



Transforming transport

All the latest news from the Square Mile, page 3



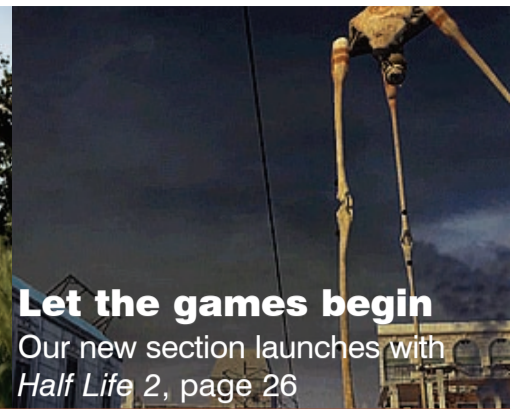
Discovering Titan

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Regal rock

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Our new section launches with Half Life 2, page 26



Felix



The student newspaper of Imperial College ● Established 1949 ● Issue 1309 ● Thursday 9 December 2004 ● www.felixonline.co.uk

On your bike

Why travelling by good old-fashioned push-bike is beneficial to you and the environment.

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Lots of letters

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Brilliant band

The Imperial College Big Band take the gold award at the National Concert Band Festival.

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RSM to Radio 1

Felix invites Ian Betts back to College to find out how an Imperial graduate has become one of the most talked about names on the London trance scene.

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The best of 2004

Our esteemed film editor chooses his top five movies of the year. Plus competitions and reviews of three of the week's new releases.

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This is the last Felix of term. The next issue is published on Thursday 6 January 2005

Merry Christmas to all our readers

Exam anguish as students suffer ill effects of short Christmas break

By Dave Edwards
Editor

Fourth year aeronautics students face the difficult prospect of having only the two-week Christmas break to revise for their final exams.

Due to timetabling issues and the way this year's College term dates have been arranged, they will have to spend the entire 'festive' season revising for five or six 20-lecture courses.

Stephen Message, a fourth year student in aeronautics, told Felix: "It's absolutely crazy for revision time to be this short. I don't know how they can honestly say that we can revise for six 20-lecture courses in two weeks."

Lectures run up until the end of this term, on Friday 17 December, and the first exam is scheduled for Tuesday 4 January, the first day of the new term.

Mr Message said: "We're

not asking for anything that hasn't been given in the past," adding that in previous years three or more weeks have been available for revision before the fourth year finals.

Professor Richard Hillier, head of the aeronautics department, said that he had "enormous sympathy about the need for revision time" but believed that two weeks was "a realistic timescale" in which students should be

able to learn the information required.

Prof Hillier added that "the only realistic option is to move the exams back by two days", but even this may not be possible due to students attending job interviews and the fact that the exams are shared with third year students who start projects almost immediately afterwards.

Sam Wolfenden, the fourth year aeronautics department

representative, told Felix: "Let this be a lesson for future years of the importance of forward planning, for both the aeronautics department and the College."

"The general consensus is that we have been given a highly stressful and unfair task at a pivotal stage of our degree, which could have been avoided in the first place at the cost of just a little extra timetable planning and thought."



On the road again

Bo', the 102-year-old motorised mascot of the City & Guilds College Union, made the journey from London to Dartmoor. Report: page 12

NHS set to waste £20bn, says Imperial professor's report

By Dave Edwards

£20bn per year will be wasted on the National Health Service (NHS) by 2010, according to a report by Nick Bosanquet, Professor of Health Policy at Imperial College.

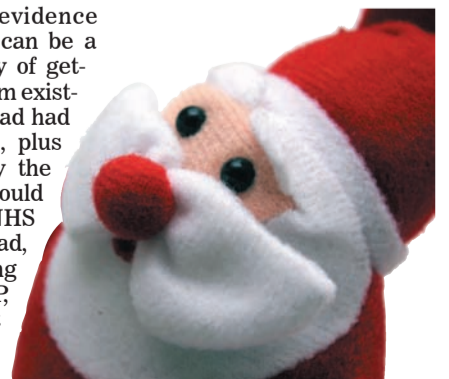
According to The Times, the report concludes that the NHS is improving, but at a high and unnecessary cost. It finds that a reformed service could have been provided for around £90bn per year, instead of the £110bn that is likely to be spent by 2010.

Prof Bosanquet said: "International evidence shows that reform can be a pretty powerful way of getting more output from existing capacity. If we had had limited extra funds, plus reforms in the way the system works, we could have had a superb NHS for 9% of GDP. Instead, we shall be spending 10.5 to 11% of GDP, an extra £20bn. That would be enough to fund the entire

social housing programme."

The report said that a good example of reform could be seen in accident and emergency departments, which have been given only an extra £30m per year but have greatly improved waiting times by changing working practices.

Prof Bosanquet has a long track record of healthcare analysis, having advised the Health Select Committee and the World Health Organisation. The report was published by the think tank Reform.



Felix

Issue 1309

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The Comedy Network presents Triple Perrier Award Nominee Dan Antopolski

Since winning the BBC New Comedy Award in 1998, Dan Antopolski has quickly built himself a reputation for being one of the most inventive, intelligent, edgy and unusual comics to emerge in years. Dan's quick witted mind and surreal flights of fancy have delighted both critics and comedy audiences alike. His Perrier Award nomination at the Edinburgh Festival 2001 followed a Perrier Best Newcomer Award nomination in 2000, and he also received critical acclaim for his part in the Perrier Award nominated Lee Mack's New Bits at the Edinburgh Festival 2000.

Dan's other television credits include appearances on two series of The Stand Up Show (BBC1), How To Survive (BBC Choice), Cherry Pop (UK Play) and The Perrier Awards (Channel 4). He recently travelled to Melbourne to appear in The World Comedy Series, which will be screened on The Paramount Comedy Channel in the UK.

"Clever, observant and a slightly rude comedian. Three times Perrier Award Nominee and a member of The Dinks, a comedy trio. 'One step beyond the best of the mainstream.'" - The Times

"Undeniably the most imaginative comedian on display" - Time Out

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NEWS

Brown and the budget

How the national press reacted to the Chancellor's pre-budget report

By Emily Gwyer

This week saw the announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, of his plans for the next year in the pre-budget report. This might seem a bit dry, but it sets out the way that the Labour party will run the country for the next year, and as this is an election year, possibly the next four years as well. The Budget report was very political indeed this year, which hints that Labour will be using the economy as the centre of their general election campaign.

The pre-budget report was widely described as being unexciting, focusing as it did on causes that nobody could moan about. *The Telegraph* did, admittedly, have a go, but it was a bit half-hearted: "If this is the man who is likely to personify Labour's next incarnation in power, it is vital to know what he proposes to do with the national wealth whose growth he believes is his achievement. Yesterday, he gave a clear and ringing answer to that question: he intends to spend it."

The most important ideas

that the Chancellor put forward were all based on the family: to increase paid maternity leave to nine months, to extend nursery places and the Sure Start scheme, and to give single parents an extra £40 per week if they go back to work. All very voter-friendly.

The Sun described the Chancellor as "spraying £50 notes at babies, mums and dads" - nothing to complain about there, you would think.

The proposals are also, however, really rather expensive. This surprised a lot of people who were expected some sort of mention of the fact that the economy appears to be downturning, and that Brown might not meet his famous but strict self-imposed Golden Rule - that spending matches investment over the electoral cycle. But those commentators had obviously forgotten that this is an election year and therefore all facts which are not 100% positive and spinnable for the Government are brushed under the carpet. In addition, it was pointed out that the fact that this is an election year means that this is a very short parliamentary session and therefore many

of these bills have no chance of becoming law before the House is closed for the election. Basically, he could say whatever he wanted.

The Financial Times also warned that the chances of tax rises after the election are high, and *The Observer* pointed out that Brown is nearly always right, unlike his "self-righteous and nearly permanently wrong critics".

The proposals were very popular, however, and very Brownite in their focus on family policies and away from the law, order and terrorism cocktail that had been the Queen's Speech a week before. This excited a lot of commentators into thinking that this was Brown's manifesto and he was going to set out his stall for the leadership of the Labour party.

Perhaps they are being a bit premature, but it does appear that Brown will have to do something soon, seeing as Blair has declared that he would like to serve throughout the entire (four year) term. So it may be that we see some action from Brown before the election, if he believes that it may be his only chance.



The Sun described the Chancellor as "spraying £50 notes at babies, mums and dads"

Business

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Latest from the Square Mile

From Ukraine to the heart of London, **Numaan Chaudhry** has it covered

Viktor vetoed

Tens of thousands of Ukrainians rejoiced at the overruling decision by Ukraine's supreme court last Friday to dismiss last week's elections.

Instead, the court declared December 26 the date for the re-vote, thus putting Viktor Yanukovich, who will from hereon be referred to as Yank, and Viktor Yushchenko, who will be referred to as Yush, back into the ring for the presidency.

Yush hailed the court's ruling as a triumph over Yank's attempt to crush democratic power by rigging the elections. The previous president, Leonid Kuchma, was intent on restarting the entire election from scratch in an attempt to bring someone into the contest alongside Yush and Yank.

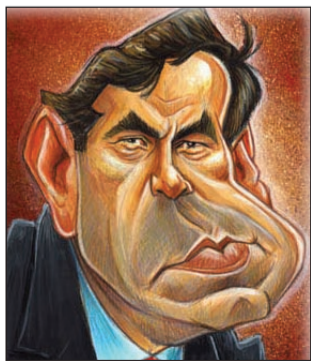
Vladimir Putin, the billionaire Russian prime minister, offered no reaction to the news as he hid his fury behind a veil of adjectives aimed implicitly at the US, the driving force behind the re-elections. Putin had backed Yank from the start of his campaign and the judgment was seen as a blow to their mutual relationship.

Dollar makes U-turn

Last week saw the dollar slip to a meagre 1.34 against the euro, 101.9 against the yen and a 1.94 against the pound sterling. The fact that crude oil prices have dropped to \$44 from their record high of \$55 in September was a crucial factor in uplifting the US trade deficit and hence the dollar currency.

Although there's no reason to believe that this drop should continue, since OPEC is trying frantically to slow supplies and build inventories, oil's volatility could dictate otherwise.

The zloty also looked stronger than ever. Despite sounding like a south Australian kangaroo, the Polish cur-



Gordon Brown seemed happy with his annual PBR on Friday last



The beginning of a long mission: Transport for London prepares itself for a 30-year transformation of its infrastructure

rency actually hopped to a new high of 4.16 against the euro. Polish prime minister Marek Belka last week raised doubts about the zloty's ability to sustain its levels.

TfL - Red Alert

Brace yourselves (no pun intended) for Transport for London's (TfL) latest initiative. A £200m new bond issue is to be sold in a bid to improve our capital's transport infrastructure. The bond, due to mature in 2034, will be sold at a spread of 0.5 over UK gilts, the standard priced government bond.

The 0.5 spread has been criticised as low, considering the double-A rating carried by TfL and the relatively poor infrastructure of the transport network.

CSFB eliminates 'duplicates'

Credit Suisse First Boston, the subsidiary of Swedish giant Credit Suisse, outlined plans earlier this week to remove certain divisions within its global operation in order to harness its growing losses. Among these, equity research and securities origination are notorious for reproducing work of the same nature.

Equity research consists of a bunch of specialists, normally in an industry sector, region or product group, who advise potential clients on which equities, or shares, to invest in.

Securities origination gurus structure securities, a form of collateral, and try to win over business by proving the

advantage of their structured products over the competitors.

Clearly, CSFB has two options: get rid of one unit or combine them. It goes without saying that if you're applying to either of these areas for an internship (it's now too late for full time), you should reconsider your options.

"I'm a multi-tied independent adviser"

This is the statement many thousands of financial products specialists will be forced to rant daily after new rules were introduced on Wednesday last week.

The new legislation demands that distributors of special services, including unit trusts and pensions, will need to declare themselves

as free from any outside pressures and be knowledgeable in all of the various types of public and private investment categories. This 'depolarisation' from any specific type of service should give the customer a better selection of products to choose from.

You can do it...

If you put your back into it! Ice Cube's response to Gordon Brown's pre-budget report sums up my feelings exactly. By 'putting your back into it', you could be entitled up to nine months off work, according to Brown's plans to increase paid maternity leave.

Although this will form regulation at the beginning of next year, small businesses are already starting to grum-

ble at the anticipated time and money lost through the scheme. To make things worse, or better as the case may be, children at the age of seven will receive an additional £250 funding by the government, on top of the £250 given to newborns. If that's not enough to get you moving, £1720 is up for grabs when claiming child tax credit, for those whose income falls short of £13,000.

Christmas boom expected

The Santa Claus rally is the term coined for the traditional rise of stocks across the board. Ask any expert and they'll tell you that Christmas is the best time for investing. I concur. From an influx of retirement money to pension managers trying to boost their performance, all contribute to rising stock prices. If you haven't got the message... invest now!

Lazard IPO delayed

Lazard, one of the most prestigious, renowned and amazing (you can tell I love these guys) advisory services, has extended the ultimatum to Bruce Wasserstein as to when the firm is to go public. The IPO, which would value this beautiful organisation at \$1.6bn, would raise sufficient funds to extend its global reach and compete with the likes of Morgan Stanley, Merrill Lynch, Citigroup and JPMorgan.

Fishy findings

The Government made another blunder earlier this week by contradicting itself on its advice on fish consumption.

Apparently, because of the volume of fish consumed in the UK, depleting fishing grounds are becoming more common and we should reduce our intake to less than two portions a week. But Government health officials stated that we should eat at least two portions a week. Luckily, nothing was said about burger consumption, so this affects none of us.

Chaudhry's ratings

I foresee GlaxoSmithKline Beecham, who are anticipating approval for a new drug with the FDA, to jump in stock price. The drug supposedly eases intestinal pressure by preventing some fat getting absorbed in the blood stream.

Science

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This is Titan

In January 2005, the Huygens probe will attempt to land on the largest moon in the solar system. What it will find there remains a complete mystery to scientists.

David Osumi-Sutherland reports on the countdown to Titan

It's raining methane today. A dramatic storm is throwing up huge waves of methane that lash the ice cliffs. From out of the orange clouds descends a metal disc suspended from a large parachute. Inside the disc, sensors hum analyzing the chemical and physical properties of the atmosphere while cameras record the tumult below and the view out to the horizon. The disc approaches the ocean emitting a pulsing sound, sensors alert to echoes from the surface and the ocean's depths, before disappearing into the crashing surf.

Bad science fiction? Possibly. But it's also a plausible scenario for the Huygens mission to Saturn's moon Titan in January 2005. The basic elements – methane rain, a hydrocarbon ocean with huge waves, and cliffs of ice – were outlined by one of the British scientists involved in the mission, John Zarnecki of the Open University, during a press conference in London last June. They are all reasonable guesses based on the rather limited data available: Titan is certainly cold enough for methane and the other simple hydrocarbons present to be liquid and for water only to be present as ice. Zarnecki has even collaborated with oceanographers at Southampton to predict what waves would look like on a liquid methane ocean on Titan (big, apparently). On the other hand, some have noted that the same data are consistent with the less romantic sounding possibility of a surface coated in a thick,

oily sludge.

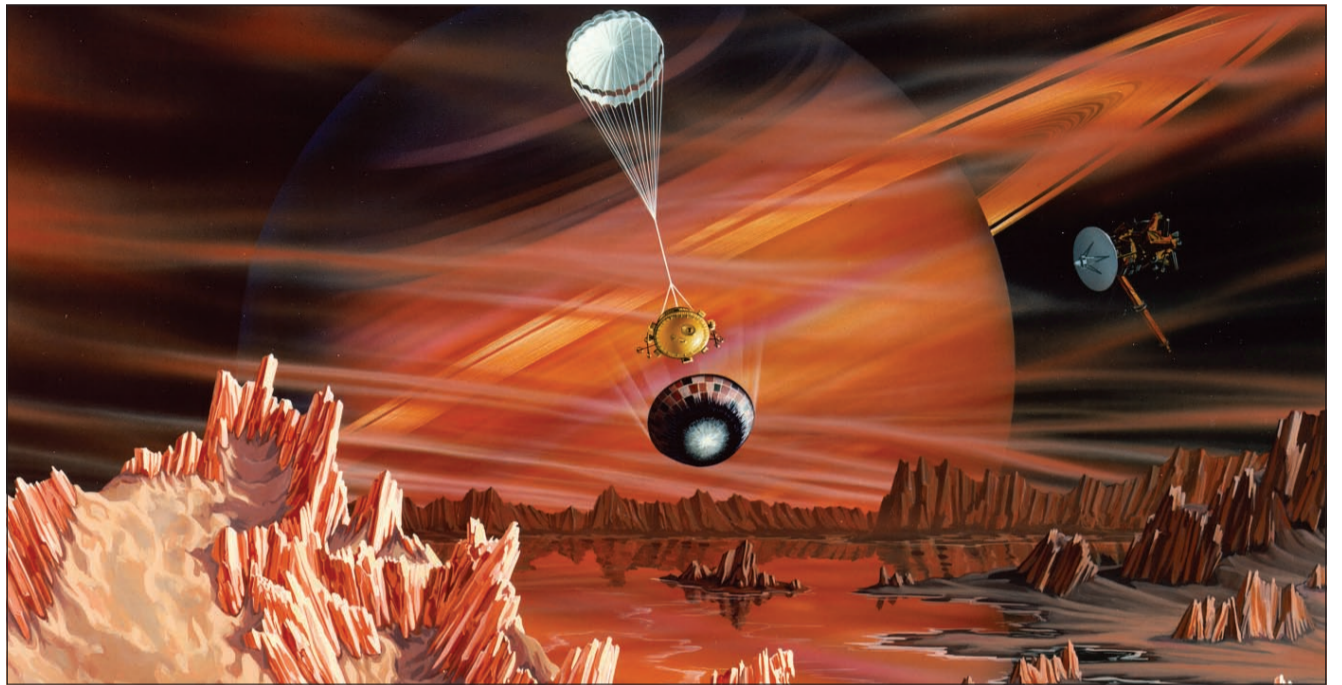
The truth is, Titan is one of the most mysterious objects in our solar system. It is permanently shrouded in a thick orange smog that, until last month's close encounter with the Saturn orbiter Cassini, has completely obscured the surface from human view. Cracking Titan's secrets may have wider implications for scientific knowledge than merely filling in a gap in our knowledge of the solar sys-

"The truth is that Titan is one of the most mysterious objects in our solar system. It is permanently shrouded in a thick orange smog..."

tem. Titan's atmosphere of nitrogen and hydrocarbons is intriguingly similar to that believed to have been present on the early earth. Perhaps studying Titan will give us a window on our own planet's past. While the extreme cold of the surface (a chilly -180°C) rules out the presence of 'life as we know it, Jim', the processes going on at the surface are anyone's guess right now.

The moment of truth. Friday 14 January 2005, 1.45pm, Germany:

A group of scientists from around the world are waiting nervously for news from Titan. If all is going well, Huygens will have just jettisoned its heat-shield, opened its first parachute and started to take pictures of the view from



Artist's impression: Saturn appears through the veil of Titan's thick atmosphere which is composed of mostly nitrogen and methane. The Huygens probe, having deployed its heat shield and parachute, hurtles towards the surface

around 160km above Titan's surface. Over the next two hours, as it descends to the surface, Huygens will beam back images and data from analyses of the atmosphere to its mothership, Cassini. If the probe survives hitting the surface, whatever that turns out to be, another set of sensors will rush through an analysis of what it has hit, sending back data as quick as they can, as no-one knows for how long the probe will survive. After that, the scientists back on earth face an agonising wait while Cassini turns and transmits this precious data home.

For many of the scientists waiting nervously in Germany, this will be the culmination of over ten years of work. For the past seven years, Huygens has piggybacked on the spacecraft Cassini's two billion mile trip through the solar system. Since July, Cassini has been orbiting Saturn, collecting data on that planet's famous rings, its moons and its magnet field. What nobody knew at the launch was that Huygens's transmitter had a flaw that could have killed its mission before it started. A routine test of this transmitter during the journey to Saturn revealed a fault that would have put the signal reaching Cassini from Huygens during its descent outside the frequency range Cassini could pick up. Fortunately the mission co-ordinators found a simple solution: they plan to re-route

Cassini during the transmission so that it recedes from Huygens more slowly than originally planned. This will reduce the Doppler effect (the same effect that causes the pitch of an ambulance siren to drop as it speeds away from you), raising the frequency of the signal being received by Cassini into the range it can detect.

Titan's atmosphere is both a blessing and a curse for the Huygens mission. Having a much thicker atmosphere than Mars makes slowing the probe easier than slowing a lander like Beagle II. As Beagle II spokesman Colin Pillinger puts it: "At least going into Titan, it is an atmosphere that is going to stop you."

But dealing with that atmosphere poses other problems. "We've got pretty good at designing instruments to work in space, but with Huygens we're entering a new atmosphere for the first time, giving us a whole host of new problems to deal with", explains Martin Tomasko, head of the team responsible for Huygens' imaging equipment. Data from the recent Cassini fly-by suggest that the atmosphere doesn't contain corrosive chemicals that could damage Huygens' instruments. But there is a danger that components of the atmosphere could simply stick to and obscure the windows from which Huygens' imaging systems peer. However, Tomasko is quietly

confident that the windows will not simply steam up with hydrocarbon condensation. He notes that, because the probe will be warmer than the atmosphere, it will in effect have heated windscreens. He also predicts that the clouds that shroud Titan will have a bottom, giving a clear view from as high as 50-70km.

One of the biggest challenges for the imaging team is simply to make sense of the data they get. "There are no lack of challenges," says

"Titan's atmosphere is both a blessing and a curse for the Huygens mission..."

