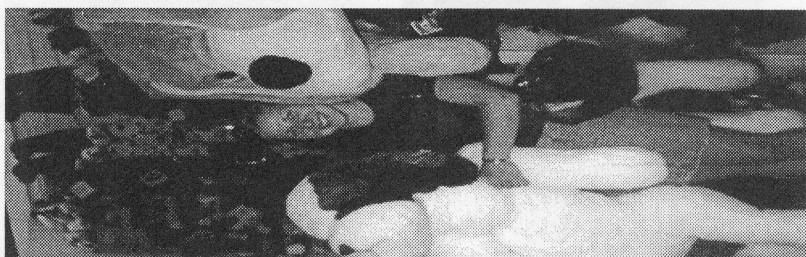


Delerium
'Karma'
(Nettwerk)

4

Dark ambience meets modern electronic and techno. Built around the female voice, the tracks on this spellbinding album are hauntingly eerie. The melodies are subtle and filtered but with singers such as Sarah McLachlan and Kirsty Thirsk featured, amongst others, the crisp vocals add that perfect touch. Tracks included on the album include the massive 'Silence' and 'Enchanted'. You get two CDs for your money, the second including dance remixes and other rare material. Out now.

East West Connection

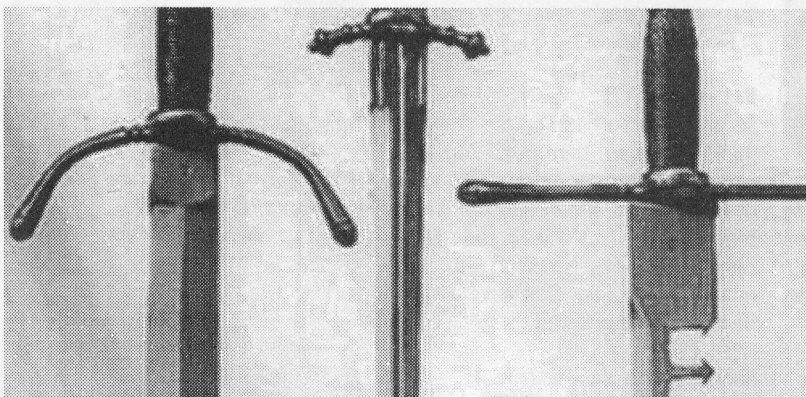


East West Connection
'The More I Get.....'
(Chilli Funk)

1

By taking the combination of two of London's best loved underground DJs, and the musical mastery of ex-Brand New Heavy Neil Cowley, this album fuses together the 'in' influences of jazz, funk and soul. Sadly, the album is let down by the lack of variation and as you're listening to it, you get the feeling that no effort has been made to define each song - they all sound the same. The vocals are alright, but there are plenty of other albums out there that use the same genres but to much better effect. This actually sounds like a Brand New Heavy album - there's a surprise! Out now.

React Presents...



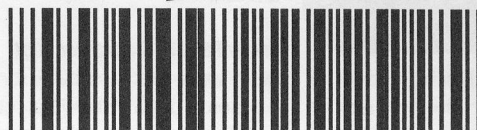
React Presents....
'Sharp Vs Sharp'
(React)

4

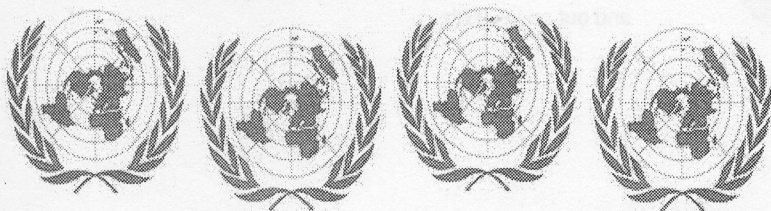
The Sharp Boys are resident DJs at the legendary Heaven in London every Saturday (though whether Heaven remains is now open to debate), where they spin their unique blend of US house and garage to maximum effect on the hallowed one and two's. With this double CD release the album brings the very best party sounds of the summer, using tracks from their own label such as Sara Parker's 'My Love Is Deep' and also tracks which the Sharp boys have remixed such as Cevin Fisher's 'The Freaks Come Out'. Mixing US house and garage together, the album takes you through a musical journey and is essential summer listening.

clubscene

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Botchitt & Scarper



Botchitt & Scarper Presents...
'United Breaks Nation'
(B&S)

5

A collection of the very best breakbeat music currently causing mayhem on the dancefloors. The album demonstrates the immense variety of music on this superb label, showing that anything goes - so long as it's good. Influences come from across the spectrum with drum and bass, funk, techno, soul, jazz - the lot. Artists featured on this awesome album include Fatboy slim, T-Power, Orange Kush and FreQ. Nasty. It's a brilliant album, with so much variation that you're literally spoilt for choice. Out on July 12th.