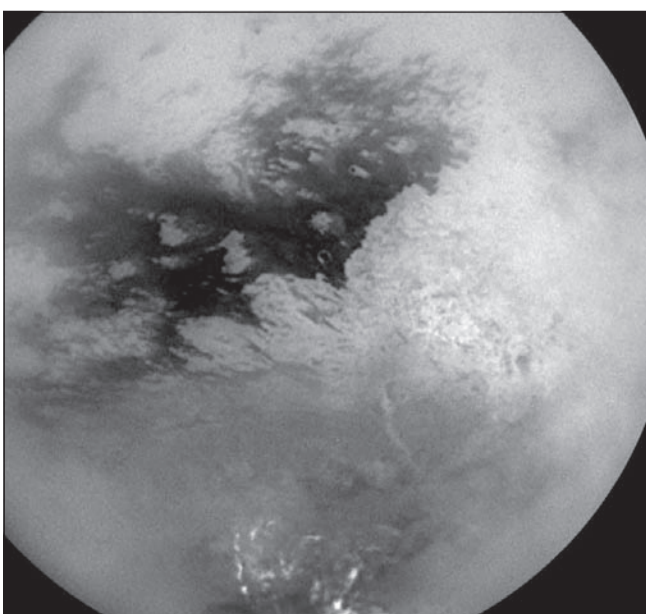
Tomasko. "The probe is going to be swinging, turning and being blown by the wind." All of these factors need to be taken into account in order to fit successive pictures together into panoramic mosaics of the landscape below. The swinging and turning will be measured by a sun sensor sitting underneath two slits on top of the probe: whether the sun sensor is in shadow or exposed will depend on the angle and spin of the probe. Once the probe is out of the cloud, making mosaic images should become easier. "If we can see distinct features in our images, we can use these to put mosaics together, rather than relying on reconstructions from the movement of the probe," explains Tomasko. Despite

these problems, the wait long for the first images should not be long. Tomasko and colleagues plan to work through the night on their mosaics so that they can release their two best images at a press conference on 15 January.

What will those pictures show? Tomasko doesn't want to speculate. By his own admission the first glimpses of Titan's surface, gathered by Cassini during its recent fly-by, are frankly mystifying. While some features are visible – dark regions and light streaks – no-one seems to have much of a clue what any of these features are. Tomasko seems more comfortable predicting what we will not see. He notes that the lack of any bright reflection of sunlight (specular reflection) in Cassini's recent images suggests that the ocean theory is wrong. However, some dynamic process seems to be going on at the surface. The lack of any obvious craters also suggests that the surface is constantly being remodeled, but by what process is anyone's guess.

One thing seems sure: if the mission goes to plan, in January 2005 we should have pictures of a very alien landscape indeed.

● For further information, visit the NASA and ESA mission websites: saturn.jpl.nasa.gov/home/ind1ex.cfm and www.esa.int/SPECIALS/Cassini-Huygens/index.html



A mosaic of nine processed images taken of Titan on 26 October reveals the mysterious light and dark patches

SCIENCE

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Surely wind energy is the perfect solution

By Elena Lengthorn
Science communication

Wind energy – these seem to be dirty words at the moment! There has been so much press about the inadequacies of wind energy as a power supply that a general feeling of negativity and doubt has descended over this renewable option.

It is fairly easy to jump on the ‘wind = bad’ band wagon, what with turbines reaching 260 feet into the sky and being erected in tranquil rural settings. David Thomas of the *Mail on Sunday* suggests that townies (the likes of Imperial dwellers) should quit diverting our environmental guilt into schemes that the rural communities are being made to suffer. Mr Thomas suggests that there is no evidence that wind farms have any real benefits. Here I have to disagree,

and argue that the concern should be with lack of take-up. Townies’ schemes are taking place in the countryside as that is where there is space available. I’m positive that few in the city would mind having a turbine attached to the roof of their office block or home if that were possible!

In 1991, the US Department of Energy published a National Wind Resource Inventory in which it pointed out that between them, Kansas, North Dakota and Texas have enough harnessable wind power to serve the national electricity requirements. This detail was written over a decade ago, when turbines were a meagre 120 feet. The modern, taller, turbines operate at lower speeds more efficiently and are able to harness more reliable and larger wind regimes at higher levels.



Wind farming: the cost has fallen to its lowest ever

Europe is the wind energy world leader, but the UK still seems reluctant to embrace its potential. Last year, the European Wind Energy Association projected that by 2020 half the population of Western Europe’s electricity would be provided by wind energy. If the offshore poten-

tial was utilised, it could provide all of the region’s residential electricity by the same time according to a 2004 assessment by the Gerrard Hassan consulting group.

The cost of wind-generated electricity has fallen with the kilowatt hour cost to its lowest ever, down by a factor of

ten to 30 on some long supply US contracts. So wind power is now cheap, widely available, clean and in abundance – and the weakness of irregularity is being overcome by using taller turbines and utilising the National grid.

Gas-electric hybrid cars, such as the Toyota Prius, could also exploit wind resources. They drive 55 miles to the gallon and Lester Brown of the Earth Policy Institute in Washington suggests that adding a second battery and a plug-in capacity could increase their electricity storage ability. This would further reduce their gas intake another 20%, giving an overall cutback of 70%. The plug-in hybrids could become part of the storage system for wind energy.

There are still, according to Peter Odell, Professor Emeritus at Erasmus University Rotterdam,

enough oil reserves remaining to be exploited to meet current demand for another 40 years. Some of the exploitation methods will have to change, but these are technologically possible. Demand for energy is going to continue to rise steadily as it has been at 2% per year for the last 30 years – and after all the oil has been exploited, carbon could still be king with coal and then natural gas to dominate the global energy picture.

For wind to rule, the Government and policy-makers worldwide must show even more commitment to the principle of renewable energy, raise taxes on carbon fuels and subsidise the development of alternative power harnessing.

My biased townie view is that it would be best to make wind king, the sooner the better all round.

Different operating systems, different needs

By Amadeus Stevenson
Physics department

When you buy a computer, chances are it’s a PC, or to put it simply, it’s running Microsoft Windows. You might even think that the definition of a home computer is a thing with a “Start” button that crashes during your lab report write-up. However, there’s a lot more out there in computer never-never-land.

As we’ve seen in previous articles, the operating system on a computer is the software (written in a programming language as source code) which interfaces between you, the user, and the elec-

tronic hardware inside your computer. You want to play Cher’s *Greatest Hits*? Your operating system will contain software to read the MP3 and send the audio data in a form which your sound card will understand, through to your speakers. Your whole end user computer experience is based around your operating system, and there is fierce rivalry from different camps as to which operating system is the best. This week I’ll try to give you an idea about the main alternatives, and whether they’re suited to what you want to do. It’s important to keep in mind the idiom: if it ain’t broke, why fix it?



Pros

Easy to use. Once installed and set up, which is fairly painless to do in most circumstances, it’s easy for people of almost any technical background to be able to surf the internet, write an email or letter and print it out afterwards. You can even print

envelopes without too much difficulty. Being by far the most widely used operating system for home PC users, it has an enormously large choice of software, including games. For the same reason, hardware manufacturers who make graphics cards, sound cards and all the bit and bobs you could want to use on your computer have this market in mind when producing items – so all of them will work on Windows (well, they’re supposed to).

According to market reports, Microsoft’s operating systems are used on over 90% of home users’ computers. The latest version is Windows XP which in most cases you’ll be using around college and will have pre-installed on any new computer you buy.

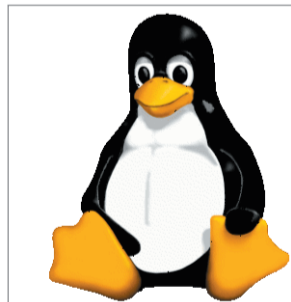
Cons

Has the largest number of exploits, viruses and worms of any of the operating systems listed here – partly due to its popularity, but also due to poor security. As many a disgruntled user will know, crashes can be frequent, and frequently reinstalling can be required. Tends to eat up system resources and is commercial software, so the inner workings are protected by Microsoft. This is the opposite philosophy of “open

source” software, which releases its source code to the community. This way you don’t know how the software is written, and hence can’t fix bugs easily or reliably. Also changing system settings can be tiresome, and sometimes you don’t know what the machine is really doing.

Conclusion

Standard essay writing/general school use? Get yourself a relatively cheap PC with Windows.



Pros

Free, open source so generally better security. Quite a large user base so lots of software available for free – alternatives to Microsoft

Linux is the name of the kernel, or central part, of a free operating system developed from 1991 by Linus Torvalds and the internet community of open source developers.

Office are available, as well as all the tools you’d need for graphics, audio, maths and even games. Some distributions are easy to install and use – trying to emulate the Windows ease of use factor. Make great web/email servers. Will run fine on older machines which might not be able to cope with the requirements of Windows. Users tend to be enthusiastic so there’s lots of support (see Imperial Linux User group).

Cons

Won’t have all the hardware support that Windows has, although manufacturers are clueing up to the growing use of Linux – you only have to check the system requirements list on many computer items to see Linux listed underneath Windows and Mac. Can be a very large pain in the arse when you can’t find drivers for your printer and the monitor refuses to show in

high resolution; not to mention the modem is unsupported and requires changing. Depending on your distribution, may require copious amounts of writing commands on a black background to get the mouse working etc.

Conclusion

Coding boffin? Get Linux on an old PC and you’ll be tinkering for hours.



Pros

Extremely lightweight, not at all heavy on system resources. Very secure, has least amount of serious bugs. Generally good hardware support. Superb servers. NetBSD, one particular type of BSD, has been ported or transferred to run on an incredible range of computer architectures (over 50) including Playstation 2 and Dreamcast. As with Linux, if you want to change something on your system, such as your IP address or what system services you have, you’ll just have to edit one or two files with a command line editor and you’re done!

There are 3 main types of BSD, all derived from Berkeley Software Distribution, a split from UNIX System V. It’s open source like Linux and has many similarities.

Cons

It’s not GUI. Well not until you’ve installed it, the X Window graphical system, needing to know the synchronization frequencies of your monitor, got your mouse working, installed a window manager, installed linux emulation, java under linux emulation, then a bloated office package to make your powerpoint presentations at the risk of grinding your computer to a halt. It’s not ideal for game playing, although there are a few 3D games available, but BSD based machines make great servers.

Conclusion

Coding boffin: this is the OS for you. Others needn’t apply.



Unlike the other operating systems listed, MacOS X only runs on Apple’s computer systems. This means to use it you have to buy their systems, which are expensive. Their latest operating system is based on a BSD kernel, and has converted many users by its beauty and the fact that it works smoothly.

Pros

It’s really pretty. I mean really. Very easy to use, less complicated than any of the other operating systems. Stunning graphics, a great range of software and major games are available. With Apple, design is everything, and this

is true for their operating system. It’s uncluttered, easy and straightforward to use so there’s less to confuse a novice user.

Cons

Expensive. Very expensive. You’re looking upwards of

£1000 for a desktop, but you get what you pay for.

Conclusion

Graphic design? Mac’s your best option, but a good PC with Windows will have the designing software you need.

SCIENCE

News
in brief

Australia to meet Kyoto target but refuses to sign

Australia is on track to meet targets set by the Kyoto Treaty to cut greenhouse gas emissions but will still not sign the pact because it ignores key areas of the fight against global warming in developing nations. Environment Minister Ian Campbell said United Nations talks on global warming should look beyond the 2012 Kyoto deadline for ways to tackle climate change.

'Super rocket' aims for January

Europe's 'super rocket', the Ariane 5-ECA, will be back in action in January 2005, says its operator Arianespace. The launch will be the vehicle's first since its maiden flight ended in an explosive failure in December 2002. The qualification flight was originally scheduled for November, but was then put back after a review highlighted a number of outstanding technical issues.

Mission cleared for Titan plunge

The Huygens probe is on target and all set for its encounter with Titan, the mysterious large moon of Saturn. The 2.7m-wide robot lab has passed its final systems check-out and scientists have confirmed the rendezvous can go ahead on 14 January as planned.

Brazil finds new Europe-related dinosaur species

Scientists have found well-preserved fossils of a new dinosaur species that lived 225 million years ago in southern Brazil but had its closest relatives in what is now Europe. The findings shed light on the migration of dinosaurs across the single continent that existed at the time. Luciano Leal, a paleontologist, said the Triassic period dinosaur was "among the oldest finds in the world."

New York school bus driver fired over stem cell talk

A school bus driver who chatted about stem cell research with her pupils was fired for inappropriate behaviour. The Buffalo News said Julianne Thompson, 42, was fired from her job in Grand Island, New York after parents complained about her discussing the issue with pupils the day before the presidential election.

The weather forecasts that will save lives

William Gates explains how the NHS is planning to use weather forecasts to save hospital beds and lives

Although many, myself included, look forward to Christmas with almost juvenile glee and excitement, for others Christmas is not the season to be jolly. And no, I am not talking about the expenditure (which has already begun to hit home for me) nor the prospect of being ogled by overzealous relatives. Rather, it is the weather that plays the villain in the end of year Christmas pantomime.

Four per cent of over-40s of both sexes suffer from COPD – Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease – a disease that can affect the breathing processes of the sufferer, leading to some catastrophic symptoms. Fatality is a very real possibility, even for sufferers who are admitted to hospital for treatment. Shortness of breath, increased sputum purulence, a common cold and wheezing are the most common symptoms associated with the ailment.

The statistics are staggering. Of those who suffer from degradations in their condition (these degradations are called exacerbations), about 20% are admitted to hospital. Of those, 15% of admittances result in mortality within 90 days. Those who survive cannot be considered safe either – 27% were readmitted within 90 days having suffered another exacerbation.

The drain this has on the NHS is astronomical. I was left speechless by the scale of the problem. Each year, COPD contributes to in the region of one million bed days (and 23% of all respiratory bed days), costing the NHS about £600m. COPD alone is responsible for 12% of all emergency medical admissions. The aforementioned exacerbations cost up to 45%

of the total cost to the NHS caused by COPD – about £270 million.

There is, however, a prospect that has the potential to alleviate some of the burden that this problem exerts. A pilot scheme is to be run next year in the South-West Peninsula Primary Care Trust of the NHS. The aim is to use weather forecasts to predict when the frequency of exacerbations of the condition of COPD sufferers will be at greater incidence. This will allow the NHS to prioritise the COPD problem and allow it to be better prepared to cope with a greater incidence of admittances of COPD sufferers.

The new method of treating COPD, being spearheaded by the pilot scheme, is to identify the level of sufferer that is at significant risk, using weather forecasts to help with this identification. Weather conditions that increase the number of exacerbations are essentially cold temperatures. These are associated with viral infections which may precipitate the exacerbations and also cause physiological reactions – such as vasoconstriction reducing blood flow to the lungs in preference for the other organs to reduce heat loss – which can have derogatory effects on condition. Similarly, air pollution can be responsible for exacerbation, hence causing a greater risk to city COPD sufferers.

COPD affects different people to different degrees. Patients are stratified according to their level of susceptance to exacerbations. Those in the "Frequent Admission Group", who have been admitted to hospital three or more times in the last 12 months, are regarded



Christmas may be the season to be jolly, but for many people forecasting cold weather could mean the the difference between life and death

as being those who are at greatest risk of further exacerbation. There are five strata levels of patients according to risk.

The forecast is issued twice weekly, and it identifies those who might be at risk. For example, a forecast of "Very High Activity" would cause every COPD sufferer to be contacted to be warned of the risk and the suggestion of preventative measures be made. Plans are made to ensure that staff can cope with the expected increase in admissions, and so that they are more ruthless in discharging those with lower risk so patients who are at greater risk can benefit from more immediate treatment.

The crux of the scheme is to treat many sufferers at home to reduce hospital admissions. These home visits by nurses and health workers are safe and effective, an alternative way of managing patients who suffer from exacerbations who would otherwise need to be admitted to, and possibly have to stay in, hospital. Antibiotics can be used to treat purulent sputum and oral prednisolone can be prescribed to help alleviate breathing difficulties. Essentially these visits will allow the patient to be treated in an environment that they find more comfortable, and will reduce admittances to hospital of people who may need to stay and subsequently occupy beds. In the current hospital situation, in which beds seem to be permanently in shortage, this can help patients who suffer from other ailments and who categorically need to be in hospital for treatment to find the bed they need.

The reduction in cost will also liberate much funding

for the NHS to invest in other areas. In the South-West Peninsula PCT alone, in 2002 COPD cost the NHS nearly £15 million, using up 52608 bed days, as there were 239 admissions per 100,000. The most optimistic estimation is that these in-house consultations will reduce admission rates by up to 40%, saving £6m and 21043 bed days in

"The reduction in cost will also liberate much funding for the NHS to invest in other areas"

this PCT alone.

The medical staff will be sent out to someone's home following an emergency call of someone suffering from an exacerbation. Once at the patient's home, it is then decided if the patient requires admittance to hospital according to the seriousness of their condition. For example, if they are severely breathless with impaired consciousness and a deteriorating condition, then the patient would be admitted. If the condition is not immediately serious, then in house treatment would be carried out and the patient be left at home with guidelines and prescriptions.

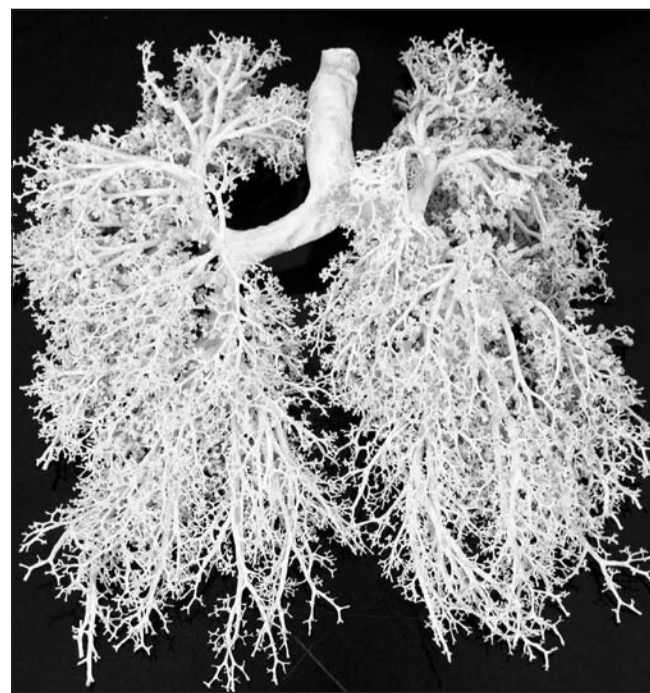
Essentially this appears to be a very convenient arrangement. However, there are certain aspects that I would question. Firstly there is the idea of money. The cost of the in-house treatment will still be high, and at times of low incidence of exacerbations this might seem to be an unnecessary fee. Yet it is, in my opinion, more a question of the number of bed days that are freed as a result of the in house treatment, which would undoubtedly be reduced and allow other

patients to find beds more easily. This conceivably has knock-on effects of reducing waiting times in Accident and Emergency, for example.

Yet further problems remain. For example, the condition of the patient may exacerbate further after the medical staff or what have you have left the patient at home. What if this further exacerbation causes a serious degradation in the condition of the patient? Then there would be another time delay before they could receive medical assistance. Also what if patients were discharged from hospital too soon during a time of "Very High Activity", and their condition worsens?

Similarly, what if the Met Office Predictions are wrong? Weather predictions can be notoriously unreliable. What if the weather conditions which cause exacerbations occur without prediction? The NHS would then be unprepared for the greater than expected COPD related problems, which may reduce the effectiveness of the in house scheme – what if there are not enough medical teams to go around?

Ultimately, this pilot scheme has the potential to become a huge success in despite of these problems. The benefits of a successful pilot are there for all to see, and for many to benefit from. At a time when the NHS is going to great lengths to increase efficiency, this seems to be another brick in the wall. Yet the problems will need to be addressed. Teething problems are to be expected, but by next Christmas they should have been ironed out. If not, then there will be many who suffer during this time of merriment.



COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) is characterised by abnormalities in the lungs that make it difficult to exhale normally

MODS, media and misinterpretations

The Imperial physics department is patenting a revolutionary data storage technology. **Anushri Patel** met the head of the research team, Dr Peter Török, to find out more

The new MODS – Multiplexed Optical Data Storage – discs could potentially store up to one terabyte of data each. Although not yet mastered, the team have ‘demonstrated what can be done’. To achieve the maximum storage capacity, the MODS discs will be double sided and dual layered, and instead of storing one bit per pit like conventional CDs and DVDs, MODS discs can store eight bits due to the asymmetrical nature of the pits.

Dr Peter Török will be attending a meeting later on this year to find out if the discs are viable for mass manufacture, and is confident that their fabrication will be easy and cheap. Research and funding permitting, Dr Török estimates that the discs will be available on the market within five to ten years. Although he emphasised that “there have been a lot of misinterpretations and misunderstandings” surrounding the new discs, and this timescale is “largely affected by political and financial factors as well as technological factors”, a fact missed out by a large majority of articles covering this technology.

The BluRay disc, although

technically sound, has had its date of release pushed back due to these reasons. Before a new data disc comes into the market, a universal standard must be agreed by the companies which will produce it, which can take a great deal of time. The BluRay consortium was set up for this very purpose, to establish a universal standard for the BluRay media. The other factor is that the companies will want to make as much money as they can out of previous technologies before they render them obsolete and embrace new ones. This can be seen by the fact that only now is VHS

“there have been a lot of misinterpretations and misunderstandings surrounding the new discs...”

being withdrawn from sale, and DVDs are being given greater emphasis. BluRay can only come out once the companies have made enough money from the sale of DVDs, or they are forced to market their product by the competition, and consequently MODS discs will most likely be able to come on to



MODS: the team at Imperial have created a new method for storing 1TB (one terabyte) of data on one optical disc

the market once the companies have milked all they can from BluRay.