Clubbers Guide to Ibiza



Clubbers Guide to Ibiza
Ministry of Sound
MOS

4

This is the album for you if you if Ibiza is your destination this summer. As well as comintaining two cds of the most bangin' tunes this side of heaven MOS have very kindly provided a pocket guide to Ibiza which could well save many a clueless clubbers night when wondering what to do with themselves.

But the music is obviously the most important thing here. Quality is here in bucket loads with several of the likely top tunes of the summer. Among others we have **ATB - 9pm (Till I Come)** and **The Olmec Heads - Spiritualised**.

The mix is crisp and funky throughout which is only what I would expect from such an esteemed establishment, but it is nice none the less. Judge Jules does himself proud again!

All in all a great compilation to last you through the summer - and a flavour of Ibiza if you aren't lucky enough to be going.

Helden vs. Slim

Fatboy Slim vs. Armen Van Helden
London Brixton Academy
11/6/99

What a night. WHAT a night. I have never been to the Academy before and this was a great night to begin on. For all those who havn't been lucky enough to go I think it is a converted theatre complete with stupidly hig ceilings. Skint had done a great job of fitting the place up to look like a proper boxing match - complete with a rotating (!) ring and a cheesy american sounding ref with all the classic booming commentaries.

The rules were explained to the crowd : one hour of solo mixing each and then a 3 hour mix off...

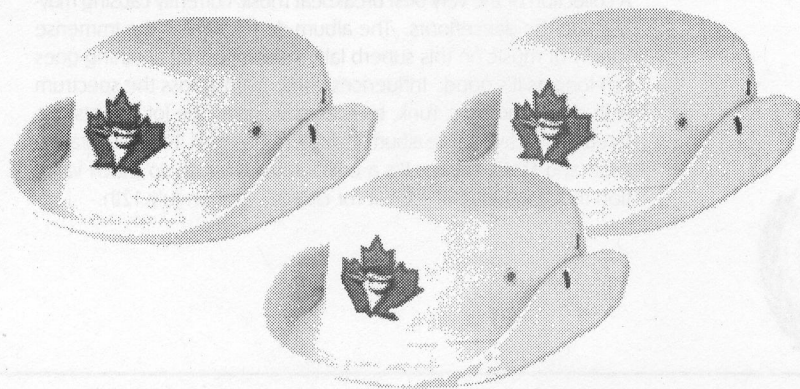
Put it like this - 3 days after the event my ears are still ringing - quite frankly it was a bass fest! Nice. All in all the home crowd were behind fatboy all the way (unsurprisingly) but I thing Van Helden one over many recruits to the more hip hop side of things with some classic tracks from Public Enemy number one and even a couple a fatboy slim numbers!

Fatboy Slim triumphant - but Van Helden did the US proud.





The 3 Jays

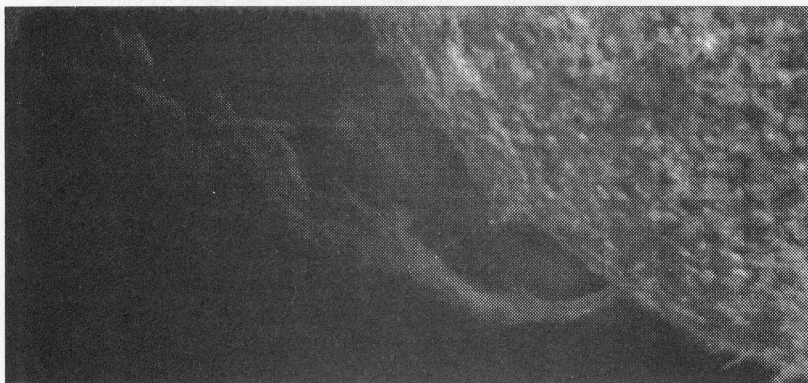


The 3 Jays
'Feeling It Too'
(Multiply)

5

Multiply release this massive disco house tune for the summer and they just cannot do anything wrong. The single features cool, crisp vocals and an unbelievably addictive beat. Causing uproar on dancefloors across the nation, the single comes with remixes courtesy of Phats & Small and the Lisa Maria Experience. Massive tune and out on July 12th.

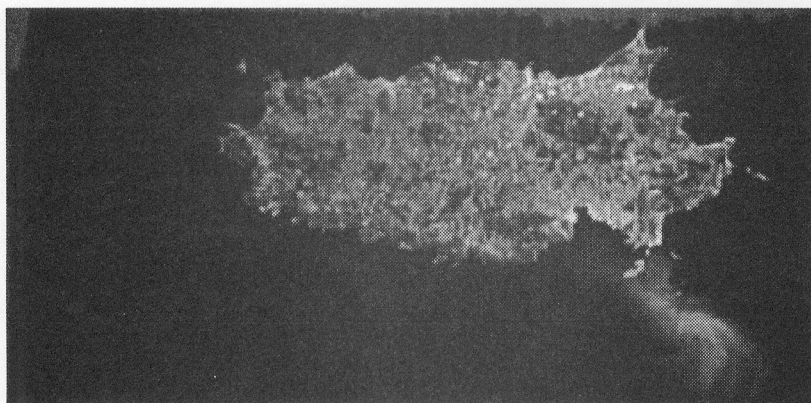
Summer Tunes



With so many massive tunes coming out over the summer, here's Gurm's guide to the tracks that will be massive this summer and not just in Ibiza either (In no order - apart from ATB):

1. ATB - 9pm (Till I Come) THE tune of the summer and of '99
2. Blockster - Grooveline
3. Sasha - Xpander EP
4. Chicane - Saltwater
5. Alice DeeJay - Better Off Alone
6. Chemical Brothers - Hey Boy, Hey Girl
7. Basement Jaxx - Rendezvous (Their album is fucking excellent)
8. The 3 Jays - Feeling It Too
9. Perfecto/ Grace - Not Over '99
10. Powerhouse/ Duane Harden - What You Need
11. The Olmec Heads - Spiritualised

Ibiza Picks



The top residences in Ibiza this summer are:

Friday - Ministry of Sound at Pacha
Friday - Freedom at Es Paradis

Saturday - Trade at Space

Monday - Manusmission at Privilege (Ku)
Monday - Chic at El Divino

Tuesday - Miss MoneyPenny's at El Divino
Tuesday - Gods Mitchen at Pacha

Wednesday - Renaissance at Pacha
Wednesday - Clockwork Orange at Es Paradis

Thursday - Cream at Amnesia

clubscene

コウイ キニリイト!





Staying in London this Summer?