Once it has been established whether it is technologically and financially possible to mass-produce MODS discs and share data, the team hope to further research whether a writing/rewriting facility can be made available. Dr Török mentioned that they do have the capacity to reach that status, but again it is heavily dependent on further funding.

30-year data storage pioneer Michael Thomas, owner

of Colossal Storage, believes that the concept will fail because the design is prone to complex errors, and that it may just be better to continue to store large amounts of data on a hard drive, but Dr Török believes that this is only partially true. Any data system relying on fitting a large amount of data in a smaller space will always be prone to error for a number of reasons, even when comparing DVD and CD discs. The same thickness of scratch on a DVD takes out many more bits of data than on a CD, and

this effect is even greater for MODS discs, especially as the wavelength of light involved is significantly smaller (around 405nm). This does not mean, however, that the whole technology can be dismissed and in actual fact the BluRay disc is likely to be similarly scratch sensitive. Hard drives are in fact far more delicate than discs, hence having to keep them contained. The advantage of MODS discs when it comes to data protection is that a large number of discs can be produced for low cost, so duplicate copies will be easy to produce.

Dr Török emphasised that whilst you could fit a large amount of data on one disc, for example a few series of *The Simpsons*, it may not necessarily reduce the cost of the MODS on the market. Whilst they are still cheap to produce, movies and music will still be subject to additional charges. “You don’t buy the disc [in that case], you support the large number of people behind the production”, so all episodes of a TV series on one MODS disc will cost no less than a box set of DVDs, but there will be the added convenience of having

everything on one disc and saving valuable space on the shelf.

He also stressed that the project is very much collaborative, with a number of people significantly involved, including his PhD student, Mr Peter Munro. The other members of the team are Dr Martin Salt, Professor Hans Peter Herzig and Mr Carsten Rockstuhl from the University of Neuchatel in Switzerland and Emmanouil Kriezis from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki in Greece.

The team have applied for funding to EPSRC and are currently in the process of writing a European grant application to fund their research further. The latter one is a collaboration between the Imperial physics and electrical engineering (led by Dr Eric Yeatman) departments, the Technical University of Delft, the University of Neuchatel and Aristotle University. Dr Török has also set up a website to reveal the facts behind popular claims, as well as further details behind the new technology. This can be found at www.imperial.ac.uk/research/phonics/pt_group/peter_torok_research.htm.

Blind car thief 0, tree 1



DARIUS NIKBIN
SCIENCE EDITOR

This is the news: seven foot high fiberglass statue known as ‘Fat Boy’ disappears from Cape Cod, woman offered \$78 for father’s ghost on ebay, police in Cayuga County claim man who stole golf course did it “piece by piece”, and finally, blind Romanian car thief strikes again, this time driving a car 25 miles before smashing into a tree.

Welcome to the final week of Felix Science in 2004. This week we feature a host of article on themes varying from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) to one of the latest Imperial College innovations to hit the news, the MODS disc.

We start off, however, with the build-up to the Huygens landing which we’re all hoping will be successful in 2005. I am absolutely fascinated by all this. Titan is the largest moon in the solar system but it has

always been shrouded in mystery due to its dense atmosphere. Although it is highly unlikely, there have been suggestions that some sort of life could have possibly evolved on its surface. The latest images, however, have already been a revelation.

David Osumi-Sutherland’s article looks at what the scientists have already discovered and what they are looking for on Titan. He also looks at the potential pitfalls of the mission. Felix Science will continue to cover Huygens’ progress in the New Year.

Also this week, Elena Lengthorn takes a brave step and defends wind energy. As European countries get greener and greener, shouldn’t Britain be following the pattern set by our continental counterparts? As the article explains, times have changed and wind energy has developed a strong case for itself.

Amadeus Stevenson continues his epic journey through the perils of day-to-day technology (having already covered hacking, cracking, adware, and spyware), and this week reviews the operating systems on offer nowadays – no, you are not restricted to using Windows (in fact, I happen to be working on a Mac right now).

Will Gates has a Felix Science exclusive with his coverage of

the NHS’s plans to address COPD by using information from weather forecasts.

Finally, Anushri Patel interviews the man behind the MODS, Dr. Peter Török, and demystifies some of the stories that have been going around in the media about the new one terabyte disc developed at Imperial College’s physics department.

So finally I’d like to take this opportunity to thank some of the people who have been working on the section this term. Thanks particularly to the editor, Dave Edwards, whose professionalism and encouragement have helped push the science section forward, as well as the paper as a whole.

Respect also goes to: Emma Williams (biochemistry), Andya Primanda (NHM and biological sciences), Tom Simonite (science communication), Rosie Taylor (sci. comm.), William Gates (bio-engineering), Iain Taylor (sci. comm.), Alex Antonov (maths), Amadeus Stevenson (physics), Anushri Patel (physics), James Berry (biochemistry), Kate Wighton (sci comm) and Giovanna Larice (biochemistry), as well as all the other contributors who have written for the science section.

To all the readers: happy Christmas and an enjoyable new year.

[insert interesting research story here]

I, Science.

A science magazine for Imperial College
contact science.felix@ic.ac.uk

Comment

felix@ic.ac.uk

The cost of living

A common student complaint is that the cost of living in halls is too high. Rents are too expensive and it is often more economical to live in the private sector – often even after things like gas/electricity bills, laundry and contents insurance (all free or subsidised in halls) have been taken into account. Is this really true?

It's certainly true that some rooms in halls are priced at quite high levels. Paying around £140 a week (after amenities and other charges) for a room in Beit can seem excessive when private sector flats are available for less than that. Nevertheless, the College has a real problem: there is no government money to fund halls of residence which, by law, have to be self-financing. In actual fact, the College gets away, where it can, with cross-subsidies but basically the halls have to break even. The cost of building and maintaining halls of residence has to be met somehow. Only so much money can be raised from

conference income. Ultimately, the residents have to make a large contribution.

That was the backdrop to last year when Katherine McGinn (then Deputy President Education & Welfare) and I faced the Rector's Committee on Student Residences for the annual rent review. The Estates people responsible for looking after the buildings maintained that they needed an increase of upwards of 10% in order to keep things in order. We successfully argued the case that students were increasingly being priced out and that they needed to be contained. In the end we secured an average real rise of only 4.5%, although the cheapest rooms stayed at the same price whilst the most expensive had large increases.

Yet the maintenance problems are real. Only yesterday, my own hall of residence had problems with the drinking water supply – unusual for Garden Hall, but quite common for those in Southside. Any 'success'

STATE OF THE UNION



MUSTAFA ARIF
UNION PRESIDENT

the Union has in holding down rent prices in the short term is only going to cause problems for students in the long-term. Just look at the crumbling state of Southside and Fisher Hall, both suffering from shoddy maintenance and underinvestment

over the years. But every time a hall is refurbished, the rents have to go up to pay for it. This means that when Southside is knocked down at the end of June 2004, there will be a serious reduction in medium-priced accommodation and a big overall increase in average rent prices.

So a new approach is needed. The College needs to recognise that whilst Beit is always over-subscribed (and so the rents can seemingly keep going-up) there are many students who can't pay the full cost. More importantly, 'poorer' students should not be given lower quality accommodation as it is demeaning and also results in ghettoisation (with some halls being seen as 'rich' and others as being for 'poor' students).

I think that all students who come to the College should be given a fixed price for living in hall, which should be the full cost – let's say £150 per week. From that, there should then be subsidies (paid for within the residences system).

Students who are allocated poorer quality rooms should be compensated with a rebate. Students who can't afford to pay should similarly receive a bursary to enable them to live in hall. This should be separate from government loans etc, because it would appear that the most hard-up students fall into two categories: those for whom the state means testing doesn't work (eg they are just above the threshold for full support or their parents' income has been mis-assessed) or they are from overseas and not in receipt of a scholarship. That way, everyone would be able to live in hall and wouldn't be forced into a particularly shabby one based on the ability to pay. Meanwhile, those who can pay their share would do, to keep the system operational.

That's a personal view, based on a pragmatic appraisal of the political and economic situation. I suspect it will be controversial – I look forward to reading your views in the letters pages.

Feel like a smoke?

When the Government acted to reclassify cannabis, there was a lot of confusion over its legality. The truth is that cannabis is still illegal, and if you are using it over a long period of time it can affect every aspect of your life.

This article aims to help you and tell you some facts about cannabis that you might not know:

Dependency

During the last few years it has become clear that cannabis use can result in dependency and lead to problems. Ask yourself this: Are you spending too much time, energy and money on weed? Does a lot of your day revolve around dope? Do those close to you complain that you are stoned all the time? If your answer to these questions is yes then you may be dependent on cannabis.

Mental health

If you have had a mental health

problem before or if you have a history of mental health problems in your family, cannabis can trigger them. There is also concern that people who use cannabis a lot when they are young may be vulnerable to mental health problems later in life.

Debt

One of the most common problems with cannabis is spending too much money on it. Try to see how much money you are spending each week on cannabis and think about all the other things you could buy with the money.

Relationships

Cannabis can make people boring, lifeless and isolated. Smoking dope all the time can lead to problems at work, in your personal life and at college.

Do you have a vibrant social life or are you staying in most nights and watching TV? Is your partner giving

ADVICE SERVICE



NIGEL COOKE
STUDENT ADVISER

you earache about your lack of motivation? Are you just smoking cannabis because your partner does?

If these things are happening to you, it may be time to review your cannabis use.

College life

Studying and smoking cannabis in

most cases don't mix. If you smoke cannabis on a regular basis, you may well be missing lectures, unmotivated by university life, and/or just sitting indoors all day.

It is also important to remember that if you are found to be smoking cannabis in University halls of residence, then you will probably be evicted and may be asked to leave the College totally.

The law

Cannabis is a class C drug. It is illegal. The maximum sentence for possession is two years in prison and an unlimited fine. The maximum penalty for supplying cannabis is 14 years in prison and an unlimited fine.

People aged 18 or over are no longer automatically arrested for possessing cannabis, however you will be arrested if you are caught regularly, you smoke in public places, or you use cannabis near premises where children and young people go.

Self control tips

- Avoid overdoing it, by having days off between using cannabis. This will also help you to lose any tolerance you might have built up from regular use
- Don't buy extra, thinking you'll save some for tomorrow. You probably won't
- Break up your pattern of use – this will make it easier to control and reduce the risks
- If you are trying to cut down and stop, avoid any places, people or events that remind you of cannabis. Plan to do something else at the time of day you usually have a joint
- Try to identify all the things you associate with using cannabis and make an effort to avoid them until you feel OK about not smoking

If you have any comments on this article or are worried about your cannabis use, please don't hesitate to contact the Union Advice Service on 020 7594 8067 or advice@ic.ac.uk.

The world today

By Ian Lawrence

Today I had to step around the body of a man on my way to campus, trying to avoid getting blood on my shoes. I've never seen a dead body before, but in the last week two people have died violently in the streets near me. What is happening?

The apparent cause was that the man had jumped off the roof, but the police had to investigate it as a murder. They asked me if I'd seen anyone upstairs. Not being a city boy, it didn't occur to me to look. It says something about the times we live

in that I just carried on walking, the police seemed to be dealing with it and I hadn't actually seen it happen, so I just went to uni, sat through a lecture and came home.

On the way home, the police had cordoned off the area in a very efficient manner. This is disturbing in a strange way; the police knew exactly what to do, they had a procedure for it. I mean, it's comfortable that the police are professional, but why should they have to deal with this sort thing so often?

I only came to London a couple of months ago, and my first impres-

sions were that people were exaggerating about the violence and the crime, that the newspapers used a lot of hyperbole and only reported the bad events. These two deaths have blown that impression out of the water. I now leave my halls wondering what will happen today, wondering who will die. Will it be someone I know? Will it be me?

I don't know what drove this man to suicide, or whether he was pushed, but surely there must be something that can be done to prevent this sort of thing happening. Support groups obviously aren't enough. I'm sure

this man had access to a telephone, but he didn't phone the Samaritans, did he? Maybe his friends were suspicious and were rushing to his house to stop him, or maybe he had no friends.

The only thing we can do is to watch out for each other, keep an eye on the lonely people, or even the ones who are always surrounded, are they really happy? Suicide is an intensely selfish act. Think of the anguish this man has caused to the people who saw him fall, to his friends and family, who will probably blame themselves. He caused

me to be in a state of shock and write this rambling article, despite that fact I haven't written an essay in years.

Even the most cold-hearted of you couldn't help to be shocked by this if you saw it. My friend and I tried to laugh it off, but we both knew this was just to distract our thoughts, to avoid thinking the big thoughts that I thought on the way home, alone. To question our own mortality. I leave you with my final thought – don't think you're unshockable, because when something like this happens, it really, really gets to you.

COMMENT

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Unfair trade?

Adam Langley responds to last week's Comment article on Fairtrade products

Jamie Brothwell seems very keen that we should all buy fair trade products, to the point of creating a bureaucracy to check that we do.

I'm perfectly happy for him to pay any price that the suppliers and growers agree to, including one which is above the market value. But before there is a "campaign for increased consumption of Fairtrade goods" (funded by our infinitely-bounteous Union I suppose), people should be aware of the problems of Fairtrade.

When buying Fairtrade coffee you are charitably giving to certain selected groups of producers. Selected, that is, by the Fair Labeling Organisation, which charges \$2431 plus \$607/year plus \$1 per 110 pounds of coffee sold to be certified as a Fair Trade producer. And if you're a small producer (that is, less than 44,000 pounds of coffee per year - \$55,440 per year, by FairTrade

base prices) then I'm afraid that the FLO "seldom" certifies groups so small [Simen Sandberg, quoted in *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 13th].

The problem with the primary Fairtrade produce, coffee, is that too much of it is being produced worldwide. In Brazil and Columbia, producers were encouraged to switch from cocaine to coffee. In an effort to rebuild Vietnam, aid went into setting up coffee plantations so that the farmers could be self-sufficient. This led to an over-supply of coffee.

The average coffee production per year increased 28% from 1990 to 2002 [ICO figures], but the values jump wildly - not the sign of a stable market. All this over-supply, of course, caused the price to drop and the less efficient producers to suffer. The inefficient producers in this case were the small, primitive



Coffee: "too much of it is being produced worldwide"

farmers who Fairtrade is supposed to help.

But Fairtrade gives the efficient producers less incentive to cut costs and keeps those farmers for-

ever at the mercy of the charity of those who buy Fairtrade and of the FLO, which soon gains the power to select who will and who won't survive.

Instead of this Jamie, perhaps we should be lobbying for the elimination of EU subsidies such as the Common Agricultural Policy (though not through the Union of course, because everyone agrees that the Union should limit itself to those issues which affect students as students, don't they?)

The idiotic effects of the CAP have entered into common usage: "butter mountains", "wine lakes" etc. In 2001, 7m tonnes of sugar was exported [Oxfam, 2002] from the EU, and the EU taxpayer paid a total of \$2.1bn to subsidise this dumping on the world markets.

The development of internal trade (especially within Africa) and the cessation of dumping under-priced goods on the world market is the way to help these farmers. Hitching them to our charity, which is supported only by the public's wondering attention, is not.

Letters to the Editor

Imperial should be primarily for the British

Dear Editor,

I have for the last two years had the impression that our Rector has been running Imperial more like a corporation with profit as its incentive than an academic institution.

Last week's front page article on the massive proposed increase in International students confirms this along with other measures such as his ridiculous re-branding exercise and his love for new buildings and constant refurbishment.

I came to Imperial as an international student thinking that I was a part of a small minority of international students who would add something to the cultural and social life of the students. I now feel that I am actually a part of an ever growing quantity of people that are denying British students a place at a good academic institution. Imperial is a British university supported by taxpayer's money and hence should primarily source Britain with much needed engineers, doctors and scientists etc. If all the places in English universities are taken up by foreign students, who then move back to their country, where will Britain's professionals come from? Where should British students go to university?

Besides how can the Rector justify not only supporting top-up fees but also turning Imperial into a cash and carry business when at the same time he plans to spend up to £400 million in the coming few years on things which are not necessarily essential. For example, spending £17 million on a sports centre is unnecessary when we have one of the most famous parks in the world on our doorstep.

His proposals also mean that it doesn't matter if two people have the same intelligence, the 'rich kid' gets the prize. I have not come to Imperial because India does not have good science institutions, it has some that outrank Imperial. I came because of its name (which I

now think is overrated) and because I was not intelligent enough to get into a good science college in India, and off-course because mummy and daddy are rich. I feel it is similar for a lot of the International students that come here.

If I had to do it all over again, I would not come to a university run by a hard core capitalist. It is wrong to have the ex-head of a huge corporation that has the reputation of a merciless profit maker as the head Imperial. If he wishes to run Imperial like a business, the government should withdraw its charity status. So lets start by cutting the useless costs and we shall take it from there. Note, the above views are primarily for undergraduate studies, I imagine the research community works differently.

Veer Singh
Physics

Student discount difficulties

Dear Dave,

I have just had a rather difficult experience obtaining my student discount at HMV. Upon presentation of my Imperial swipe card, the cashier told me that it was for members of the NUS only. I protested, informing him that this was illegal, and asked to speak to a manager. The manager told me the same, and asked me if I had any other student ID cards.

Opening my wallet, I spotted the HMV student discount card I had picked up at Freshers Fair and forgotten about, and triumphantly presented it. I was informed that I should only have been given this if I had a NUS card. I told them that HMV staff were giving them out here, and he relented, and gave me the discount "just this once", telling me it was company policy to only give discounts to member of the

NUS. I told him this was illegal; he didn't seem to care.

HMV's website tells a different story. <http://www2.hmv.co.uk/hmvweb/navigate.do?ctx=1099;-1;-1&PageID=1103> says "If you are a NUS cardholder, HMV.co.uk are giving away 10% off purchases until 30th September 2005. If you do not have a NUS cards you will need a HMV Student card to receive your discount. You can get a HMV Student Card from any HMV store in the UK or Ireland on presentation of valid student photo ID."

It would appear that HMV's staff are ill-informed of company policy, and so I will also be writing to HMV to inform them of this. If I had not been so persistent, I may have been denied the discount.

When are the retailers going to realise that NUS membership is no longer valid as a verification of student status?

Oliver Sinden
Maths

Union sandwich prices

Dear Felix,

Last Friday I was persuaded to go to our so called Student Union for dinner (or lunch as you Southern people call it). After deciding against some dodgy looking chilli we went to the sandwich bar in dBs. Advertised for £1.50 was a chicken tikka baguette, which seemed reasonable enough. But on closer inspection we realised that this was the price for the filling alone - it would cost another £1 on top of the £1.50 for the sandwich, as apparently at our subsidised union it costs £1 for a plain baguette. Horrified at this, we went to 'Sandwich World' on Gloucester Road where the very same chicken tikka baguette was available freshly made for a total of £1.50, plus an

optional free piece of fruit.

So my point is this - if an independent sandwich shop 2 minutes from the Huxley building can produce the same sandwich and others like it for around £1.50 how can our supposedly subsidised union charge an extra £1? The cost of living in London is high enough as it is, without our own student services trying to rob us blind.

Yours faithfully,

A hungry Northerner

Tolerance?

Dear Editor,

I would like to complain about this article on your last issue (Thursday 2nd December 2004).

I was very pleased to see an article dealing with the unease to be christian in the 21st century and think that this article had the point. Unfortunately, the author Victoria Pollock tried to support her ideas with charm, but a bad instance with the French law banned any ostentatious faith signs in the French state school. By this way, she broadcast nonsense about French statement and obviously did not realize that she contradicts herself.

This instance have been made to support her statement that the society were tolerant until people decide to pursue tolerance as a definite objective. And Victoria had not the point on this part of her article.

The 1905 French Law have been written to allow children, whose religion was not christian, to have the opportunity to access a state school. This law supported equality among children when they entered any state schools. Last years this law has been discussed again to reinforce the law in order to give a free access to the "laic" state schools.

The French Law is neither tolerant nor intolerant. We missed the point. In fact, France is a laic country, in which any religion have neither right nor links with the state authority. France supported last year its laicity.

I agree with Victoria that the French Republican Pact let some French unsatisfied. I agree that religions authority criticised the reinforcement of this Law. But Victoria's statement was not supported by her instance.

I ask her tolerance for the French laicity. In trying to support her belief, she offends mine with this pick on our decision.

Best regards,

Jeremy CH Rossiny
Conducting Ion Ceramic Membrane

Christmas trees

Dear Editor,

I have been noticing the growing numbers of Christmas trees everywhere. I even saw one shop on the high street which had about four of them, big ones as well. It really disturbed me to think that so many trees are being cut just to give us a bit of aesthetic pleasure. In the case of shops, the trees are just another tool to sell more and make more money by putting everyone in the "festive spirit". What is Christmas really about anymore?

After thinking about it further, it seems even more absurd that it is supposed to celebrate the birth of Christ. We are killing something in celebration of the birth of something else. Perhaps having a small tree or plant in a pot or a large one if can afford it will be more appropriate. Lets celebrate life.

Happy Christmas,

Veer Singh
Physics

Send your letters to felix@ic.ac.uk. This is the page where you can make your voice heard on just about any topic. Letters may be edited for length but not for spelling or grammar, and are printed at the Editor's discretion

COMMENT

felix@ic.ac.uk

Why cycling is the answer

Ben Jefferys explains why travelling by good old-fashioned push-bike is beneficial to both you and the environment

Transport is a hot topic in London. Most people live too far from work to walk. Public transport can be expensive for students and unpleasant for everybody. Driving is out of the question for the majority of Londoners due to clogged streets, lack of parking and the high cost. The morning news consists of a catalogue of catastrophe on road and rail. It is little wonder that the mayoral elections are dominated by transport issues.

But there is a way out of this locomotive rat race: cycling. Many cyclists talk as if their chosen mode of transport is the solution to the world's problems – and it is easy to see why.