What's on in and around the capital, plus sports highlights

	Cinema	Theatre & Arts	Sporting Fixtures	Events
26 June - 2 July	The Mummy	Pride & Prejudice: Museum of London (from 2)	Thurs 1: Eng v NZ 1st Test begins Sun 27: French GP Tennis: Wimbledon	2-4 Bracknell Festival , South Hill Park, Bracknell Sun 4: Party In the Park , Hyde Park
3 July - 9 July	Entrapment	Sun 4: London Symphony Orchestra @ The Barbican Tue 6: L&G debate, MoL	Tennis: Wimbledon Cycling: Tour de France Henley Regatta (till 4) World Student Games	Wed 7: Minority Ethnic Graduate Careers Fair for Government Depts 0171 978 9488
10 July - 16 July	10 Things I Hate About You	The Backroom @ The Bush Theatre (from 14) 14-15: Free Jazz @ Royal National Theatre	Golf: The Open Sun 11: British GP	Sat 10: Fleadh Festival , Finsbury Park Sun 11: Gulfin Ambient Picnic , Guildford
17 July - 23 July	Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace	Sun 18: Asian Dub Foundation @ The Barbican Joseph Beuys Drawings @ The RA of Arts from 22	Thurs 22: Eng v NZ 2nd Test begins (Lord's) Golf: The Open (till 18) Cycling: Tour de France	23-25: Guildford Festival Sun 18: Adams Antiques Fair - 0171 254 4054
24 July - 30 July	Few films will be released this week	Terence Donovan exhibit @ Museum of London (till 1 Aug)	Cycling: Tour de France (till 25) Sun 25: Austrian GP	Sun 25: Out of Asia , Victoria Embankment Gdns 20 - 2: Royal Tournament , Earls Court
31 July - 6 Aug	Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me	Free music @ The Royal National Theatre Watercolour 21st Century (till 15)	Thurs 5: Eng v NZ 3rd Test begins Sun 1: German GP	Sat 31 - Sun 1: Sunsplash , Victoria Park Great British Beer Festival
7 Aug - 13 Aug	Life	BBC Proms (till 11 Sept) @ Royal Albert Hall Bomb to the Beatles: Imperial War Museum	Golf: US PGA (from 12)	Tues 10 - Wed 11: RHS Flower Show, Vincent Square
14 Aug - 20 Aug	Wild Wild West	Royal Academy Exhibition (till 22) Designing in the Digital Age (V&A)	Thurs 19: Eng v NZ 4th Test begins (The Oval) Golf: US PGA (till 15) Sun 15: Hungarian GP	
21 Aug - 27 Aug	The Thomas Crown Affair	Wed 25: Book bonanza @ Museum of London		
28 Aug - 3 Sept	Analyze This	Rembrandt by Himself, National Gallery (till 5 Sept) Beckett Festival, Barbican	Sun 29: NatWest Trophy Final (Lord's) Sun 29: Belgian GP	Sun 29 & Mon 30: Notting Hill Carnival
4 Sept - 10 Sept	The General's Daughter	10-11: The John Williams Trio, Free @ Royal National Theatre	Sat 4: England v Luxembourg, Bosnia v Scotland Sat 8: Poland v England, Estonia v Scotland	
11 Sept - 17 Sept	Ed TV	Sir John Soane @ The RA of Arts (from 11) Globe Theatre Exhibition (till 26)	Tennis: US Open (till 12) Sat 11: IAAF Golden League final Sun 12: Italian GP	
18 Sept - 24 Sept	Eyes Wide Shut	Icons of Pop, National Portrait Gallery (till 19)	Golf: Ryder Cup (24-26)	



1999: Summer of Sport

CRICKET

Time for a bit of Kiwi bashing

After a dismal performance in the World Cup, England will be looking to bounce back against surprise semi-finalists New Zealand in the four-match Test series this summer.

Definitely with a new coach (probably Glamorgan coach Duncan Fletcher) and possibly with a new captain (Nasser Hussain or Mark Ramprakash), England need to put up a good showing against of the only 2 (out of 8 others) test sides that can be classed below them.

When you look at the team that is actually available, it is hard to see how they could have done so badly in the World Cup.

Look for Alan Mullally, Darren Gough and Alex Tudor to lead the bowling, and Graham Thorpe, Mark Ramprakash and Mark Butcher the batting. The selectors need to find another opener if Mike Atherton's back hasn't healed, and they need to decide whether they want to use Ben Hollis, or Andrew Flintoff or neither as

the number 6/allrounder position.

Alec Stewart probably won't be keeping any more, so expect either Paul Nixon (Leics) or prospect Chris Read (Notts) to be behind the stumps.

With regard to New Zealand, they have a good bowling attack with the hostile Simon Doull, the World Cup's leading wicket taker Geoff Allot, and young left arm spinner Daniel Vettori (think milkybar kid - that's who he looks like).

There batting, however, is much weaker. Only captain Stephen Fleming is really up to international standard, all though ex-Warwickshire Roger Twose may make his mark back in England.

Hopefully though England supporters should have something to smile about - before the winter in South Africa...

Key Dates:

July 1-5: 1st Test, Edgbaston
July 22-26: 2nd Test, Lord's
August 5-9: 3rd Test, Old Trafford
August 19-23: 4th Test, The Oval

FOOTBALL

Kev's scramble for Euro 2000

After despterly dull performances by England against the likes of Sweden and lowly Bulgaria, Kevin Keegan needs to prove why he was worth prising away from Mohammed Al-Fayed and Fulham.

Admittedly he did not have a full squad at the end of a long English season, but the performance needs to be lifted significantly if England are to win in Poland in September.

Hopefully by that stage they will have a convincing win against Luxembourg under the belts. England need to win against Poland to make sure they can get through to the playoffs. So even then they don't guarantee qualification. Admittedly you cannot blame Keegan entirely because the qualification process started under the then slightly mad Glenn Hoddle and was far too soon after the end of the World Cup.