Cycling is cheap. You can get a brand new bike and associated gear for under £200 from Halfords or Decathlon, and even less if you buy second hand. Alternatively you could get something a bit more luxurious for around £400 from a local bike shop – still far cheaper than your average Travelcard, but it will last a good few years. And you won't be paying to stand stationary in a tunnel for half an hour with your face in someone else's armpit.

Cycling is fast. Transport for London figures suggest that cycling is the fastest mode of transport in central London. You can travel four miles in just 20 minutes, compared to half an hour by tube or an hour by bus. And cycling is door-to-door – chances are most of your commute is spent walking to and from stations.

Cycling gets you fit. The obesity epidemic is in full swing, and you can be sure that sitting on a bus eating crisps is doing nothing for your physique. Regular cycling halves your chances of suffering from heart disease. The Government recommends that adults get 30 minutes of moderate exercise five times each week. Cycling to College will give you all that and more, without wasting precious time and money in the local gym.

Cycling is fun. While initially the prospect of getting on a bike is daunting, it rapidly becomes easier and more rewarding. There's nothing more satisfying than arriving at your destination having got there under your own steam. You've cut through the traffic, flown past the bus queues and bypassed the crowded stations, using your natural strength, skill and dexterity to get from A to B. You can make it an exhilarating everyday extreme sport or a scenic ride through



"Many cyclists talk as if their chosen mode of transport is the solution to the world's problems – and it is easy to see why"

parks and along waterways – your choice.

And finally, of course, cycling is environmentally and socially responsible. It is unlikely you'll end up killing anyone with your bike, unlike cars which result in the deaths of 3500 people in the UK each year. Every other mode of transport bar walking uses energy derived from fossil fuels. Those who aren't convinced by global warming (both of you) will nonetheless have experienced the unpleasant side-effects of walking along London's choked streets. Biofuels are here today: two slices of toast and a coffee goes in, and out comes enough energy to get you to College (and a little bit of, er, exhaust). Imagine London's streets without the noise and smell and danger of motor vehicles. You can make it happen.

What's the down side? There's always a down side. People are put off by bad weather: in fact, London is the driest part of the UK and only a

tiny fraction of your journeys will be wet. You can choose to take the day off and get back on the tube (you'll remember why you started cycling) or just get some waterproofs and carry on regardless.

Some people are worried they'll get to College reeking of sweat and fumes. You might be lucky and have odourless sweat – just wear clean clothes every day, use a deodorant, and your popularity will be maintained. Alternatively take a shower at College instead of at home. A map of College showers is being prepared – every department has one or two tucked away somewhere. See these pages for news in the coming weeks, or ask your head of department.

Danger from cars and buses is also quite off-putting for novices. A prerequisite is that you are a competent cyclist when on traffic-free routes. Take it easy for the first few weeks and you'll build up experience of how to deal with London's

traffic. Kensington and Chelsea local authority offer free cycle safety courses – email road.safety@rbkc.gov.uk. You could prepare yourself for the open road with *Cyclecraft* by John Franklin (ISBN: 0117020516), a book which is widely regarded as the authority on cycle safety. My personal top tips are: don't ride in the gutter, ignore cycle lanes, be aware of what is going on around you, use lights, and observe the Highway Code.

The last hurdle is parking and security. Cycle parking at Imperial has taken a nosedive over summer. The handy parking outside your department has gone, replaced by motorcycle and car parking. You must now use a swipe-carded cage up some stairs under the Big Blue Faculty building.

The racks are tough to use, but with some creativity and practice they are almost as secure as street parking, and they are undercover. You must register with Security

before your swipe card will work. Elsewhere in London, the Mayor has handed cyclists a small army of excellent cycle racks, so you can do your shopping or go to the cinema in confidence. The parking in High Street Kensington actually won a design award last year.

A cycling group is being set up at Imperial, which will campaign for better facilities and generally support cyclists. The first stage is a mailing list, <http://mailman.ic.ac.uk/mailman/listinfo/bike-users>. Old, new and future cyclists are encouraged to subscribe, ask advice and offer wisdom.

Your student years are the best time to start cycling, when body and bank balance are likely to be less than healthy. When you disappear to your career in merchant banking, you might end up chugging around in a BMW or sweating it out on the tube. But chances are you'll find it hard to kick the cycling habit.

London transport etiquette

By Vikas Kaura

I should not be writing this in a state of anger, however, I will.

Why is it that Londoners (well, those on the tubes) are so socially inept? Is it so hard for a 20-year-old to give up his seat to an older gentleman with a walking stick? Well I guess so, as this is what I have just observed and it is not a one-off case. I use the tube every day and,

day in and day out, I see the same thing – the elderly get pushed to the back at the platform and crushed in the middle on the trains rather than having seats vacated for them.

What is it about London that makes people think less than certain 'lower' species of animals? Back in Newcastle I am sure, although we sound very uncivilised, we conform to a much better moral standards than our London coun-

terparts do. Even though trains are less frequent, I know the majority of Geordies would give up their seat or even just wait at the platform for the next train if we were to see 70-year-olds struggling to get on.

Is it too much to ask of people to stand for 15 minutes of their life or put their plans on hold for a minute or two by catching the next tube? Is it such a hinderance on your life to allow an older person in a fragile

state to have a comfortable journey at your expense? Well it seems so!

Although, rather than painting a completely negative picture, I did also see a rarity: on the same train, a young lady swiftly vacated her seat, allowing an old lady to sit down. The old lady was so happy and thankful. I presumed that the girl was either a 'northerner' or from abroad. It is a sad situation when people are rendered to think along these lines,

but can you blame me after observing the normal London tube users' behaviour?

To conclude, I would urge everyone to try to smile on the tube – it makes your journey a lot better, trust me. Break this vicious circle of defensive body language and misery. Just think, how you would feel when you are in your seventies and fragile, yet a youth of 20 cannot show you some moral decency.

Around Campus

felix@ic.ac.uk

Beerienteering and the Silwood beer monkey

By Andy Brown
Silwood Park Correspondent

It may have come to your attention that most of the recent articles which have been submitted to *Felix* from Silwood have revolved around the consumption of alcohol. This is indeed the case for most universities. However, one thing that must surely be unique to us is rabbits. Millions of them, everywhere.

Wye has its sheep, London has red buses and Silwood has more rabbits than a fox could dream of. Beaten down every year by outbreaks of myxomatosis, they are always keen to show their resilience and bounce back by doing what rabbits do best. As well as our fluffy friends, it has recently come to my attention that the woods of Silwood Park are inhabited by another well known mammal: the beer monkey. I would like to share with you my knowledge of this creature.

It all started with the 'beerienteering', one of the fresher events we run here. Freshers are given rather hastily drawn maps of hidden beer in the 50 hectares of land we have here. They're then sent on their way to find over 100 cans of beer before merrily returning to the bar many hours later wet, covered in mud, and attached to various fragments of vegetation. This was swiftly followed by the Silwood Beer Festival. Both these events were based around the consumption of alcohol, and during both, various members of the Silwood community were visited by the Silwood beer monkey.

I believed the legend behind the beer monkey was well known, but I have been proven wrong by the blank looks spread across the faces of those in the Silwood bar when I put forward this theory.

Ever wondered why, when you get home from a big night out, you have literally no

money left over? The answer is the beer monkey. It is highly unlikely that you calculated exactly how to spend your money whilst at the bar in that club or that your kebab cost exactly what you had left after you left the club. The fact is that the beer monkey stole your loose change. He can follow you home and can choose to strike at the moment your guard is let down, from your neighbour's bush or from behind the lamp post next to you. He will never harm you, he will just leave you perplexed as to how you managed to spend all of your money despite a vague recollection of visiting a cash machine at some point during the night.

Along with the beer monkey is the more commonly known and experienced 'beer goggles', a mind-altered state experienced by both male and females, leaving you wondering: "Oh no, did I?"

There is also the 'beer jack-




PHOTO: MIKE GARRATT

Silwood students after some 'beerienteering'. Apparently

that warm invisible coat that guards you from the cold on your walk home after a night out drinking, and the 'beer scooter' which safely transports you from club to

home. This is why you can't remember how you got home the night before and is why when asked the following morning "where did you go to last night?" rather than admit-

ting "er, I can't remember", "I got the beer scooter home" is a more than adequate explanation, ensuring that you got home safely and had a good night out.





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Clubs & Societies

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Bo' goes to Dartmoor

TEAM BO'

By James Devine

A long time ago in Hammersmith, there lived a man called Colonel Browne, who had a friend called Mr James. Together they used to build cars under the name of James & Browne.

For the most part, they were pretty ordinary. Only two James & Browne cars which rolled off the Hammersmith production line are still in existence, one of which is Boanerges (also known as Bo'), built in 1902.

Bo' (as many of you may know) is currently owned by Imperial College and is the official motorised mascot of the President of the City & Guilds College Union. The other car lives in Devon, currently owned by a Mr Proctor, who inherited it from his father and grandfather, a former employee of the James & Browne motor company.

As some of the more senior members of the college may remember, there were big celebrations to mark Bo's centenary at the National Motor Heritage Museum, in Gaydon. As these were attended by Mr Proctor and his James & Browne, it seemed only fitting that, on the occasion of his car's centenary, a delegation from Imperial should go and pay him a visit in Devon. And so the adventure began...

A week after the ordeal of the summer term, the devoted members of Team Bo' returned to College and began preparing the City & Guilds mascot for another long journey. We decided to load Bo' onto a trailer for the trip down to Dartmoor, as he wasn't designed to face the Friday morning rush hour. After squeezing every tool in the entire garage into a union minibus and hitching up the trailer, complete with car, we set off for Devon.

Unfortunately, team member Dave had not made it

to the garage by the time of our departure, but we set off anyway. This worked out for the best, as we were able to divert Dave as he raced to catch up with us. We sent him to collect a large quantity of alcohol, which came in handy for the weekend.

Newly qualified towing-Jedi Dan Lehmann drove the minibus plus trailer through the traffic and torrential rain, whilst most of the team slept like babies in the back. After a quick stop for essential re-fuelling (BK Whopper Burgers all round), we arrived at a random Little Chef and decanted Bo' from the trailer. It took about an hour to secure the exhaust pipes, which had fallen off the day before during a particularly energetic tuning run down Kensington Church Street.

"Team Bo' began preparing the City & Guilds mascot for another long journey..."

We cruised for a couple of laps of RNAS Yeovilton and posed for photos of Bo' next to a Harrier jump jet. Just as we were getting close to flying (on four wheels) down proper country lanes, the gear selection mechanism imploded during a three point turn. Driver James (in his dubious wisdom) decided that it could be more thoroughly fixed if the linkage was totally dismantled by the roadside. As soon as it had been stripped from the car and split into a large number of delicate looking pieces, it started to rain. 40 very wet minutes later, James had managed to put the linkage back together.

When Bo' was back in running order, the rain immediately stopped and we drove on towards the 'campsite'. This just happened to be the front

garden of a friendly family in the village of Curry Rivel. To be more precise, the family were in fact the current residents of a house which had been inhabited by the original owner of the 1904 car. Team Bo' pitched a couple of tents (one for Bo' and one for us), before departing on the bus for the village of Longport. We spent the evening enjoying hospitality of local public houses, before posing for a photo outside of the amusingly named Longport Tackle Shop and returning to our adopted front garden for some after-hours port drinking.

Soon the sun was rising over the rolling hills of Devon. Bo' was wheeled out of the tent and given an all-over polish. Special mention should go to the expert polishing skills demonstrated by Simon. Dan Lehmann even got out a special white marker pen to write 'Dunlop' down the side of Bo's tyres, much to the amusement of everyone else. At about this point, Mr Proctor arrived in his James & Browne, which for some reason is much quieter than Bo', but we still heard him coming.

A fair number of Team Bo' were still nursing sore heads from the night before, but Bo' was looking fantastically shiny, all just in time for a photographer from the local newspaper to turn up. Guilds regalia at the ready, we posed for several photos with both cars parked side by side, before driving up and down the nearest country lane, attempting to run the photographer over as he took pictures of us heading straight towards him. He insisted on standing in the middle of the road, only to leap head first into the Hawthorne hedge-row each time we got close.

Bo' soon tired of posing for photos. The gear selection mechanism promptly imploded once again. This time James just realigned the linkage, rather than going through the totally unneces-



Driving down a country lane: Bo' and the team

sary process of taking the whole thing apart.

In the afternoon, we drove the two James & Browne cars down into the centre of Curry Rivel for their annual village fête. Initially we were given a parking space on the vicar's immaculate newly concreted driveway. After about 40 minutes, Bo' had left his oily mark on the floor, so we decided to move up towards the village green before our oil leaks got us into trouble with the clergy. Having the only two surviving James & Browne cars together for the afternoon certainly provided an exciting edge to the village fair; the other highlights of which included a tombola and traditional maypole dancing.

Once the frivolity of the fair had died down, our accompanying Team Bo' alumni took Bo' out for a quick spin down the village lanes, with Paul at the helm, ably assisted by Pete in the role of co-driver and Jez hanging on in the back seat. The current students amongst the team

returned to our campsite to make themselves presentable for the evening. Mr Proctor had kindly arranged for us to dine on the 'Dartmoor Belle', a special volunteer staffed rail service which operates on the Okehampton Line.

This was no ordinary train – we had a whole first class carriage to ourselves and enjoyed a sumptuous three course dinner with lashings of wine. Good, clean (genuinely first class) fun. Even the usually serious Matt was amused. After dinner, we retired to the train's custom-built function carriage, where the onboard jazz quartet were playing requests and the bar was serving large measures of Glen Morangie whiskey.

Bo' had been safely garaged for the night with Mr Proctor, so after the evening's entertainment, Team Bo' retired to the nearby Okehampton youth hostel. Sunday was spent as part of a static display of veteran and classic vehicles at the recently restored Okehampton Station. We

managed the occasional lap of the car park, in between explaining the car's history to visiting tourists and interested passers-by.

At the end of the morning session, we snuck Bo' off into a corner of the car park to give Dan Reader, next year's Bo' Driver, a first opportunity at the controls. He soon managed to find first gear, and eventually second as well, before racing around the car park at the breakneck speed of 10 miles per hour. After the driving lesson had finished, we parked Bo' outside the station and disappeared inside for lunch.

Upon returning to inspect the car, we found that honorary Team Bo' member and ex-C&G president Shrenik Patel was curled up in the back seat, fast asleep. As the evening approached, we loaded Bo' back onto the trailer and started on the long journey back to College. All in all, a very successful and enjoyable adventure with our motorised mascot!

News from the choir

CHOIR

By Lucy Abbott

The Imperial College Choir has had a busy term in preparation for our forthcoming concert on Friday 10 December. We are performing an exciting programme, including the well known Mozart *Requiem* and Bach's *Magnificat*.

The term began with excellent recruitment at the Freshers' Fair, and with 180 members the choir is now the largest it has ever been. Our Freshers' welcome event, Champagne & Nibbles, was particularly enjoyable, giving everyone the opportunity to meet new people and sample some fine cava!

One of the annual autumn term highlights is singing at the Royal Albert Hall for

Commemoration Day. The choir sang at both ceremonies, performing the *Hallelujah Chorus* from *The Mount of Olives* by Beethoven, which was well received by the audience.

To supplement our weekly rehearsals on Thursday evenings in the Great Hall, we travelled to Silwood Park for a day of intensive rehearsal in beautiful and calm surroundings. As well as plenty of

productive rehearsals, there was also time to explore the grounds and socialise.

As we are now in advent, it is the time of year when choirs start to sing carols, and the chamber choir will be performing at the Imperial College carol service at Holy Trinity church on Wednesday 8 December. As well as the traditional carols for everyone to join in, the choir will also be singing some special

Christmas pieces.

Everyone is welcome to come and join the choir, and if you would like to come and join us next term to sing Brahms's *Requiem*, then please email the choir at icchoir@ic.ac.uk for further information. If you would like to hear about future choir events, please email lucy.abbott@imperial.ac.uk to be added to the events mailing list, or why not visit our web-

site, www.union.ic.ac.uk/arts/choir.

The Choir concert is on Friday 10 December at 8pm in the Great Hall. Tickets are £4 for students and £8 for non-students on the door, but are cheaper in advance, and can be purchased from Ainslee Rutledge in the Blyth music centre on the 5th floor of Sherfield, or on the 1st floor of Sherfield every lunchtime this week.

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

felix@ic.ac.uk

Imperial Big Band take gold

BIG BAND

By Ruth Roberts and Tom Woodcock

In the beginning God created the double bass. And God heard the double bass, and that it was good. And God said, "Let there be piano and drums". And God called his creation 'rhythm'. And he thought smugly to himself, "This is pimp".

"I'll add trumpets, and trombones. And in front of these angels of music, I will place cherubim and seraphim with saxophones. I shall send the prophet Jon to strum the guitar and to shout approval at this band of seraphs. A singer will spread my word, and that word shall be 'swing'..."

On Sunday 29 November, Imperial College Big Band took part in the National Concert Band Festival, held at Colchester Institute of Music and Performing Arts, and won the gold award. This was one of seven divisional competitions taking place across the UK and as such, the next step will almost certainly take the band to the National Finals at the Royal Northern College of

Music in Manchester. This is a huge achievement for any university or college band, and an unbelievable success for one without a music department.

The band performed a

"What are those idiots in the back row playing there?"

BERT AMBROSE

varied repertoire of three arrangements. The first was Nat Adderley's *Work Song*. Soloists Pete Hopcroft (alto sax) and Martin Cloke (piano), along with Ant Dearden (bass), were individually congratulated for their performances.

This was followed with a change of pace as singer Ruth Roberts led the vocal ballad *A Nightingale Sang In*

"I don't know, I haven't tried today"

MAYNARD BURNS, when asked how high he could play

Berkeley Square. The band's performance was described by the adjudicators as refined and idiomatic.

The stylish conclusion was Gordon Goodwin's *Count Bubba*. Solos from Tom Woodcock and Andy Thorpe (trombone), and Chaz Robertshaw (alto sax) were commended. Jan Marchant led the trumpet section "with a great sound".

It was perhaps the most focused (and sober) performance the Imperial Big Band have ever given. Obviously however, when a break came up in the schedule, they headed straight to the pub.

Both Imperial College Big Band and the University of Surrey (UNIS) attained gold standard in the open big band category, the adjudicators describing both bands' performances as "at least equal to the quality of the National Final last year". UNIS were the gold medallists of the nationwide competition last year. Imperial Big Band and UNIS Big Band are now making plans for a joint gig in Guildford, followed by a recording session the next day.

Imperial College's Big Band practice together just



The Big Band at the 2004 summer ball

once a week but it was evident from their performance that an intricate knowledge of the pieces and a life-long habit of listening to the jazz masters propelled them

through the rhythms and harmonies in a way that you can't get from reading music. Their enthusiasm and enjoyment of the music gave them the quality and charac-

ter that set them apart from the rest.

On Wednesday 15 December, the Big Band will be performing a Christmas-themed gig in dBs.

Strong contenders for ULU trophy

CHESS CLUB

By Anup Sinha

The Chess Club is going from strength to strength this year. We have been able to recruit six players with a BCF rating of more than 150. But we are still looking for more players, of all skill levels, to further strengthen our squad.

The Chess Club meets every Wednesday at 7pm in the Union Building (top floor, seminar room 3).

We are going to have the inaugural Christmas Dinner for our members and their

friends. The Dinner will be on Friday 10 December 2004, at 7pm in Kwalita Tandoori Restaurant (38 Thurloe Place, SW7 2HP). Please email chess@ic.ac.uk if you would like to come.

Our members will have the opportunity to play a grandmaster in January. We also offer free entry to some tournaments. If you are not already a member, it only costs £5 to become one.

Other events we are planning to organise include a summer trip to Greece (this should provide an excellent opportunity to use your summer holiday to have fun with

sightseeing while exercising your mind with a few games of chess), an Imperial College Championship (here the winner and runners-up will get a prize) and matches against Oxford and Cambridge (to see who is at the top of the game). We are going to elect a new committee member soon to help us with the amount of work we are undertaking.

Since the last edition of *Felix*, we have won further matches, to stay top of both the Middlesex League and the ULU League.

In the Middlesex League, we have won all our matches convincingly: 8-0 against



Thames Valley University, 8-0 against LSE, 7-1 against Harrow, 5-3 against Hendon and 6-2 against Kings Head. I don't think I need to say more about the performance of our players here.

In the ULU League, we

have beaten King's College both at home (4-2) and away (5-1). We were pleased when we outclassed LSE 5-1 at home. After our strong succession of results, we fielded a team mostly comprised of first year students, who had expressed their will to play for the team. We happened to lose the game 4-2. But, it was still a fairly good result, as we played five players (out of six) who had never represented Imperial College Chess Club before.

Donald Pang, the organiser of the ULU Chess League (from UCL) commented, "Well, LSE's crushing

defeat at the hands of the Imperialists comes as a fat surprise to all of us. I've also heard that Imperial won in the Middlesex league against LSE 8-0! This means Imperial is a strong contender for the trophy. I've also heard that LSE's team is comprised solely of players with a rating of more than BCF 140, which is a scary thought..."

The current committee members are doing an excellent job with their organisational skills. Please email chess@ic.ac.uk with your queries, and visit www.union.ic.ac.uk/chess for further details.

Stop violence against women

AMNESTY SOCIETY

By Farah Vohra

"He caught me and tied me up and then he started cutting my face. He never said a word except, 'This is your last night...'"

This is the case of Zahida Parveen, a 32-year-old Pakistani woman who was severely beaten by her husband for allegedly having an affair with her brother-in-law. In blind anger, her husband "bound her hands and feet" and "slashed her

with a razor and knife... Her earlobes were sliced off, her nose reduced to a reddened stump of bone and her eyes replaced by empty sockets." She was three months pregnant at the time.