If Keegan has a full squad available, then the potential lineup could

theoretically be good enough to beat anyone. The trick is Keegan needs to recapture the spirit and attacking ability of the Newcastle United from a few years back (Remember them? They were really exciting and then Kenny Dalglish took over). If he can do that then Seaman, Southgate, Adams and Campbell can take care of the defence.

Euro 2000 qualification should still be a realistic possibility for England and questions must be asked if they don't qualify.

The same cannot be said of Scotland, who, after drawing with the Faroe Islands (the Faroe Islands?!?!), will be hard pushed to qualify. Not that it would matter - we all know they would go out in the first round if they did qualify....

Key dates:

4 Sept: England v Luxembourg; Bosnia v Scotland;
8: Poland v England; Estonia v Scotland

MOTOR RACING

Ferrari v McClaren - again

We are midway through the formula one season, and already it looks like being the same race as last year - Ferrari versus McClaren.

But this writer isn't complaining, especially if we get a race as exciting as the one in Canada 10 days or so ago. It once again comes down to who has the more reliable, better machine, as always. The Ferrari is getting better all the time and it looks a tough ask for McClaren to keep up. But every time that McClaren look like they're falling behind, they catch up again.

I can't really see which way this race is going to go, but I know that I'll be watching. Especially the start at Belgium, after last years pile-up.

There is something quite satisfying about seeing a dozen or so multi million pound cars get trashed....

Look for recent retiree Damon Hill to try and go out with a bang - rather than a whimper.

Key dates:

See box on p49

TENNIS

Catch the Beeb's only sport

People interested in tennis all of a sudden? It must be Wimbledon (which kicked off on Monday), the two weeks of the year when everyone suddenly remembers what tennis is.

Tim Henman is the British hope in the men's, which may be won by Pete Sampras (again). Greg Rusedski may put up a challenge, but I can't see him winning it. Look for Henman to crash and burn in the semis

In the women's bad loser Martina Hingis will probably be the favourite, but she will have to watch out for Steffi Graf, who appears to be having somewhat of a renaissance, the Williams sisters and Anna Kornakova, amongst others.

All that's left of sport on the BBC. Watch it before it goes too.

Oh yes and the US Open - just re-read the above...

Key Dates:

June 20 - July 5: Wimbledon
August 30 - Sept. 12: US Open

GOLF

Europe goes for hattrick

Just before the beginning of term is the biggest event in golf - the biannual Ryder Cup. Europe will be going for a third successive win, having successfully defended the cup in Valderama last time.

Nick Faldo will probably not be in the team, but Europe still has a strong lineup with players such as Colin Montgomerie, Lee Westwood and Darren Clarke.

The Americans, however, are just as strong with Justin Lenoard, Tom Lehman and Tiger Woods. It ought to be a tight and enthralling contest (rare for golf), but you'll need a dish to watch it.

Before then there are the last two majors of the year (the US Open finished on Sunday), in which Colin Montgomerie will probably choke - again.

Key Dates:

July 15-18 The Open (Carnoustie)
August 12-15 US PGA (Medinah)
Sept. 24-26: Ryder Cup (Brookline)

CYCLING

Le Tour fights back

Last year the rider doping scandal ruined the Tour de France, and ended the careers of several high profile riders. The fact that it took so long to uncover the fact that doping went on is what is surprising, and in the process the magic of the gruelling nature of the Tour has been shattered. No longer will people assume that the blokes who can ride 200 miles a day for three weeks are top class athletes with outstanding ability, but the majority seem to be just that.

In the mess that became last year's Tour de France, people tend to forget that Marco Pantani became the first man to win both the Tour and the Giro (Tour of Italy) in the same year. The ability of the man to climb mountains on a bike has to be seen to be believed. Cycling is more watchable on TV than you'd think. Catch some of the Tour on Eurosport with their excellent commentator, David Duffield.

Key Dates:

July 3-25 Tour de France

1998/99: Year of Imperial

Imperial proves that in 98-99, it was the capital's best

Well, that's it. Another year in the book. We all get a year older and some of you leave. Shit happens and then you die. But look at the column to the left and if you are involved with sport at IC, you should be proud. The fact that we manage to be the number two university in the country and still be so good at sport is a testament to the ability of people at this college.