[Source: *Constable*, "The Price of Honour", *The Gazette (Montreal)*, May 22, 2000]

This is just one of many cases of violence perpetrated against women. Statistics show that 'at least one out of every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime.' [Amnesty Pamphlet]

In the UK alone, recorded acts of violence include honour killings, forced marriage, rape, sexual violence, trafficking, female genital mutilation, physical abuse and others.

- 167 women are raped each day
 - One woman in nine is severely beaten by her male partner each year (Stanko et al, 1998)
 - On average, a woman is assaulted 35 times before her first call to the police (Jaffe, 1982)
- Amnesty International, the largest human rights

organization in the world, recognizes violence against women as a serious violation of human rights. This year, Amnesty has chosen to highlight this issue by running a 'Stop Violence Against Women' campaign from the 25 November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) until 10 December (World Human Rights Day).

The Amnesty International Society here, at Imperial, has chosen to mark the occasion by organizing a variety of events, including tabling sessions in the JCR (this

Thursday and Friday lunch-times) and a talk by Maryam Namazi on the violation of the rights of women (watch out for more information on this).

Imperial students can show their support by attending the events and actively participating in our campaign by signing petitions, responding to urgent action letters, giving donations and getting your hands messy and leaving your mark on our banner (literally!) All you have to do is turn up at a tabling session.

Amnesty has a host of

other programmes planned throughout the year. Watch out for upcoming events such as the 'Christmas Card Campaign', the 'Control Arms' campaign, the 'Human Rights and War on Terror' campaign and the 'World Human Rights Day' protest.

The members of Imperial College's Amnesty society meet up every Thursday at 12noon on the top floor of the Union building. For more information, or to join our society, just turn up at one of our meetings or contact oscar.dahlsten@ic.ac.uk.

christmas showcase

FASTER PUSSYCAT

subred

drum & bass Believe the Hype



December 17

8pm - 2am

ποση 1 hip hop : βαγγλα

faster pussycat

DMC scratch champ DJ Blakey

Hanif

ποση 2 drum & bass

mac rheson

nickyblackmarket

spindle & chug

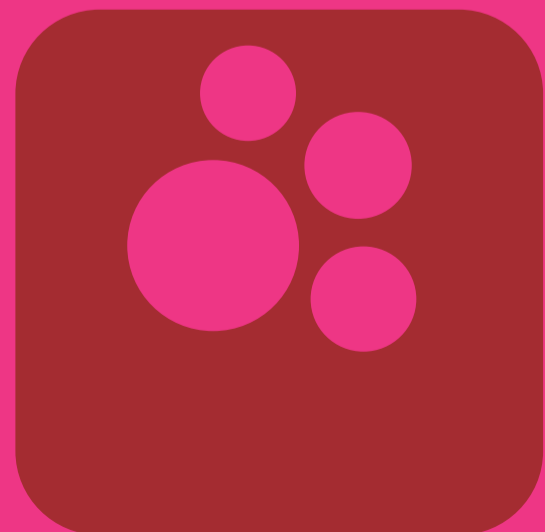
paradise bal

hσκαλ & smoke

entr card £5.50

union £6.00

guest £6.50



Imperial College Union, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Rd, London SW7 2BB

What's on

felix@ic.ac.uk

THURSDAY 9 DECEMBER

FILMS THE MOTORCYCLE DIARIES

6pm
Union Concert Hall, Beit Quad
Contact: cinema@ic.ac.uk

CLUBS AND SOCIETIES MEDICS DRAMA AUDITIONS

6.30pm onwards
Reynolds Bar, Charing Cross
Hospital
Auditions for the main play,
The Crucible, at Charing
Cross. There are around 20
parts in total, six of them
main. So whether you fancy
a leading role or want to help
with costumes, lighting, set
or backstage, please come to
the auditions.

Contact:
catherine.kirby@ic.ac.uk

UNION EVENTS COMEDY NETWORK

8pm
dBs, Beit Quad
£4
With Dan Antopolski.
Contact: union@ic.ac.uk

FILMS HERO

8.45pm
Union Concert Hall, Beit Quad
Contact: cinema@ic.ac.uk

FRIDAY 10 DECEMBER

UNION EVENTS SCHOOL DAZE

8pm-2am
dBs, Beit Quad
£3
Vodka and mixer £1 in dBs
while stocks last.
Contact: union@ic.ac.uk

SUNDAY

12 DECEMBER

UNION EVENTS MEDICAL SCHOOL CAROL SERVICE

6pm
St Augustine's Church,
Queen's Gate
Start Christmas week with
carols by candlelight and
readings from professors and
students, followed by mulled
wine and mince pies.
Contact:
medic.president@ic.ac.uk

MONDAY 13 DECEMBER

UNION EVENTS MISTLETOE AND MAYHEM: THE MEDICS CHRISTMAS BALL

Pacha
Get ready for a night of fun
a frolics at one of London's
most prestigious nightclubs -
Pacha. With £4000 behind the
bar, top DJs and free sheesha,
you might think Christmas
has come to soon. Tickets
are £15 and are on sale now.
Available from South Ken SU
office, Charing Cross bar and
Wilson House each night this
week.

Contact:
medic.president@ic.ac.uk

TUESDAY 14 DECEMBER

FILMS CINEMA ALL-NIGHTER

From 6pm
Union Concert Hall, Beit Quad
6pm Shark Tale
8.25pm I, Robot
10.50pm Wimbledon
12.45am Man On Fire
3.30am Layer Cake
5.30am Sky Captain: The
World of Tomorrow
Contact: cinema@ic.ac.uk

CLUBS AND SOCIETIES LEOSOC: CHRISTMAS CARD MAKING

7pm
Room 407, Electrical
Engineering Building
Have some fun making origi-
nal Christmas cards and help
people at the same time. The
cards we make are used by
Amnesty.
Contact:
alison.twelvvetrees@ic.ac.uk

UNION EVENTS STA TRAVEL QUIZ NIGHT

8-10.30pm
Beit Quad
FREE
The quiz is a bit of a tradition
at the Union, with cash and
beer prizes on offer. Get a
team together and see how
much you really know.
Contact: union@ic.ac.uk

UNION EVENTS PARAMOUNT COMEDY ON TAP

8pm
Reynolds Bar, Charing Cross
Hospital
The last and undoubtedly best
comedy of term. Arrive early
to avoid disappointment.
Contact:
medic.president@ic.ac.uk

CLUBS AND SOCIETIES SINFONIETTA CONCERT

8pm
Great Hall, Sherfield Building
£2-£5
Music by Wagner, Schubert
and Copland.
Contact: sinfonietta@ic.ac.uk

WEDNESDAY 15 DECEMBER

UNION EVENTS CHEEKY

8pm-1am
Beit Quad
£1
Flirty current chart music
and party classics. plus the
Big Band playing seasonal

Running an event? Tell us about it!

Felix will print your listings free of charge.
Just email felix@ic.ac.uk and tell us:

- the name of the event
- who is running it
- the time
- the location
- the cost (if any)
- a brief description of the event
- a contact email address

favourites.
Contact: union@ic.ac.uk

UNION EVENTS MEDICS SPORTS NIGHT

Reynolds Bar, Charing Cross
Hospital
A huge clubs and societies
night in the style of Freshers
Fortnight. Celebrate
Christmas with your club!
Contact:
max.marsden@ic.ac.uk

THURSDAY 16 DECEMBER

FILMS SHARK TALE

6pm
Union Concert Hall, Beit Quad
Contact: cinema@ic.ac.uk

UNION EVENTS ACOUSTIC NIGHT

Reynolds Bar, Charing Cross
Hospital
An evening of live acoustic,
jazz and open mic at the
Reynolds.
Contact:
medic.president@ic.ac.uk

FILMS MAN ON FIRE

8.15pm
Union Concert Hall, Beit Quad
Contact: cinema@ic.ac.uk

FRIDAY 17 DECEMBER

UNION EVENTS WINTER WONDERLAND BOP

Reynolds Bar, Charing Cross
Hospital
The last and biggest bop of
the year. Come and celebrate
Christmas at the Reynolds
with Father Christmas and a
snow machine!
Contact:
rachel.guest@ic.ac.uk

UNION EVENTS CHRISTMAS SHOWCASE

8pm-2am
Beit Quad
£6
End the term with hip-hop,
drum 'n' bass and bangra.
Contact: union@ic.ac.uk

ALL WEEK

FILMS: VUE CINEMA, FULHAM BROADWAY THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA (12A)

Fri to Thurs: 12noon, 2pm,
3pm, 5.10pm, 6.15pm, 8.15pm,
9.20pm. Fri and Sat only:
11.20pm. Sat and Sun only:
11am.

BLADE TRINITY (15)
Fri to Thurs: 12.30pm, 3.20pm,
6pm, 8.45pm. Fri and Sat only:
11.30pm.

THE POLAR EXPRESS (U)
Fri to Thurs: 1.10pm, 3.30pm,
5.45pm, 8pm. Sat and Sun
only: 10.45am.

THE INCREDIBLES (U)
Fri to Thurs: 1pm, 2.15pm,
3.45pm, 5pm, 6.30pm, 7.45pm,
9.10pm. Fri and Sat only:
10.30pm, 11.45pm. Sat and
Sun only: 10.30am, 11.30am.

**BRIDGET JONES: EDGE
OF REASON (15)**
Fri to Thurs: 12.40pm, 3.10pm,
5.40pm, 8.30pm. Fri and Sat
only: 11pm.

**CHRISTMAS WITH THE
KRANKS (PG)**
Fri to Thurs: 1.45pm, 4.15pm,
6.40pm. Sat and Sun only:
11.10am.

**THE MERCHANT OF
VENICE (PG)**

Fri to Thurs: 1.30pm, 6.50pm.
THE FORGOTTEN (12A)
Fri to Thurs: 9pm. Fri and Sat
only: 11.10pm.

**AFTER THE SUNSET
(12A)**
Fri to Thurs: 9.30pm. Fri and
Sat only: 11.50pm.

**NAPOLEON DYNAMITE
(PG)**
Fri to Thurs: 10.15pm. Sat and
Sun only: 11.20am.

RIDING GIANTS (12A)
Fri to Thurs: 4.30pm.

Competitions

Win a mobile phone worth £120

'Tis the season to get jolly and snap happy! Take a photo of your mate this holiday when they're looking worse for wear and Virgin Mobile will reward the most mischievous photographer with their very own Sony Ericsson T610 camera phone worth £120.

To celebrate the launch of Virgin Mobile's great new infotainment service, BITES, and its scandalous 'Worse for Wear' gallery of the all time best pictures, we're encouraging you to get creative on your festive booze fuelled evenings out and send us the evidence. We're talking underpants on your head, lipstick moustaches and squirry cream bikinis - as if you need any encouragement!

BITES is an exciting new boredom busting service which offers downloads, competitions, gossip and a laugh straight to your phone. Free to use until February 2005, BITES is the perfect antidote to boredom, offering bite-sized entertainment on demand. For more information visit www.virgin-mobile.com/bites. Virgin Mobile customers call 22522 to set-up on BITES.



To enter, hand your photo in to the Felix office in the West Wing of Beit Quad, or email it to felix@ic.ac.uk



Music

music.felix@ic.ac.uk

Stars delight, Brian disappoints

The eclectic Canadians' third album is a fantastic example of what pop should be, whereas Brian "I used to be in Westlife" McFadden's solo attempt is somewhat poor

ALBUM REVIEWS

Stars

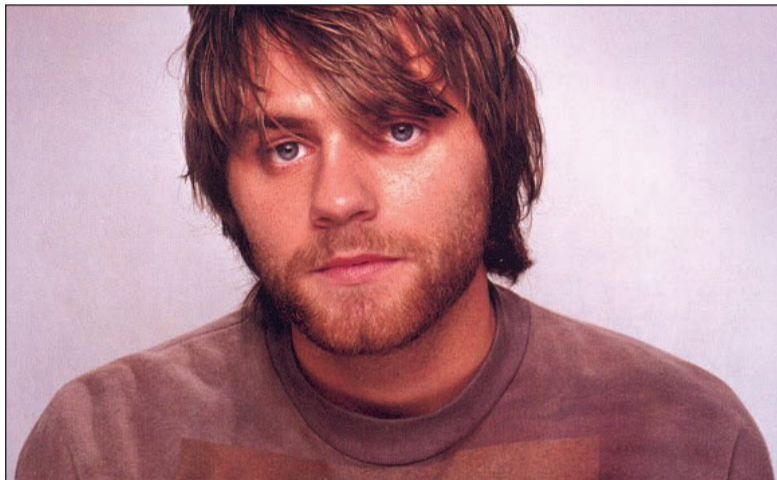
Set Yourself On Fire
(Arts & Crafts Records)

★★★★★

Stars are yet another band to come out of the eclectic Canadian collective that spawned KC Accidental, Broken Social Scene and Metric, the basic premise being that loads of art-school musicians (Do Say Make Think members, for example) get together in random little groups and make deliberately different music from their 'home' bands. When these beard-stroking, arch post-rock kids go pop, the results are astonishing.

Stars is based around the "he said, she said" vocal interplay of the fantastically named Torquil Campbell and Amy Millan. You can consider them the most pop end of the collective; there's precious little in the way of wigouts, krautrock clicks or any of that crap. They aim to take over the genre founded by later Pavement and Stephen Malkmus – the wry, witty pop song, mixing experimentation with clever lyrics and hook-laden choruses.

Opener *Your Ex-Lover Is Dead* is a tongue-in-cheek, heart-in-mouth description of the end of a relationship, set against horns and Death Cab-esque guitar lines. The whole thing has a vague resemblance to *Fairy Tale Of New York*; it catalogues love gone sour in the same offbeat way. In fact, the whole record is about relationships being destroyed, falling apart, or reminisced over. Check out *The Big Fight*; gentle Rhodes piano and a slow, gentle jazz feel allow Torquil and Amy's call-and-response vocals about the



Brian McFadden: "Now I'm a serious solo artist, I need a beard!"
Marketing: "But it makes you look a tit"

mundane facts of a breakup room to breathe: "There are bills here for you / that's cos nothing is free."

Ageless Beauty is a wall of guitar noise, reminiscent of Broken Social Scene's *Almost Crimes*, which progresses slowly and predictably, Amy's soft, schoolgirl-esque vocals floating ethereally over the top, before a surprising, offbeat flurry of hypermelodic guitar noise signals the huge chorus to come crashing in while she joyfully proclaims "We will always be alive!" A My Bloody Valentine homage it may be, but it's a damn good one.

What I'm Trying To Say comes across like the Postal Service aping Superchunk; bleepy keyboards and syncopated basslines track a bittersweet tale of love and heavy drug use with yet another killer chorus: "I am trying to say / what I'm trying to say / without having to say / I love you". Cheesy is never far away when you're trying to chronicle romantic entanglements, but the clever wit

and dead-on observations will make you laugh (or cry) it off.

Special mention must go to *The First Five Times* for being the best song ever about the first five times you have sex with someone – it's achingly true, heartrendingly funny and just plain genius. A bouncy acoustic riff drives Torquil through his reminiscing, before a buzzing bassline and heavy drums take us to a much darker place: "And every day / it's changed since then", sing Amy and Torquil together in gloriously sad harmonies.

I could talk for hours about how great this album is. Every song is a small slice of pop perfection in its own right; witness swelling horns and soft organs on *Sleep Tonight*, driving, bouncy basslines and eighties synths on the hopelessly upbeat paen to love *Set Yourself On Fire*, or the rush of Pavement guitars that precedes an ode to longlost schooldays and Friend's Reunited-style meetings, *Reunion*. "I had six

too many drinks last night, yes / that's why I made you stay" sings Torquil, like it's the most romantic sentiment ever.

You need to hear this record. Seriously. It's moving, at turns both funny and bleak, and it's full of more great melodies and clever lyrics than most bands manage in an entire career. You owe it to your ears, your heart, and that little gooey bit in your brain that loves great pop music.

Andrew Sykes
Music Editor

Brian McFadden

Irish Son
(Sony Music UK)

★★☆☆☆

Jim Morrison's back! Well, he isn't actually, but from looking at the front cover art for the ex-Westlife star's latest album you can tell that's the look he's going for, as the rugged former boy band charmer now makes his attempt at a credible, 'grown up' record. But coming from a safe, chart-friendly musical background, you know he's not going to push the boundaries too far, and he's definitely not going to call himself the new lizard king, take loads of drugs and run around naked onstage, unlike the aforementioned Doors front man.

Or will he? Songs like *Demons* and *He's No Hero*, with its lyrics of doom and alcoholism (sample: "Have you ever, been lost in a different world / where everything you have known / has gone..."), it gives the impression that the squeaky-clean image of Westlife hides a history of misuse and depression. Well it would do, if the actual musical compositions included in it weren't so dull and

conservative.

Yes, it's his new 'mature' album; however it mainly stays safe with slow, meandering musical compositions: music that makes Keane sound like the Kinks. The overall songwriting is uninspired as well, which is not surprising as he co-wrote the album with Robbie Williams' ex-songwriter. All songs fall into one of two categories: the happy songs about love, or the sad songs about love. And with each one having a nice slop of schmaltz applied to it, you've a recipe for a whole album consisting of dull, unmemorable songs, with a few that are recognisable purely for being excessively bad – *Sorry, Love Daddy* being a prime example, a real heart wrencher written as a goodbye note from a father who decides to do a runner. Except it wrenches the funny bone rather than the heart (and if someone I knew decided to write his goodbye like that, I'd be glad he's gone).

There are a few reasonably interesting songs on here though – the opener, *Irish Son*, is a surprisingly articulate tune about the strict religious upbringing in his home country, if let down by the cheesiness of the tune. Same with *Lose – Lose Situation*, although it's back to love again, mind (and – gasp – he even swears a bit!). *Walking Disaster* is also a decent energetic little tune, taking its inspiration from recent bands like Snow Patrol.

But that's it, and the rest is just the same boring dirge, albeit a better set of dirge than what was produced with Westlife. I would only recommend buying this as a Christmas present for that older relatives who thinks Dido offers enough excitement in music today.

Matthew Hartfield

Kings of Leon showcase their new, self-written material

SINGLE REVIEW

Kings of Leon

Four Kicks
(HandMeDown Records)

★★★★★

Listening to this gets one in touch with one's primal urges. I had to restrain myself from shaking loose and getting in touch with my inner ape whilst screaming out, "RAWK!"

Darker, edgier and yet more melodic than anything on *Youth And Young Manhood*, this also manages to take over your life in its "what just happened there?" two minutes and ten seconds. Yes! Only two minutes ten seconds; that's how long the Mars Volta take to tune up. It follows the formula of *The Bucket* with its driving verse and then half speed broken down chorus.

However, who cares about originality when a riff this good pounds away with all its garage rock scratchy excellence?

After repeated listens I still have no idea what Caleb is singing about. The chorus goes something like, "You whipped, you switch play pie-sale, I get my guns from south, who take to the yard like a cock fight, for kids who's strutting now?" If anyone has any idea what this means, then please send your answer on a postcard to: Couldn't Care Less With A Riff This Good, London, England.

For all the incomprehensible lyrics, I guarantee that you will be shouting along about whipping your tackle out at a pie-sale (I will not be held responsible for any mental damage this may incur) by the third listen. Oh, and did I mention how good the riff is?

Matthew Hoban



Kings of Leon: tunesmiths of the highest order; great beards too

Feature: Four Day Hombre

Five lads from Lancaster who make sky-scraping, epic rock in their home-made studio return with their new EP

EP REVIEW

Four Day Hombre
Mr M
(Alamo Records)
★★★★☆

Sometimes the best way to describe any band is through comparisons. Sometimes, though, pigeon-holing does them an injustice. Such is the situation with Four Day Hombre.

During the A&R frenzy following the release of their Radio 1 approved debut single *The First Word Is The Hardest*, there were many comparisons made: Elbow, Muse, Haven, Mogwai, Jeff Buckley, The Smiths... the list goes on indefinitely. As you can already see from that variety, this old pigeon-holing business isn't as easy as it's cracked up to be.

Lead track on this three song EP, *Mr M*, starts with piano and delicate semi-falsetto vocals, creating some dark atmospherics before the addition of some nifty slide-guitar. It builds gradually, creating an amount of tension before the chorus. Then



Four Day Hombre: talented and sadly overlooked

enter spine-tingling harmonies of the man-screaming type. The song ends in a cacophony of noise before the brilliant addition of the lead guitar's lead being pulled out and thrown on the floor. So it goes indie intro, Muse-style chorus theatrics, and ends in white noise. See the problem?

Drink starts slowly, and sounds a

lot like Elbow. But then it explodes into a big, bold, and loud chorus. They manage to avoid the old post-rock 'quiet bit, loud bit' formula by bringing it back down for the ending.

The Boy With The Mended Heart begins with snare drums and upbeat piano, again with very atmospheric, delicate yet sky-scraping vocals. It

drops down to just piano and vocals in a truly spine-tingling way to finish.

A brilliant release from a band trying to make it on their own (see interview, below), may Four Day Hombre continue to confuse music journalists for years to come.

James Millen

Alternative Music Society President

Life is cheese

Felix managed to catch up with Simon Wainwright, pin him to a chair and ask him about Radio 1 airplay, their new self-run label, and cheese

INTERVIEW

Four Day Hombre
Simon Wainwright, vocals/guitarist
Quote: "Try again. Fail better"

Four Day Hombre isn't these lads' first band. They've had years of being involved in bands "of varying styles and success - from clubland and beyond", explains Simon.

"There's a lot to be said for cutting your teeth and learning your trade in the working men's clubs

of Lancashire and Yorkshire...gives you a certain, erm, outlook. A certain appreciation."

The core members met at Lancaster University, "doing various other musical activities". Not having any real music qualifications, they formed a band "because we desperately wanted to make great music... it was the only avenue we could explore. Ash (drums) was an old mate of Ed's (keyboards) and he initially came down to just lay down some loops. The rest, as they say, is history".