Right now I've got my corny pat-on-the-back speech out of the way, I'd just like to say how much I have enjoyed this year. I realise these pages haven't always been the most exciting, or the prettiest pages in Felix, but I'd like to think they have got better as the year has gone on. I'll probably be back next year (sorry), but something I would like to see is more reporters and writers, and more reports that concentrate on the matches rather than what happened on the bus on the way there. Thanks to all those who wrote anything for the sports pages this year.

There may even be an IC sports personality of the year. Of course the ballot will be rigged. See you next year

Gus

Men's Football

ULU Premier League winners
ULU First Division Winners (ICSM)
ULU Cup Winners
UH Cup Winners (ICSM)

Fencing

BUSA Champions

Volleyball

BUSA Runner's-up

Men's Rugby

Gutteridge Cup Winners
UH Cup Winners (ICSM)
BUSA Southern Premiership Champions (ICSM)

Ladies Rugby

ULU League Winners

ULU Cup winners

Athletics

ULU Competition Winners

Men's Hockey

ULU League Winners

ULU Cup Winners

UH Cup Winners (ICSM)

ULU Reserve Cup Winners

Ladies Hockey

ULU Cup Winners (ICSM)

Basketball

UL Cup Runners Up

Summer Sports Diary

JUNE

17-20: US Golf Open (Pinehurst)
19-20: European Athletics Cup (Paris)
20: Cricket World Cup Final (Lord's)
21-July 4: Wimbledon
27: French GP (Magny-Cours)
30-July 4: Henley Royal Regatta

JULY

1-5: England v New Zealand, 1st Test (Edgbaston)
3-25: Tour de France
8-13: World Student Games (Palma, Majorca)
11: British GP (Silverstone)
15-18: The Open (Carnoustie)
16-18: Nat'l Rowing Ch'ships (Holme Pierrepont)
22-26: England v New Zealand, 2nd Test (Lord's)
25: Austrian GP (A1-Ring)

AUGUST

1: German GP (Hockenheim)
5-9: England v New Zealand, 3rd Test (Old Trafford)

12-15: US PGA (Medinah)

15: Hungarian GP (Hungaroring)
19-23: England v New Zealand, 4th Test (Oval)
22-29: World Rowing Ch'ships (St Catherine's, Canada)
29: NatWest Trophy final (Lord's)
29: Belgian GP (Spa-Francorchamps)
30-Sept 12: US Lawn Tennis Open (New York)

SEPTEMBER

4: Euro 2000 qualifiers: England v Luxembourg; Bosnia Herzegovina v Scotland;
8: Euro 2000 qualifiers: Poland v England; Estonia v Scotland;
11: IAAF Golden Lge final (Munich)
11-12: Walker Cup (Nairn)
12: Italian GP (Monza)
24-26: Ryder Cup (The Country Club, Brookline)
26: European GP (Nurburgring)
27-Oct 3: Grand Slam Cup (Munich)
Oct 2: Term begins