After spending a year or so out in the unsigned wilderness, Four Day Hombre emerged from their basement studio with an incredible, self-produced single. Simon talks frankly about the aftermath: "When we first got all the airplay on Radio 1 with *The First Word Is The Hardest* our phone just went mad with every A&R man, or A&R man's monkey, calling us up and saying they loved us and could they have a full demo and were we playing London and would we like to meet up... It was incredible and for a while it felt like we ruled the world and all glory would be ours... in a narcissistic kind of way."

In the end, though, the band turned down the offers, worried about how the future would pan out if they did: "In the end we weren't offered a lot - we didn't really fit any particular niche and couldn't be associated with any bandwagon." Simon explains that they were seen as a long shot by most of the labels, and "major labels won't back long shots at the moment - the stakes are so high, the chances of success so slim and the budgets so offensively large that unless you're a sure-fire seller or a photocopy of the latest big thing then you don't really stand much of a chance." It was a case of "not wanting to give up our creative freedom - we were very independent, even then."

Setting up a record label was an almost logical step from there: "Over the last year we've released two singles and had numerous record contracts in our hands, and we've become painfully aware that if you want anything doing properly then

do it yourself." Since they'd already collected lots of creative people and were "doing everything in-house anyway - all the artwork, the web stuff, the marketing" they decided it was time to do it. "We thought we might as well just make it official, put on our waterwings and jump in at the deep end. We're all strong swimmers."

Though the label was set up primarily as a way of releasing their own records, there are plans to sign more bands. Simon sees it as a future direction for the label, not for at least two years: "If we're in a position to get other bands recording at that point then we'll definitely do it."

He has a few sage words of advice for young bands trying to get their music heard: "Try again. Fail again. Fail better. Keep playing, at all times just keep playing." He has high hopes for the exposure potential of the web: "Get something on the internet. For better or worse, it is the future."

Four Day Hombre relied mainly upon their own recording and producing skills, as Simon explains. "Take the plunge and invest in some recording gear, no matter how basic. It allowed us to develop our sound and take away the pressure of one-day recording sessions." Wise words indeed.

Lastly, asked to compare his music to a Tesco Value product, Simon chooses "cheese of a notable strength" before finishing with the prophetic "life is cheese; ask anyone."

Sartre, eat your heart out.

James Millen

Shocker!
Good Charlotte
single
panned,
Chemical
Brothers
regress

SINGLE REVIEWS

Chemical Brothers
Galvanise
Virgin Records
★★★★☆

The Chemical Brothers have returned to their roots. This is basically musical language for "We've run out of ideas and now we're going to nick stuff from our more successful albums".

However, the Chemicals have not gone back to big beat but the inspiration behind that genre. They've gone back to their hip-hop roots, even employing A Tribe Called Quest's Q-Tip (anyone remember *Can I Kick It?*). The big bass is still there but there is a distinct lack of drive in this track.

The repetition of the line, "Don't hold back!" in the track does not translate into the music, where every part of this record feels predictable, so much so that the climax doesn't feel that climactic. Everything just happens and does not demand attention, nor is there the experimentation with sounds as with previous efforts (including the fantastic *Star Guitar*). All in all, this new single from the Chemical Brothers is as average as this review.

Matthew Hoban

Good Charlotte
I Just Wanna Live
Epic Records
☆☆☆☆☆

No, no, no, no, no! If faced with the prospect of having my testicles removed by starved badgers or listening to this song more than once, then I'm afraid the life of a eunuch awaits me. They have really taken the whole punk boy band thing to a new level, a level where they just become a boy band.

If you wanted to know what N*Sync would sound like if they didn't shave for a couple of days and were beaten with sacks full of coal as children, then by all means indulge yourself with this. Think of me as your sacrificial lamb; I listen to this pervasively grotesque excuse for music so you don't have to. In fact, I deserve a cult who worship me, judging from how truly awful Good Charlotte are.

If they insist on making this kind of faeces-smearing life-draining 'music' then they should now be called Bad Charlotte. Bad. So they just wanna live, well then they should give people a reason not to kill them. Come on boys, good men have died for less in fishing and cooking accidents.

Matthew Hoban



Four Day Hombre: all tiny midgets. No, really



Ian Betts: from RSM to Radio 1

INTERVIEW

Regular readers may recall that previously I have enthused about the merits of DJ and former Imperial student Ian Betts and his production *Love Resurrection*. I invited Ian back to College to find out how you go from being an Imperial graduate to one of the most talked about names in the London trance scene with bookings from here to Thailand.

FELIX: Welcome back then! How are you?

IAN BETTS: Very well thanks! But pretty busy. With a full time job, DJing and the production stuff always on the go, it can get a bit hectic, but I can't really complain.

Nice of you to spare us the time then. You were here a while ago weren't you?

Yeah, from '89 to '92, I did geology in the RSM. I think I've been back once since I graduated, that was about ten years ago.

Notice anything different?

Not really. It all looks remarkably similar to back then. The [Beit] Quad is a bit tidier and looks like it might have had a bit of a paint, and there used to be a games room where those toilets are, but this [the Union Bar] looks almost exactly as I remember it, and I knew it quite well! There's also that big white frame thing on the road up here.

The Tanaka Business School.

Oh right. That wasn't there when I was here. It doesn't quite look finished...?

Strange you should say that. So, you did geology, and now you're a world famous DJ. Not exactly a common career path is it?

It's not quite like that. I only really DJ part time. During the day I'm an IT consultant for an American bank. I left uni with a massive debt and ended up getting a job in a meat factory to pay it off. While I was there I bought myself a computer and taught myself IT and it kind of developed from there. The DJing came much later. And I wouldn't say 'world famous'.

So what were you like as an undergraduate?

Many drunken nights spent in Southside, and RSM bar nights on Wednesdays with the chaps and their drinking games.

Good grief, things really haven't changed!

Ha ha, probably not, no. I was into my indie and rock stuff back then too, I almost got involved with *Felix* and the radio station, but I never got round to it. I played drums and guitar in a band though, and we used to practise in the basement of the Union in this dingy little room with grotty carpets and a smoky kind of stench.

Were you any good? What

were you called?

We were called (hangs head in shame) Easy Meat.

Easy Meat?!

I know, I know, it wasn't my choice, I was out-voted three to one. But we weren't that bad, we played a headline gig at the Mean Fiddler once and the Garage another time. We split up after a year or two when one of the guitarists went to Cardiff, and then I joined another, more folkly band. The music background probably helped with picking up the DJing.

So how did you get into trance if you were an indie kid?

Well dance music didn't really exist when I started uni and it only began to pick up after I left. Basically, when I was working at the factory, some of the guys went to a bar one evening and then just said "Hey, lets go to a club". We went along, it just clicked with me, and I've never looked back!

What about the DJing?

That was even later. I had been buying records for a while, all the stuff I was hearing out at the weekends, I'd buy it just because I loved it. I had no intention of playing it seriously, DJing never crossed my mind, I just had a basic turntable. And then it got to a stage where we thought that the scene had changed too much, the clubs weren't as good as they were in the old days etc.

Some things really don't change then?

Exactly. So they said to me, you've got a load of records, why don't you start playing? It seemed like a reasonable idea so I bought myself a pair of belt-driven hi-fi turntables and taught myself to mix on those. It was only a hobby back then though, I never considered taking it any further, didn't dream of it. But I picked it up, and about three years later in '99 I started my own promotion so that I could start to play out to real people.

And it all kicked off from there?

Not at all. Like I said, back then it was just a bit of fun, literally a hobby. It only really started to gather any momentum about 18 months ago. I was made redundant just before that, and I got a pretty decent redundancy package, so I decided to buy a load of new kit. I got myself set up with a studio at home, bought myself some proper decks and started getting gigs and doing it more seriously. Around March last year, I played a gig for Heat at Turnmills and Steve Hill [Kiwi legend, DJ, producer, record label boss] was there, as well as Damo [HeatUK head honcho]. I played *Love Resurrection* as my first tune and the place absolutely went off, Steve ran into the booth asking what it was, and when I told him it was my own tune he immediately wanted it for his new record label and called me every day for the next week asking about it.



Betts: knows where he's headed

And that's when it all kicked off?

Oh yeah! Damo loved the set as well and I got asked back to play a few more gigs for Heat, I started playing out on a more regular basis, my name got around and I was asked to be the other Heat resident back in February.

And now you're one of the biggest trance DJs in London.

Ha ha! People always say this to me, but I honestly don't see it. It's really strange, like being in the eye of the storm where everything is just going on around you. I guess because it's happened so gradually and I never really intended it to take off, I haven't noticed anything that different.

Oh come on! Heat resident [they only have two], headline sets for Twisted, Cream at Amnesia in Ibiza, tunes played on Radio 1... you aren't exactly 'local' any more.

Those things were all astonishing. I did a three hour headline set for Twisted at the Fridge, and it baffled me. I fully expected no-one to turn up and the place was absolutely rammed, I suppose that's when I started to think "Hmmm, maybe there's something in this?"

The Amnesia gig came about because Heat were doing a week of co-promotions out there. Damo suggested me to Cream, I sent them a demo and they booked me for the opening set. I played before Armin van Buuren!

What was that like?

Strange. I was perfectly fine for the whole day and directly before the gig, people kept asking me if I was nervous but I actually wasn't. I knew what I was doing, why would I be? It all went great, it started off with a couple of hundred people there whose faces I mostly knew, which was nice. By the end there were a few thousand people there. Armin liked it, I had a chat with him, shook his hand, all fairly usual, and then I left the DJ booth. All of a sudden I realised what I'd just done, that I'd just finished playing to five thousand people in the best club in the world and they'd loved it. I stood by the bar for about two hours in an utter

daze, just staring around, not really knowing what to do. I had to leave, it was too much to take in. That whole experience is definitely the pinnacle so far!

And then there was Love Resurrection...

Indeed. I'd had the idea for a while, and then when I got my studio I had the chance to give it a go. People seemed to love it, and because I only gave it to a very few select people, it was mostly me who played it so it became associated with me, which probably helped. It finally went to press a couple of weeks ago. 750 were printed and it sold out in about 10 days apparently. I think we're going to get another 750 done, it's been licensed to a couple of MoS type compilations in South Africa and they use it in most of the jingles on their equivalent of Radio 1, and as you say, you can get it in HMV Japan.

Not to mention Radio 1 in this country...

That was also awesome. I'd played at Knowwhere on the Friday night just before Dave Pearce and used it as my last tune. As usual the reaction was incredible, he noticed, so I gave him a copy, rather hopefully. Then on Sunday night I was driving home listening to Dance Anthems, I was about a mile from home and I heard the beat coming in, I went crazy, I had to pull over and catch my breath until it finished, it was incredible.

You did some radio work yourself didn't you?

Well, I did a show on [internet radio station] TranceAirwaves for a while. I sent them an email and demo asking if they wanted any DJs, and they said yes. Sadly it doesn't exist anymore, those kind of things cost money, especially when you're streaming terabytes of data, and they just weren't getting the investment needed. It's a shame because internet radio is a fantastic resource and I think it is definitely the way forward. The potential audiences are huge and it's much easier to get internet radio going than a proper radio station.

So what have you got lined up for next year?

Well, I'm going back to do a small tour of Australia some time, a few dates around Sydney, Melbourne, Perth. Apparently there's already a buzz and they expect tickets for a boat party to sell out pretty quickly. I'm going to Thailand to do a Full Moon party for Heat, there's a big outdoor event in Cape Town with a 4000 people arena that I'll probably be doing and Steve [Hill] is always on the look out for stuff in Oz and NZ. They've asked me back to Ibiza next season.

Any chance of seeing you in this country?

Ha ha! Of course. I'm playing the main room at Brixton Academy for New Years Eve with Heat and The Gallery, plus there's the Heat

Christmas Party at KoKo [formerly Camden Palace] this Friday which is going to be awesome. They've completely refurbished CP and it looks so plush, all the Heat DJs will be there, the atmosphere will be fantastic and it's just going to be brilliant. If you get there early there will be some tickets on the door. I'm also taking bookings for April and May already, there's Heat Evolution in January as well as Knowwhere that month. Heat have some massive things planned for next year, things that will blow what they've done so far out of the water, so look out for those.

So you're planning on running with the DJ thing? Don't fancy heading back into promotion?

Not really, now the DJing is working nicely I think I'll stick with it. I'm still going to be doing a lot of production work too, there's about five things in the pipeline, I'm back off home now to get in the studio with Marc [French, Heat DJ] and there may be a Heat LP sometime next year too.

Any advice for the kids that want to get into DJing?

It's clichéd I know, but it really is all about practise, practise as much as possible, and try to be different. Promoters hear hundreds of demos a week so you have to stand out - playing anthems will get you nowhere. Do your own productions, remix stuff, be different. These days, about 75% of what I play is either my own original work or remixes/reworks that I've done. And talk to them, go to their events and get to know them. They are more likely to respond to you if they see you out and about than if you just send them a CD and never follow it up.

OK then, finally, what did you think of the DJ Mag Top 100?

I think this year's results show just how global the poll is now, and the growing popularity of dance music in America. I also think a lot of DJs place too much importance on making it into the list - the Top 10 is pretty much impenetrable at the moment. The DJs got where they are through hard work but they have also turned themselves into widely recognisable 'brands' and so will always feature highly in such polls. I do respect PvD and Ferry Corsten because they are consistently good, and Ferry is one of the most innovative producers around. The list does highlight which genres are most popular though; trance is that big outside London, it's up there with house, even in England, you don't find many hard dance clubs outside London.

Thanks very much for taking the time to speak to us. Anything else you'd like to add?

Just that it's the KoKo club this weekend and then Heat NYE at Brixton, tickets are selling fast so if you fancy coming along then I suggest you get in there quick.

Dominic Farrell

Paul van Dyk less than perfect

DJ Paul van Dyk and club Gatecrasher are two of the biggest names around on the trance scene, but did they cut it last Friday at Heaven?

CLUB REVIEW

Gatecrasher
Heaven
★★★★☆

On Friday 26 November, the colossal juggernaut that is Gatecrasher rumbled its way into London's Heaven, and in the driving seat was the man himself, variously known as God, Your Majesty, or just plain Paul van Dyk.

I'd been looking forward to it for ages – the guys I met on the beach in Ibiza were coming down from Manchester, and in short, I was thoroughly overexcited.

Back in March of this year, clubland was looking distinctly wobbly. Trance had been flat on its back for the whole of last year, and I'd started to think maybe I'd grown out of dance music. It was going to be a wrench, but bear in mind I'm 27, and the time is going to come for all of us. Anyway, I went to this exact same event in the exact same venue back in March, and Paul van Dyk was so frantically awesome, I joyfully ditched the idea of retirement and here I still am today.

So, I was expecting great things from Friday, and indeed there's nothing quite like arriving at Heaven to bring you to an absolute pitch of feverish excitement – the sweep of the road down the side of the sta-



Paul van Dyk: having an off day?

tion, the steps down to the tunnel, the orange glow of the lights, queues of that unmistakable breed – clubbers, in their sexy trousers with zips up the side and trainers and funky t-shirts, clutching their tickets in hot little hands, the bouncers, the

metal detectors, and overall, that deep bass thump that you can hear and feel in the pit of your stomach. Oooh... clubbing anyone?

Nick Riley warmed up for PvD, and played a surprisingly low-paced set – sort of a proggy deep house

rather than trance. Still, he played some ace tracks – Tilt's *The World Doesn't Know*, and the brilliantly urgent *Jump The Next Train* by Young Parisians.

And then, the time had come – 1am, the start of PvD's set, and that undeniably emotional, glorious sound. I crept forward to the front to make sure it was him, and there's an undeniable thrill in seeing that deadpan face that's looked out at you from so many record sleeves and CD cases. It was less of an uplifting and euphoric set than I would have expected – more uncompromising, with a definite tech influence, but nothing wrong with that. There were plenty of big tunes as well, like Sander van Doorn's *Dark Roast*, and many, many of his own – *For An Angel*, *Wir Sind Wir*, *Time Of Our Lives*, and *Crush* – and this is kind of when the trouble started.

I recognised almost everything I heard him play, and I didn't hear anything I didn't know that I desperately wanted to find out about. He played Space Brothers' *One More Chance*, for heaven's sake, which is positively ancient and, I'm sad to say, in my opinion a tiny bit cheesy. Paul just seemed to have given himself a bit of an easy ride. I still love the man to bits but it really won't do. I don't know, perhaps he was ill, or having a bad day, but if you're performing, you're going to be judged. I even wondered cyni-

cally if Nick Riley had deliberately (or been instructed to) played at a slower pace to make it easier for PvD. Towards the end there was a bit of the old magic. He finished off his set with a mix of *Jump The Next Train*, nice and acoustic through the vocals and then off like an express train, with everyone leaping about like lunatics.

I have to say the place did look extremely nice though – a big sparkly silver Gatecrasher lion up on the wall and a huge, enthusiastic crowd. What makes it such a shame is that PvD and Gatecrasher do have this colossal number of loyal followers that will hand over their hard-earned 15 quid (or £22 on the door) and come anyway. Surely they deserve better. It's sad to rely on the old faces and brand recognition.

Let's hope that the great man was simply having an off day and we can put this behind us. I'll still definitely go next time and I'll be as excited as I was this time. On a brighter note, the next couple of months are looking to continue the run of quality events that we've been spoiled with this year: Lange, Smith & Pledger and Simon Patterson at TranceGeneration, Matt Darcy's Decade album launch at December's Knowwhere, Massive @ Heaven, Lashed, and brand new trance night Ultra Utopia in January. No sleep for a while then.

Josie Harral

Festive fun

Term is nearly over, thank god, and as 2004 draws to a close, the nightlife scene is hotting up. Here's the *Felix* guide to the best of the Christmas and New Years Eve parties

Christmas is coming, and it's not just the goose that is getting fat and has people slobbering at the thought of it.

With lectures out of the way there's no excuse for not making the most of your nights out, and as Christmas approaches the clubs are laying on plenty of parties over the festive season, climaxing with one of the best, or at least most expensive and most hyped nights in the clubbing calendar, New Year's Eve. Don't just take my word for it, though – have a look around and see what's on offer, because there's bound to be something that'll appeal to you.

Christmas Parties

Christmas is a great time to get out and about and experience some nightlife, especially since you probably won't have to get up in the mornings! In the run-up to the end of the year, there are plenty of special events on offer:

Heat UK Xmas Curtain Raiser
Saturday 11 December
Koko

MissDemeanours Boxing Day
Turnmills
£12

Lottie, Jon Carter, Ashley Beedle and Justin Robertson are back at Turnmills for round 2 of this popular

house night.

A Night Of True Playaz
Wednesday 29 December

Fabric
Hype, Zinc, Blackmarket, Brockie, Ratpack and many more all come together to fill all three rooms of giant Fabric with hoodies, caps and the glorious sound of drum and bass.

New Year's Eve

New Year's Eve is traditionally a big one on the club scene. Whilst there's nothing better than being in the middle of a rammed dancefloor as Big Ben strikes, choose carefully (and quickly), as clubs charge a hefty tariff for special nights, and tickets sell out quickly.

Renaissance NYE

The Cross, York Way
Dave Seaman, Hybrid and Paul Jackson headline a night for those who like to make progress.

The End New Years Eve
£30-35
Layo & Bushwacka in the main room and Sancho Panza in AKA

Together NYE
Turnmills
£40
Chemical Brothers (they're here

most years) plus Justin Robertson, Lottie, Mutiny and more.

Heat UK & Gallery – HeatNYE
Brixton Academy

£25-40
Tall Paul, Fergie, K90 and many many more at what will undoubtedly be one of the biggest and loudest parties.

Fabric NYE
£35

Craig Richards, Freestylers, Terry Francis and DJ Vadim. Fabric regulars galore at one of the biggest clubs' party.

Faith

The Egg, York Way
£25
A slightly more eclectic, less full-on party but still one that promises to deliver, with a line up featuring the UnaBombers, Farley & Heller, and Nancy Noise.

Miss Money Penny's NYE
Rouge, 144 Charing Cross Road
£30
CJ Mackintosh, Jim Shaft Ryan.

Imagine NYE
The Rocket Complex
£20-30
Pendragon, Pickle and Gathering join forces for crazy psychadelia.

Into the New Year

If you're clubbing for NYE, you probably won't be heading home to bed with a cup of cocoa after all the excitement at midnight, so why not carry on into the new year?

Trade New Year's Morning
Spectacular

Turnmills
£15-20
BK and Fergie headline stalwart Trade's morning-after-party

Frantic New Year's Day

Koko
£15-20
Rob Tissera and the NuEnergy collective headlining a cracking after-party for those who just don't want to go home.

Twist New Year's Day

The Fridge
£10
Ian M and Karim provide some of the hard stuff.

Simon Clark

Competition

Win Ian Betts Heat CDs

If you've read our interview with Heat DJ and Imperial graduate Ian Betts on the opposite page, you'll be drooling at the mouth for some of this.

Mr Betts has kindly given us several CDs of his set at Heat back in June, to give away to you lucky people!

So if you want to get your sweaty little paws on some mind-blowing trance from one of the scene's fastest rising stars, all you have to do

is answer this simple question, a trivial test for trance trainspotters:

What is the title of Ian Betts' recently released single?

Come on, it's not hard, the answer is hidden somewhere in this week's Nightlife pages.