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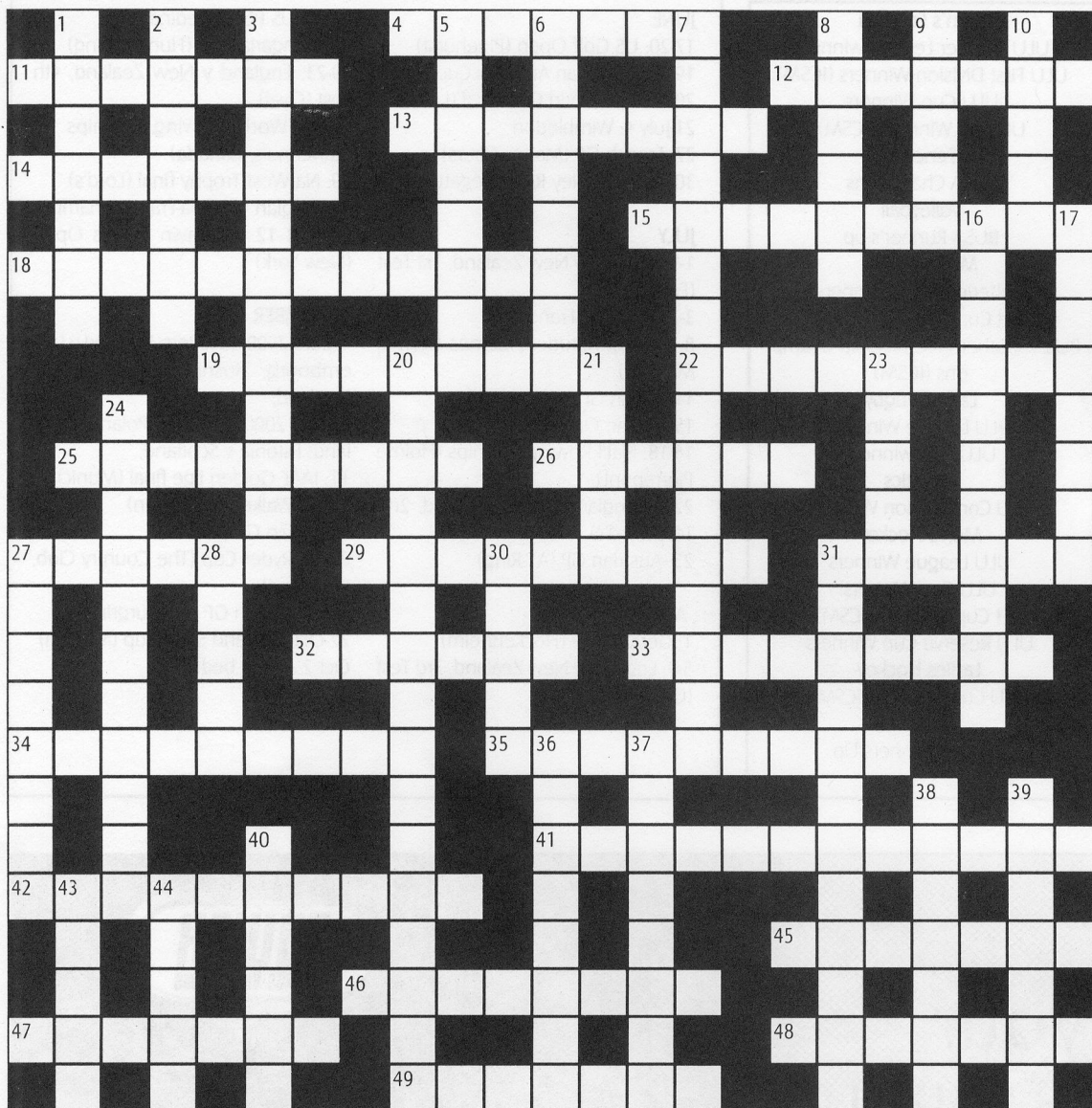
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Across

- 4 Final dividing line? (7)
 11 Works usually require four movements (7)
 12 Wave initially to sun and then miss aim (7)
 13 Repts back without fabric, making fracture (8)
 14 Ceylon pastry? (7)
 15 H... h... is the answer (10)
 18 Capital bonds? (6,6)
 19 I am reduced to awaiting decision about to happen (9)
 22 Person who takes tuned clarinets (9)
 25 Perhaps scary aunt seeks refuge (9)
 26 Call for repeat in French centre (6)
 27 Old man sounds like spring? (6)
 29 Cutter ruins washed-up derelict (9)
 31 Trophy in setback if stick taken from chicane at start (6)
 32 Feed expert, then edit it badly with lan (6)
 33 Unreal coital fin, perhaps (9)
 34 Dance with significance? Use it to write answer! (4-5)
 35 Make assertions that pet is initially engaged around mat (9)
 41 Then rum trail confused theologian (6,6)
 42 Super cooked meal, sir, for the subconscious (10)
 45 Saint blemished when mixed-up with Ed (7)
 46 Retired with hat and drink (8)
 47 Drainpipe gas used to conceal horse (7)
 48 A red van in trouble alongside house (7)
 49 Green French sea surrounded by nasty metal (7)

Down

- 1 Dig out small dome with weariness (7)
 2 Case surrounding scoundrel falls (7)
 3 Station difficult regiment where one pays (7-5)
 5 Cheap pen dedication added in concealment (8)
 6 Prime set of loaves (8)
 7 Ceramic obstacle? (5,4,2,5)
 8 Forgot to mention donations for songs (6)
 9 Irritate girl when the French lost, ending with eighteen (5)
 10 Morning gent in Jordan (5)
 16 Diana, once in trouble, reveals water (6,5)
 17 Half give FT to cover fancy paper (4,4)
 20 Point oar shipment, perhaps, to region of England (16)
 21 Moved right and lost (5)
 23 Concluding words sound like messenger (5)
 24 Transparent painting? (11)
 27 Farewells for excellent runs? (8)
 28 Prepare Ed's first clever saying (5)
 30 Quietly guide and beg (5)
 31 Someone who quibbles about mop ripping (4-8)
 36 Measured resistance from them; more trouble! (8)
 37 Draw up left-plan for financial aid (8)
 38 Chalet I built upright (7)
 39 Mythical inscriptions (7)
 40 Support reverse (6)
 43 Dude used right to source of milk (5)
 44 Greek letter-chap loses head initially concerning city (5)