Drop us a line at clubs.felix@ic.ac.uk with the answer and we will sort you out with one of the CDs. Easy.

iCU Cinema All-Nighter

Tuesday 14th Dec

18:00 Shark Tale
 20:25 I, Robot
 22:50 Wimbledon
 00:45 Man on Fire
 03:30 Layer Cake
 05:30 Sky Captain: The World of Tomorrow



£10 for all six films

Union Building, 2nd Floor. Open to IC Students & staff.
 Doors open 15 mins before time stated. union.ic.ac.uk/cinema

Flirty current chart music
 and party classics
 plus Jazz Big Band
 playing seasonal
 favourites

Wednesday,
 December 15
 8pm – 1am

Cheeky

imperial college
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 in dBs 'till the cellars run dry



The Union encourages you to drink responsibly

Ents Card
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Imperial College
 London

Fancy doing some volunteering?

Why not get active in the community whilst you're at Imperial College London? It doesn't matter if you work or study in Imperial – volunteering will have always something to offer you! We have over 250 volunteering opportunities in our database, so there should be a project for you.

The easiest way to get regular updates about volunteering is by signing up to our mailing list. You will receive all the latest opportunities on a weekly basis, directly to your email inbox. Simply send us an email to volunteering@imperial.ac.uk, clearly stating that you want to receive the weekly news bulletin and we will do the rest!

Imperial Volunteer Centre



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Arts



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Can you feel the love?

Lynsey McInnes has her faith in the West End restored by *The Lion King*

The Lion King

Not closing any time soon
Lyceum Theatre, WC2
Students can get the best seats in the house for £17.50 on the day

Having previously subjected myself to two other West End musicals – *Les Miserables* and *Fame* – and come out feeling thoroughly violated, it was with some trepidation that I attempted a third, *The Lion King*, last Wednesday evening.

Both previous musicals had been expensive mistakes – two hours of shoddy, half-hearted performance, replete with tired clichés, mediocre song and badly choreographed dance. Despite these unpromising initial experiences, I had not heard a bad word spoken about *The Lion King* – indeed oft proclaimed the musical of all musicals (an ambiguous compliment in my mind). So, taking a deep breath, I crossed my fingers and hoped for the best.

And the best is indeed what I got. *The Lion King* is a stunning piece of musical theatre (note: musical theatre, not musical with all its negative connotations). From the sleek live orchestra, effective staging and reverberating song to the phenomenal costumes, everything about this show signals a professionalism and dedication quite obviously lacking in many other West End performances.

The show opens with the chant of an African woman, bouncing off the walls of the theatre, filling every crevice with rich, vibrant sound, and knocking all other thought from your head. The stage then fills with a

menagerie of fantastically clad men and women, providing a snapshot of the jungle kingdom. This first tableau sets the scene for the magic to come. There are men on stilts dressed as timid giraffes, four men caged into an elephant suit, a lithe young woman roaming the stage as a panther, and hordes more performers in varying stages of animal disguise. These fill the stage in a flurry of uplifting song and dance and glue your eyes to the unbelievable display being unveiled before you.

From this impressive beginning, the well-known story unfolds with the introduction of evil Scar, the old King Mufasa and his young cub, Simba. While Scar excels in his role as the evil uncle, from a start as the underdog scathing of the present regime to his demise into a ridiculous leper, he is entertaining throughout. Conversely, both Mufasa and the young Simba are weak leads. Neither come close to meriting stage space with the glorious backdrop of animal magic with which they share each scene. Both are unconvincing main characters and fail to invoke sympathy for their plight. Mufasa overemphasises his role as benevolent king and young Simba, with his tacky grin and false amity, simply grates on the nerves.

Somehow, and luckily, such shortcomings fail to impinge on an otherwise spectacular performance. One is led to ignore the hiccups of individual artists and become immersed instead in the wonderland expertly evoked by a talented team of set and costume designers. Throughout, one is aware that no expense has been spared to produce authentic set-

pieces and magnificent costumes.

In fact, *The Lion King* deserves viewing if only for a montage of its costumes. Each player has been transformed into a fantastic character, including the conniving hyena stooped over and dressed in a grey cape, a mask suspended from its forehead which bounces maniacally as it pounds the stage. Then there are the synchronised jungle trees of agile dancers decked out in vivid green leotards and sporting trails of green silk who spin and pulsate across the stage. In a bizarre musical interlude, towering giraffes fill

“A stunning piece of musical theatre...”

the stage, kitted out in multi-coloured silk cloaks emblazoned with patterns and swirls, and launch into toe-tapping song and surprisingly nimble dance. Such examples are just a taster of the weird and wonderful creatures one is exposed to in the course of the show. No doubt you will find your own favourite among the throng.

Perhaps you are now asking whether I've been paid to advertise the show, by the quantity of superlatives splashed across this article. I haven't. *The Lion King* really is an outstanding piece of entertainment and should be seen by everyone. Whether you want to take leave of your intellect and embrace the familiar songs and well-known story or prefer to marvel at such an amazing theatrical production, or indeed do both, you will undoubtedly come out satisfied. Go now!



Gentleman in a rather impressive lion costume on stage at the Lyceum

Wanted: one giant (size not important!)

Iain Heaton invites you to join in and do your bit for the panto

Can you say “Fe Fi Fo Fum”? Excellent! You could be just who we are looking for!

Every year, Dramsoc puts on a number of plays for your amusement. One of the chosen pieces this year is the pantomime, *Jack and the Beanstalk* (the first pantomime Dramsoc has ever done!) It is to be performed in the Union Concert Hall on January 18 to 22. Well, that was the idea anyway, but there is one slight problem: the lack of a giant to live up Jack's beanstalk!

That's right, Dramsoc has run out of actors (don't worry, there are still plenty of techies so the Union can continue to run smoothly). So this is where all you talented people come in. Instead of simply watching the pantomime you can be in it!

Now before all you little people stop reading, the giant can be big or small (irony is a brilliant thing)! It doesn't matter whether you have never done any acting before in your life; this isn't Shakespeare, this is pantomime! All you need is to



Remember: no pain no gain! However, the Union's insurance policy is probably not up to this type of stuntwork

be keen and be willing to attend rehearsals, which happen every Thursday or Tuesday evening (you will not be required to attend all rehearsals). Rehearsals are very relaxed and friendly (and often involve alcohol) and the cast (so far)

are great! If you are interested in being a giant, and fancy grinding up people's bones to make your bread, then email Tom the director at thomas.cafferkey@ic.ac.uk.

● If you're really not the participating type, remember that there are still some arts events going on in college right up until the end of term.

The Choir have their concert tomorrow in the Great Hall, starting at 8.00pm. Their programme includes the latest version of Mozart's not quite finished *Requiem*, Bach's *Magnificat* and Beethoven's *Hallelujah*, this particular version coming from the *Mount of Olives*. The Mozart is a hugely powerful piece and you've all probably heard at least a snippet or two of it and should really hear a complete performance.

Sinfonietta have their concert, in the same location, on Tuesday; be prepared to be blown away by some Wagner and Copland!

No singing, no dancing: Brass do *West Side Story* with style and great rhythm

I think I'd be right in saying that almost all of us are vaguely familiar with Bernstein's classic *West Side Story*. You know, it's the one with the same storyline as Romeo and Juliet, except the action is no longer in Verona but in New York and the feuding parties are now the natives and the invading Puerto Ricans. The story is a classic, and so is the music. Last Wednesday, a privileged few had the pleasure of hearing Imperial Symphonic Brass and Percussion play the arrangement for brass of the music from the show by Eric Crees.

The audience was privileged not only due to the nature of the venue, the Union Dining Hall, but also, of course, in the quality of the performance. The Crees arrangement, originally for the London Symphony's Brass ensemble, is renowned for being amongst the toughest, if not the toughest, arrangement of Bernstein's music.

The brass did themselves proud, not to mention the percussion,

(who for the most part looked a bit bored, but were probably just lost in concentration trying to keep track of a thousand different things at once, with the exception of Joel Farland on the drum kit when he got a chance to show us all what he could do in style). The performance was confident and they nailed all the rhythms and themes that we'd all come to hear. The range of dynamics was impressive, bringing the music to life in a hugely expressive way. The mambo, cha-cha and *America* were all full of Latin spirit, and the finale had some truly heart-breaking moments.

The performance was full of jazz, swinging right along, and was over far too soon! This was a brief concert enjoyed by all attending that has definitely won the Brass more fans. Make sure to keep an eye out for posters on the walkway advertising future concerts – you will not regret taking the time to go.

Paola Smith
Arts Editor

Books

books.felix@ic.ac.uk

Money causes rotation of Earth

Unfunded and without a safety net, **Tom Simonite** discovers the future of research

Pioneering Research: A Risk Worth Taking

by Donald Braben
(John Wiley & Sons Inc)

★★★★☆

Donald Braben paints a sorry picture of the current state of scientific research. He asserts that without radical changes to the way it is funded, motivated and practised, civilisation itself is under threat.

Braben lays out his thesis effectively in the introduction, drawing the reader to commit to the book and his ideas. He explains that

“Civilisation itself is under threat”

while science and technology are the basis of civilisation, they are taken for granted – the source of the advances that have transformed our world is rarely considered. Now this source – truly innovative research – is threatened by widespread obsessions with safety, control and predictability. “Humanity has reached a crucial point in its development.”

Despite the early promise of the introduction, the opening chapters are sadly rather awkward. Braben takes too long developing his definition of ‘dissent’, the tendency to find the status quo unbearable and hope for and plan future improvements.

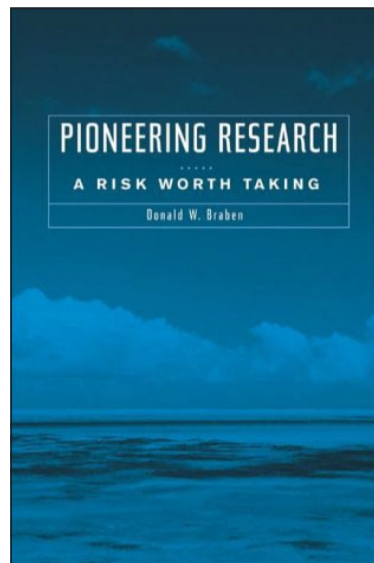
He sees this as the unique and defining character of the human animal, the key to its success.

The ‘back of an envelope’ account of human history, from the evolution of *Homo erectus* to the industrial revolution, is also hard going. Despite acknowledging that better histories of humanity are in no short supply (Jared Diamond’s excellent *Guns, Germs, Steel* is one that is recommended), Braben proceeds nonetheless.

I have to admit that the ardour of your intrepid reviewer wavered somewhat after the opening chapters. Fortunately things soon get back on track; Braben is far more authoritative and interesting when writing on the problems posed by the success of science, the failings of science policy and his proposed solutions.

Historically, researchers generally worked alone or in very small groups, and were self-directed. At the turn of the 20th century, this began to change, industrialists grouped together researchers to create new opportunities, and governments soon also developed research infrastructures to sustain their industrial societies.

The result was sustained success – industrial development and economic growth continued apace. Economists dub the period covering the fifties, sixties and early seventies as ‘the golden age’ of economic



growth, and technology advanced rapidly during this time. However, subsequently, science became a victim of its own success.

The number of working scientists increased greatly, and this presented the authorities with the twin problems of which research to fund, and how to fund it. Braben pins the cause of the crisis facing research and humanity on the policies used to allocate funding in an ever more crowded profession. Governments and industry alike have sought to maximise the effectiveness of their resources, allocating on the basis of

projected return from their investment in research.

Unfortunately research is an inherently unpredictable business. Few of the most important and influential scientific breakthroughs could ever have been forecast by any committee. An investment in research is like no other.

Braben’s theory is that we should stop second-guessing research and do away with bureaucratic obsessions with safety and control: “The geese that lay the golden eggs are increasingly being farmed and focused, it is no wonder that our magical geese have become egg-bound in recent times.” He claims that a drastic overhaul of the way that research is funded and managed will fix this problem. More novel products of research will drive economic growth and safeguard humanity.

Braben has a powerful example of his ideas in action, in BP’s Venture Research Unit, of which he was founder and chairman. During the 1980s, the oil giant ploughed millions of pounds into this initiative. The intention was to identify scientists with the sort of innovative ideas that would not usually get funded. The usual lengthy goal-motivated, peer-reviewed proposals were scrapped. The novelty of the science was paramount and face-to-face discussion with applicants was used. Despite successful and unim-

aged new findings by almost all the recipients of Venture Research funding, a change of management at BP in 1989 led to the closure of the Unit.

The book can be characterised as one side of a discussion on the future of science. The continued expansion of professional science has led to the development of bizarre bureaucracies to allocate resources. Researchers find themselves having to play the game to these rules and this will necessarily impact the nature of the research carried out. Braben’s book does a

“Science became a victim of its own success”

worthy job of highlighting these issues, and how they have arisen, but the solutions he suggests are not the only ones. There is undeniably a situation to be dealt with, but many possible interpretations and solutions. Braben’s reasoning and his Venture Research Initiative illustrates a possible route, but others surely exist.

This book is a stimulating read. Hopefully it will kindle wider discussion of the way that research is managed and how more of those elusive golden eggs can be found to the gain of humanity.

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Film listings: see
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The best of 2004

Alan Ng, Film Editor, presents his top five films of the year

1. Spiderman 2

Few sequels surpass their predecessor. *Spiderman 2* went past and well beyond anything *Spiderman* accomplished.

Spiderman 2 was what a superhero movie should be. It wasn't camp, nostalgic, it wasn't wall-to-wall special effects and it wasn't pickled in angst. It was simply and poignantly

a realization that being Spiderman is a burden that Peter Parker is not entirely willing to bear. The movie demonstrates what's wrong with a lot of other superhero epics: they focus on the superpowers, and short-change the humans behind them.

Some might say that the movie was far too slow, but that's what I was so impressed with – how intelligently *Spiderman 2* dealt with such

adult themes as responsibility and sacrifice.

When it did come round to the fight scenes, they were superb. Doc Ock's arms looked brilliant, with the change from puppetry to CGI unnoticeable.

It could have been such a one-dimensional blockbuster. Instead it chose to be far more intelligent, and left me wanting more.

2. The Last Samurai

It was an absolute travesty that this movie didn't win any Oscars. Cruise should have got recognition for his best performance to date. Instead of the usual showman, he was a more pensive character with a lot of inner torment.

The movie wonderfully recreated the patterns and textures of the

Japanese past; its production design, sets and costumes were astonishing. The battle scenes were stirring and elegantly mounted. They were less about who wins and more about what could be proven by dying.

Beautifully designed, intelligently written, acted with conviction, this was an uncommonly thoughtful epic. Much more than just an action flick.



3. Bad Santa

Bad Santa was a demented, twisted, unreasonably funny work of comic kamikaze style.

Santa is a depressed, alcoholic safecracker. The kid is not one of your cute movie kids, but an intense and needy stalker. The elf is an angry dwarf who has been working with Santa for eight years, cracking the safe in a different department store every Christmas.

The elf is fed up. Santa gets drunk

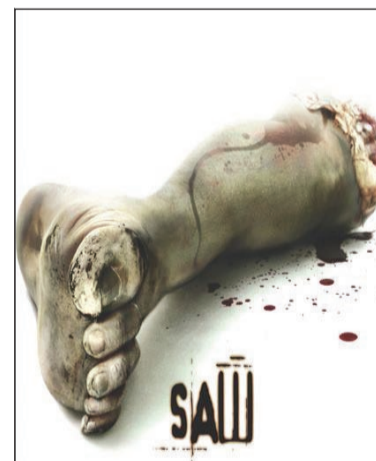
on the job, he's bonking customers in the Plus Sizes dressing room, and whether the children throw up on Santa or he throws up on them is a toss-up, no pun intended.

This movie will offend your mother's virtue, with so many four letter words. It's quite possible the most politically incorrect movie I've seen in a long time.

Whilst it was never going to win any Oscars, or smash any records at the box office, this was sickeningly funny.

4. Infernal Affairs

The movie that inspired me to write about movies – I just had to try to convince as many as possible to watch this. It was, and might still be, the best movie to come out of Hong Kong. It combined exhilarating action with liquid nitrogen existential cool, gleaming and shimmering with the city of Hong Kong's glass and steel. The plot twisted and turned, rivalling the best of thrillers out there. *Infernal Affairs* was a gripping thriller with grandstanding drama, muscle-clenching suspense and two great action leads in Tony Leung and Andy Lau.



5. Saw

The best horror movie I 'Saw' this year. The final twist was so large and unforeseeable that I never saw it coming. The twists were astonishing and the pain was palpable. The premise was fantastic and original. The execution was slightly less than breathtaking though; the two lead actors were slightly erratic. This was made up for by the great camera work and ambience though, really providing a claustrophobic feel. The costume of the villain is genuinely nerve wracking. It made the hairs on my back stand to attention, and did such a good job of scaring me that I'm not even sure I want to buy the DVD.



YOUR VIEWS

Do you think this list is absolute trash? Were there glaring omissions? Or massive misjudgments?

Tell us what you think

Comments to film.felix@ic.ac.uk. Your views next issue

FILM

film.felix@ic.ac.uk

Not as 'kranky' as it sounds

'Tis the season to be jolly, so here come the usual festive treats. After the bomb of *Surviving Christmas*, Hollywood is looking to redeem itself

Christmas with the Kranks

Director: Joe Roth

Starring: Tim Allen, Jamie Lee Curtis, Dan Aykroyd

Length: 98 minutes

Certificate: PG

★★★★☆

Yes guys, it's the time of year when we need to be jolly, forget all our troubles, and brave the clustered streets of central London to get our shopping done. It's also the time when those Hollywood moguls capitalise on the season by drowning us all with the usual dose of Christmas films – some ultimate turkeys and others worthy smash hits. Will director Joe Roth's latest offering pass the test? Possibly.

The unofficial king of Christmas blockbusters is back. No, I don't mean the overweight dude in the red suit (though he does make a small role in the film), I mean Tim Allen. With Christmas blockbusters like *The Santa Claus* under his belt, the former *Home Improvement* actor appears alongside an impressive all-star line up in this feel-good comedy.

Allen stars as Luther Krank, a goofy family man living in a suburban neighbourhood with his wife Nora (Jamie Lee Curtis) and teenage daughter Blair (Julie Gonzalo). The Kranks are famous among their neighbourhood for marking the festive season by throwing their usual parties, so imagine how mortifying it was to the entire neighbourhood (the

local police force, the local priest, I mean everyone) to hear that things would be different this year.

That was courtesy of Blair deciding she would spend the festive season with her friends at school, rather than with the folks. Quick thinking Luther decides it's time to live a little (away from the cold) by taking his wife on a Caribbean cruise during the Christmas period instead of slaving away preparing for the usual party.

The implications: no tree, no gifts, no Mr Snowman, but plenty of angry neighbours doing all in their power to make the Kranks feel bad. Luther decides to fight back, until Blair does a U-turn at the last minute and decides to come home

"This film will certainly not be shaking the seats of the Oscar bosses"

for Christmas.

Mum and Dad's holiday plans are bust. With only 12 hours left before Blair arrives, they must quickly plan their usual Christmas.

This film is typical of Hollywood's fantasy Christmas offerings – the background Christmas music, the carol singing neighbours and the snow, to name just a few things. The plot does not appear to be very practical in everyday life. It's very lightweight and predictable. This



Now what on earth could go wrong now?

film will certainly not be shaking the seats of the Oscar bosses. So if you are looking for a film that will have you gripped from beginning to a month after the end, don't bother with this one.

I feel the only element that carries this film is the all-star line up. Tim Allen is an impressive actor and the on-screen chemistry with Jamie Lee Curtis is undeniable.

Former *Ghostbusters* actor Dan Ackroyd does well in portraying the ringleader of the angry neighbours doing their best to stir things up, cracking the usual jokes that have made him the actor we all know and love.

However, I won't write off this film entirely. There are a number of classic moments to savour. I won't spoil it all for you too much. All I'll say

is: botox, Tim Allen, serious fake tan, Hickory Ham and a frozen cat. There is also some candy guy in the shape of Blair's Latino boyfriend, Enrique.

All in all, this is a feel-good comedy that should lift your mood. Ideally it's a good film for your younger siblings, but it's not worth getting "cranked" up about if you miss it.

Gbemisola Ayininuola

History... Hollywood style. No change there then

The Merchant of Venice

Director: Michael Radford

Starring: Lynn Collins, Jeremy Irons, Al Pacino, Joseph Fiennes

Length: 132 minutes

Certificate: PG

★★★★☆

Shakespeare isn't something you'd expect to be made into a film these days – too many long words I guess – but miraculously this one was green lighted for production.

On paper, this seems an interesting film, with Al Pacino and Jeremy Irons delivering amazing performances, and some familiar faces in Mackenzie Crook (*The Office*) and Kris Marshall (*My Family*). All this not forgetting it was written by one of history's greatest playwrights.

Al Pacino plays Shylock, a Venetian Jew who lends money to Antonio (Irons). Bear with me here – Antonio isn't actually borrowing money for himself but for his friend (although he'd like him to be a bit more than that) Bassanio. Bassanio wants to sail to Belmont to try to woo Portia. Bitter at Antonio's insults, Shylock stipulates very specific terms if a default on the loan occurs. The loan falls due and Shylock claims his forfeit: a pound of Antonio's flesh. Nice. To aggravate the situation, Shylock's daughter elopes with her lover and a sizable chunk of her father's wealth.

The acting can't be faulted; however, neither can it be praised – a bit of a non-event, really – but Al Pacino's melancholy presence makes up for this and he dominates the film even after his exit. His portrayal of the moneylender is a sensitive one; he is both victim and villain. One of the best scenes is his rendition of the iconic "If you prick us, do we not

"A film that lacks any visual style or personality that you may have expected after seeing *Romeo and Juliet*"

bleed?" speech, which is guaranteed to make you sit up and pay attention in an otherwise slow paced, dull film. Irons does well in portraying the homoerotic undertones in Antonio and Bassanio's relationship... but sadly that's all I can think of to sell the film to you.