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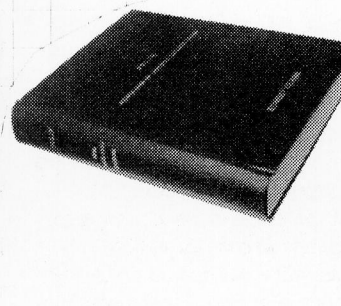
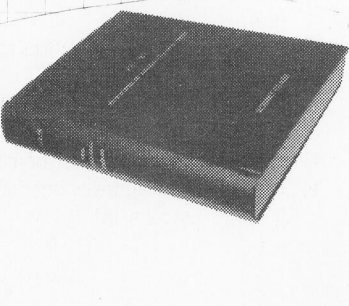
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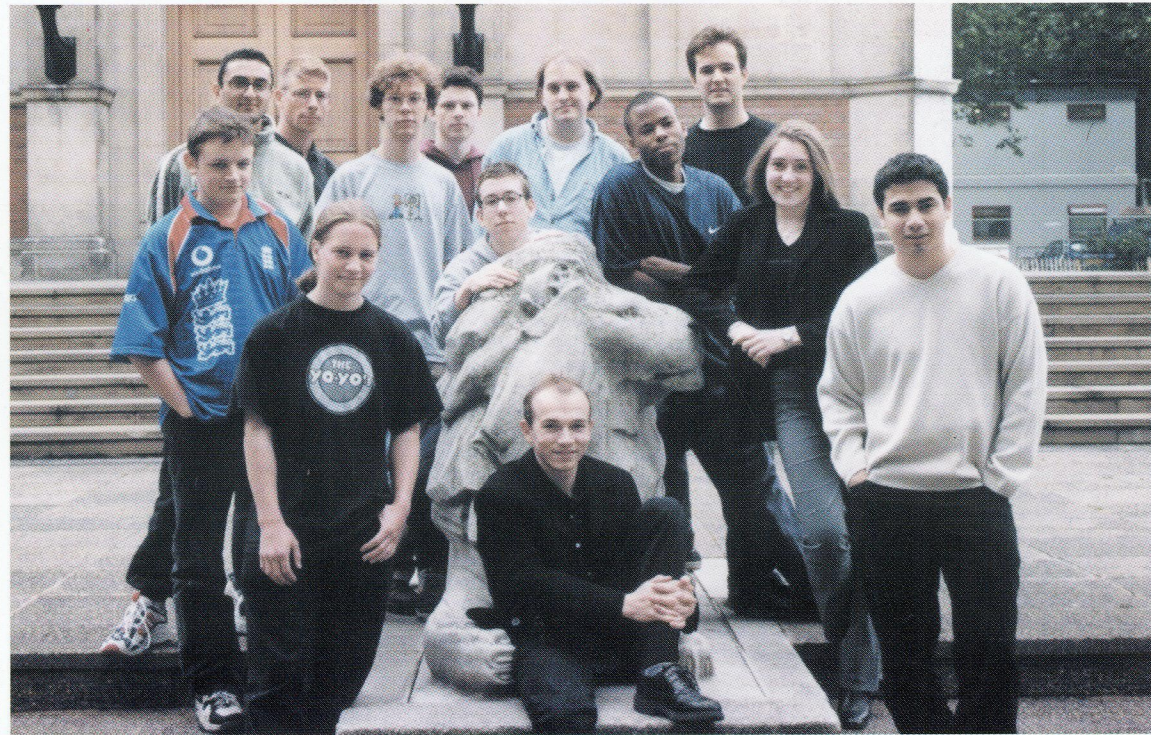
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FELIX 98-99



Some of the people who have helped produce Felix this year; going clockwise from the bottom;

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Significant others not pictured;

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