Radford could have done much more with the direction, but the scenes were poorly shot and loosely linked to each other – it just didn't gel. The film had the potential to be visually spectacular with Radford sticking to the 16th century theme and shooting in Venetian locations.



"Please don't 'prick' me again"

However, what you're given is something that is quite oppressive and ugly to look at. It looked as if it were a substandard B-grade TV movie rather than something for the big screen. Perhaps the use of the dark and dank canals was a metaphor for the play's blurred moral world. All I can say is that nothing stood out. Maybe that's why I found myself falling asleep during the film. Might I add that this has never happened to me before – I desperately wanted to like *The Merchant of Venice*, having loved reading it in school, but just couldn't.

This film may conjure unhappy memories of GCSE English for some, although it would fill in the parts you fell asleep through. What was particularly annoying was Radford's repeated failure to make use of the play as an analogy for world events today which so easily could have been done – one of the main themes is revenge and oppression. After all, Shylock's main motivation for terrorising Antonio is the appalling treatment he suffered as a Jew. Radford could have emphasized this, but instead he focuses on the romantic aspect of the play, pos-

sibly to satisfy a wider and presumably brainless audience, or to avoid controversy.

The end result? A film that lacks any visual style or personality that you may have expected after seeing *Romeo and Juliet*. It's long – way too long – and goes torturously slowly. Do not go to see this film if you want something easy on the mind, as you will need to pay a lot of attention to understand it. Although Al Pacino's performance is great, I'd advise you all to wait until it's released on DVD – you won't be missing out on much.

Haj Alttahir

FILM

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History... Hollywood Style. No change there then

Churchill: The Hollywood Years

Director: Peter Richardson
Starring: Neve Campbell, Christian Slater, Harry Enfield
Length: 85 minutes
Certificate: 15
★☆☆☆☆

Harry Enfield, Vic Reeves, Bob Mortimer, Sally Phillips, Rik Mayall, Ronni Ancona, Phil Cornwell, David Schneider and Mackenzie Crook. The cream of British comedy join Hollywood's Christian Slater and Neve Campbell to rewrite the history books for our dubious entertainment in *Churchill: The Hollywood Years*.

For the first time in the history of film reviewing, I have decided to call upon scientific method to deduce exactly how funny this movie was. In order to do this, I'm introducing a new measure of 'funniness' that is simply measured by 'laughs per joke'.

Now, the director Peter Richardson is famous for writing the late-night TV comedy *Stella Street* - which is an extremely 'hit-and-miss' programme whose laughs per joke ratio usually registers at around 0.2 (about a fifth of the jokes are funny). This is pretty bad going for a TV show (compared to *The Fast*

Show, for instance, which registers at around 0.6). But when measuring the laughs per joke ratio for *Churchill: The Hollywood Years*, I found it to be closer to around 0.13 - which is ridiculously low, especially for a feature length film. On this 'scientific' basis alone, the movie was a dismal failure.

But forgetting the scientific meth-

"I have decided to call upon scientific method to deduce exactly how funny this movie was"

od for a moment, what could I say about a movie whose premise is that the Winston Churchill we know and respect was actually an after-dinner speaker and character actor called Roy Bubbles? What could I say about a movie that has a joke about Hitler driving a car straight into a wall? What could I say about a movie that tries to take one of the grimmest periods of modern history and turn it into a comedic farce?

You could say 'congratulations' because despite being a patched-up, nonsensical sequence of tenuously connected sketches, in *Churchill:*



Britain's finest hour becomes Hollywood's greatest story. Great

The Hollywood Years there are genuinely a few decent laughs to be had. Although it is not in the same league as the sickeningly hilarious *Bad Santa* (which measures at around 0.75 laughs per joke), it will provide a decent evening's

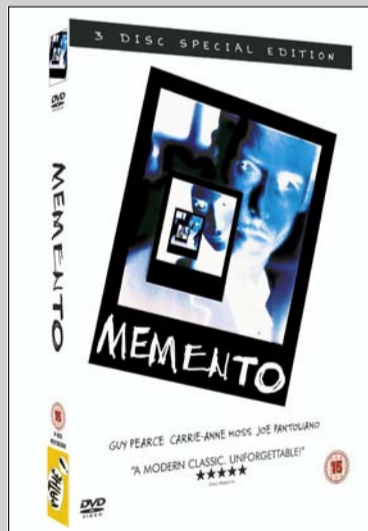
light entertainment thanks to the comedic talents of Harry Enfield, Phil Cornwell (Dave Clifton from *I'm Alan Partridge*) and Vic Reeves, who embellish the film with a few memorable scenes.

So once you've realised after

the first five minutes that this is not going to be a conventional experience - once you have accepted that and somewhat changed your expectations, then the rest is plain sailing and rather enjoyable.

Darius Nikbin

Memento Competition



There are three copies of *Memento 3 Disc Special Edition* to be won this week, courtesy of www.fox.co.uk.

Memento 3 Disc Special Edition is available to buy on DVD from Pathe Distribution Ltd on 27

December 2004.

With an abundance of never-before-seen DVD special features, *Memento 3 Disc Special Edition* is an utterly original mix of intricacy and flashback montages. Writer and director Christopher Nolan (*Insomnia*) has masterfully intertwined a complex yet enthralling story, revealed in an ingenious reverse narrative, to ensure that along with some exclusive extras, the *Memento 3 Disc Special Edition* will be remembered as the definitive edition of this cult classic and one of the most important DVD releases of the year.

To win one of the copies, tell me: Who was Nolan's first choice as Leonard?

- a) Guy Pearce
- b) James Caviezel
- c) Alec Baldwin

Email your answer to film.felix@ic.ac.uk. Usual *Felix* competition rules apply.

Alan Ng
Film Editor

OUT NEXT WEEK

Out on Friday 17 December at Vue Fulham Broadway:

- Lemony Snicket's 'A Series of Unfortunate Events'
- Ella Enchanted

Visit www.myvue.com/student for more details.

Vue Fulham Broadway are giving you the opportunity to win posters for these new releases. Just answer this question:

- Who plays Ella?
- a) Katie Holmes
 - b) Anne Hathaway
 - c) Lindsay Lohan

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Games

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Limitless... potential

The new Games section launches with the return of Black Mesa's finest

Half Life 2

Valve Software
Published by VU Games
Certificate: 15
★★★★★

Imagine the scene. Agitated figures scurry around aimlessly through an intricate maze of Victorian and Brutalist architecture. Meanwhile, a meek middle-aged suit with a big interest in biotechnology peers down from the top of an anachronistic monolith provided by a set of mysterious benefactors. And down below a group of renegade physicists are plotting their next strike against the system. Sound familiar? It will do, once you've played through the long-awaited awaited sequel to 1998's game of the year!

Yes, *Half Life 2* has finally become a reality, after last year's great controversy surrounding the leak of files by a German hacker.

Exactly six years ago, the world woke up to the sound of a crowbar meeting flesh, and now ex-Microsoft employees Valve Software, or to be precise, the strange entity known widely as the G-man, has brought Gordon Freeman back to a leaner, meaner world. Those who



have already played through *City 17* will know that Valve have taken no chances with piracy, infuriating some users by forcing them to wait several hours before the game could be authenticated by Steam, Valve's own built-in software. This Windows XP style system is seen by some as a shift to the future in games like *HL2*'s DVD-only retail release, forcing those who hadn't to go out and buy DVD drives.

"Horde upon horde of zombies, cyborgs, ant lions..."

So, to those who haven't bought *HalfLife 2*, a word of advice. Do. The original game came out at a time when people were bitching between *Quake II* and *Unreal*. It managed to blow away both of them, and even though the actual multiplayer component was largely forgotten, the support that Valve gave to budding developers helped produce mods like *Counterstrike*, which arguably became more famous than *Half Life* itself. Furthermore, *Half Life* was revolutionary in its scope and Marc Laidlaw's B-movie plot certainly makes it all the more memorable now, which is why the makers have expanded Dr Freeman's journey into a whole universe... or two!

The game begins as the first one ended, on a train. But this is a very different kettle of fish to the Black Mesa research facility. City 17 is a fictional eastern European city, under the control of a mysterious force called the Combine that has ruled earth since the seven hour

war. You soon find out that everyone has heard of your name, and you are now revered by your allies and feared by your enemies. But that doesn't stop them from trying to kill you! And so the carnage begins. Whereas there has been a growth in role-playing shooters like *Deus Ex* in the time since Nihilanth was defeated, *Half Life 2* encourages a less stealthy approach than its predecessor, and instead we are now confronted by horde upon horde of zombies, cyborgs, ant-lions and flying buzz-saws!

Just as this epic is building on years of gaming greatness, it plays like a truly interactive movie through fantastic backdrops. It takes you from the sordid ghettos and canal chases of City 17, to zombie flicks in Ravenholm, to post-apocalyptic thrillers and creature features along highway 17, to Normandy beaches and prison dramas in Nova Prospekt, back to urban warfare and finally into the evil citadel itself, where it's as if the Borg assimilated the Earth of 2199 with the Death Star!

"It's as if the Borg assimilated the Earth of 2199 with the Death Star!"

With all this evil trying to put an end to Gordon again, it's refreshing that there is now an array of friendly characters there to help you along, including the crazy Father Grigory, who bestows you with the Zero-point energy device, also known as the manipulator or gravity-gun. The



It's time to run for your life. STRIIIIIIIIIDER!!!

fun that can be had with this tool is limited only by your imagination, as it lets you pick up and launch large objects around the place, thanks to the otherwise ultra-realistic physics courtesy of the Havok engine. The other weapons in your standard arsenal haven't changed greatly from the first game, although they are better than ever.

People who want an intellectual challenge will be disappointed as *HL2* pays homage to the glory days of arcade gaming, delivering extremely addictive gameplay in gorgeous realism that requires the intelligence of a Headcrab rather than the PhD that Gordon never has a chance to put to use. The game's linearity allows for some beautifully choreographed set-pieces while never disembodding the player from the ever-mute Free-Man.

The makers have remembered that game-play shouldn't be blinded by shiny graphics or drowned by immersion into an overly compli-

cated environment as they have strived to uphold the players' right to have fun. In effect, the game's adherence to primitive narration and a rich narrative create all the suspense that is needed to drag the player through the game and to the conclusion that *HL3* is all but a formality.

As a final note, *HalfLife 2* is available either in the shops or through Steam as several different packages. *Counterstrike Source*, rendered as *HL2*, comes as standard whilst *HalfLife Source*, the original game re-mastered plus a whole load of extra bums, is available for extra through Steam. An X-Box release is planned for next spring, giving the game a wider audience through the console market, although the PC version has been on monitor screens since November 16 and will probably be so in various forms for a long time to come!

Alex McKittrick
Games Editor

Teams, players, egos... the entire game on your PC

Football Manager 2005

Sports Interactive
★★★★★

Having played every version of the popular PC game *Championship Manager*, I was weary when the follow-up to last year's primary cause of missed lectures and near exam failure was announced.

With a new name, *Football Manager 2005*, the series formerly known as *Championship Manager* was to be avoided at all costs. Yet after receiving a review copy of the game, I relented. And since then, I haven't stopped. Or gone to lectures.

"More statistics than a John Motson wet dream"

For those of you with lives, ignorant of this plague on the country's menfolk, *FM 2005* is surprisingly enough a football management simulation, allowing you to take control

of your choice of over 5000 teams from over 50 countries. There are no fancy graphics, just more statistics than a John Motson wet dream. As a result, anyone who reckons they could do better than José Mourinho (at winning, not being a smug bastard) will become instantly addicted, ruining relationships and careers and, quite possibly, threatening global security.

Having only a week to review the game (including lectures) and fancying more fun than losing every week as manager of Wycombe Wanderers, I plumped for the choice of controlling Chelsea. As my managerial alter-ego Jeremy Beadle worked his way through a season of Premiership football, I slipped further and further into the depths of addiction. My usual routine was to eschew food and sunlight in favour of sitting in front of the computer for hours on end. Whilst my team were busy eking out poor results and I was becoming less popular with the fans, I contented myself with finding humour in the game's little quirks.

For instance, using the new media interaction feature, you can inform

the media of your opinions on other managers and teams, thus starting mind games à la Sir Alex Ferguson. Whilst being an innovative addition to the game, it also throws up some oddities – my housemates and I were amused to read the litany of homoerotic correspondence between Beadle and Birmingham

"My usual routine was to eschew food and sunlight in favour of sitting in front of the computer for hours on end..."

City manager Steve Bruce, each taking turns to compliment the other in what seemed to be a blossoming relationship.

For non-football lovers, *FM 2005* probably represents the nadir of gaming pleasure, an endless display of useless statistics across a muted, Spartan background. But for fans of



It doesn't look like much, but it's what footie geeks always dreamed of

this series, and anyone with a love of football, the lure of taking over one of the many teams from the colossal database is too attractive. As is the prospect of unearthing such gems as my personal favourite, the spectacularly named TJ Mclory-Cuthbertson.

With quicker loading times and extra detail, *FM 2005* is certainly another giant leap in the evolution of the series. But for God's sake, if you want to come out of university with a degree, steer well clear of this game...

Tim Hoult



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Coffee Break



It's Christmas time, there's no need to be afraid... because Coffee Break is here! We're making the yuletide gay with our special festive edition, the last of the year. Lots and lots of points this week, so send your answers to **coffee.felix@ic.ac.uk**

Super-Mega-Ultimate Xmas Lyric Quiz

We begin our special festive Coffee Break with the **Super-Mega-Ultimate Xmas Lyric Quiz**, or to be catchy, **SMUXLQ**. We've took key lines from 31 of the best Christmas songs around. Some are pop songs, some are carols; some are worth listening to, others are turgid crap. There's a point for each song title that you correctly guess. And if you just Google them, we'll know.

Good year / bad year

It's not just Christmas at this time of year – there are plenty of other festivals and traditions going on, the most important of which is New Year, a chance to reflect on the past year's achievements and get wankered. However, some people shall be celebrating, and others will be drowning their sorrows. So a little quiz is in order. Two points for each answer.

Good Year

1. Abi Titmuss has made a fortune this year, but what was she working as last year?

- a. A nurse
- b. A weathergirl
- c. A porn star

2. George Bush won the election, good for him. He used to be a very bad boy. Where did he allegedly do coke that he really shouldn't have?

- a. The desk of the Oval Office
- b. Camp David
- c. On duty in 'nam

Bad Year

3. Michael Jackson had an awful year, and could be going to prison soon for ages. But what was the name of his monkey?

- a. Monkey
- b. Bubbles
- c. Francis

4. David Beckham was a very naughty boy with his mucky texts. But what farm animal did his (alleged) mistress wank off?

- a. A horse
- b. A cow
- c. A pig

1. Oh the weather outside is frightful
2. The kids start singing and the band begins to play
3. A face on a lover with a fire in his heart, A man undercover but you tore me apart
4. He said, "Let's run and have some fun, before I melt away"

5. All is calm, all is bright
6. Toys in every store
7. From now on your troubles will be out of sight
8. Are you hanging up a stocking on your wall?
9. Won't you guide my sleigh tonight?

10. Sleigh bells ring, are you listening?
11. It'll be cold, so cold, without you to hold
12. Where tree-tops glisten, and children listen
13. They've got cars big as bars, they've got rivers of gold

14. Well, you better watch out, you better not cry
15. Should all acquaintance be forgot
16. The stars in the bright sky
17. Par-rum-pa-pum-pum
18. Ding dong verily the sky

19. Oh, what a laugh it would have been, If Daddy had only seen
20. Logs on the fire and gifts on the tree
21. The mood is right, the spirit's up
22. Snow is falling, all around me

23. An outer space convertible too, light blue
24. 'Tis the season to be jolly
25. Just hear those sleigh bells jingle-in ring-ting-tingle-in too
26. Jingle bells swing and jingle bells ring
27. Well tonight thank god it's them instead of you

28. Dashing through the snow in a one-horse open sleigh
29. Good tidings we bring, to you and your king
30. Hark now hear the angels sing, a king was born today
31. War is over if you want it

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FUCWIT Answers: Issue 1307

Cryptic Corner

Fritillary: B - A type of lily
Kaki: C - A parrot
Denigration: C - A defamation

International Beats

Eminem - *The Real Slim Shady*
Justin Timberlake - *Cry Me A River*
Modjo - *Lady*
Franz Ferdinand - *Take Me Out*
The Libertines - *Don't Look Back Into The Sun*
The Beatles - *Norwegian Wood*
Radiohead - *No Surprises*
Robbie Williams - *She's The One*

Cryptograms

1. Downright Stupid
2. Go up in Smoke
3. Man overboard
4. Look both ways before you cross the street
5. Nothing good on TV
6. Three blind mice
7. Safety in numbers
8. Next to nothing
9. What goes up must come down
10. Robin Hood
11. H₂O
12. Unfinished symphony

FUCWIT LEAGUE 2004-5

Management Slackers	127 points
Smith & Wesson	113 points
The Illegitimate Bionic Progeny of Jeremy Beadle	69 points
Team Bulwer	42 points
Araldite Sniffers	34 points
Team Willy J	34 points
Team Robin	31 points
The B Team	22 points
See you next time	16 points
KPN ²	11 points
Natasha Kundi	10 points

Send in your entries to **coffee.felix@ic.ac.uk**

'Fitty' of the week



I would like to introduce a new section to Coffee Break, 'fitty of the week', so here is our first bit of totty.

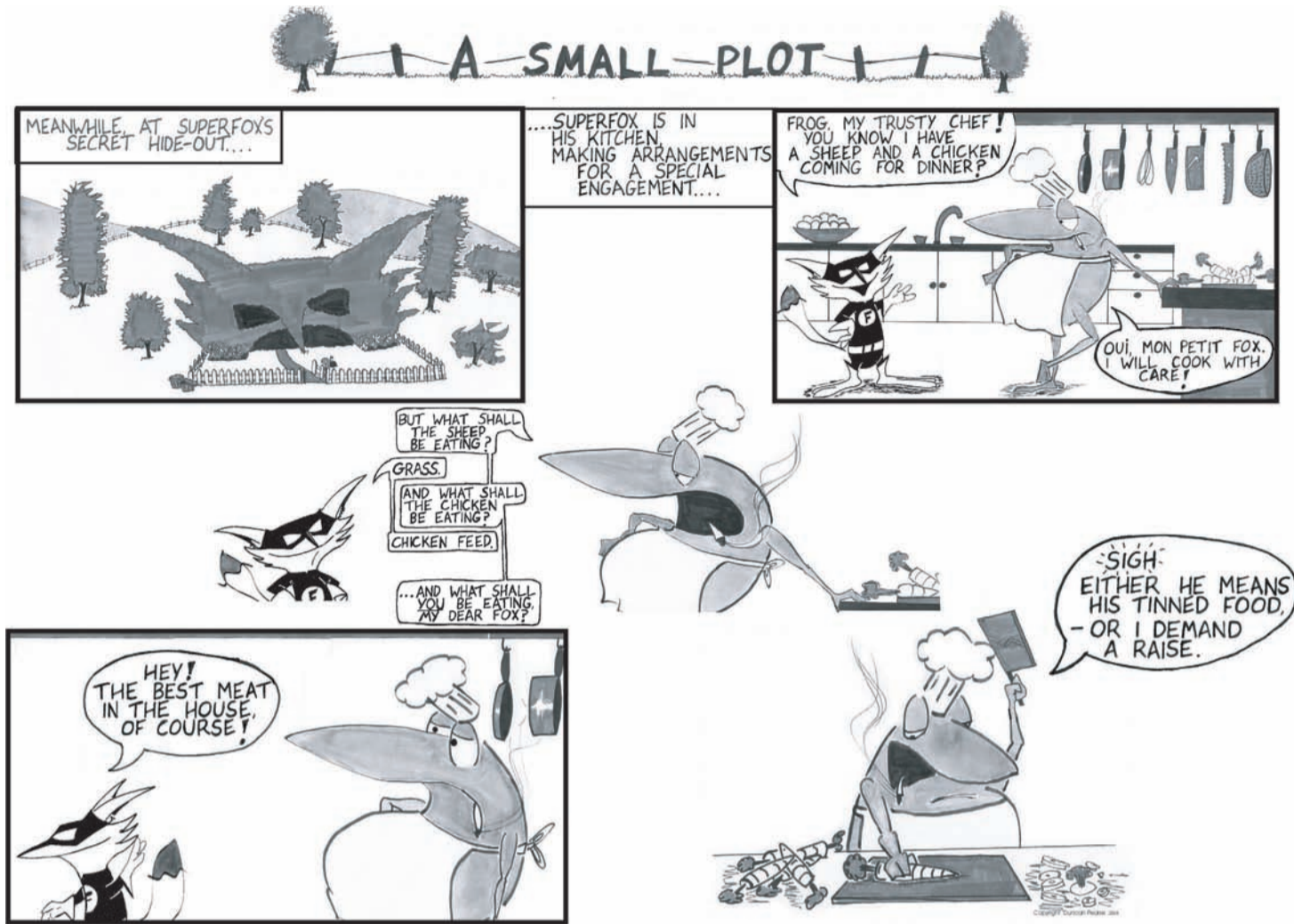
I'm sure you have all noticed him walking around the College. Who could miss those baby blue eyes, and newly bleached blonde hair. Yes everyone, this weeks hotty is Michael Higns. Now there are no points in this section I'm afraid, it's for pure enjoyment only, and I just want to add: don't be angry bread.

I would like to dedicate a bit of time to talking about Michael so you can all see what an amazing person he is and why I have chosen him for fitty of the week. Michael enjoys horse riding, but above all his favourite hobby is computer games, which he usually plays until the early morning. He's also a member of the TA, so we are expecting a bit of a fit body under that jumper! He's a second year physics undergraduate, and his favourite club is Breakin' Bread. If we have any takers, email coffee.felix@ic.ac.uk and I'm sure we can sort you out with a date.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the Coffee Break team!

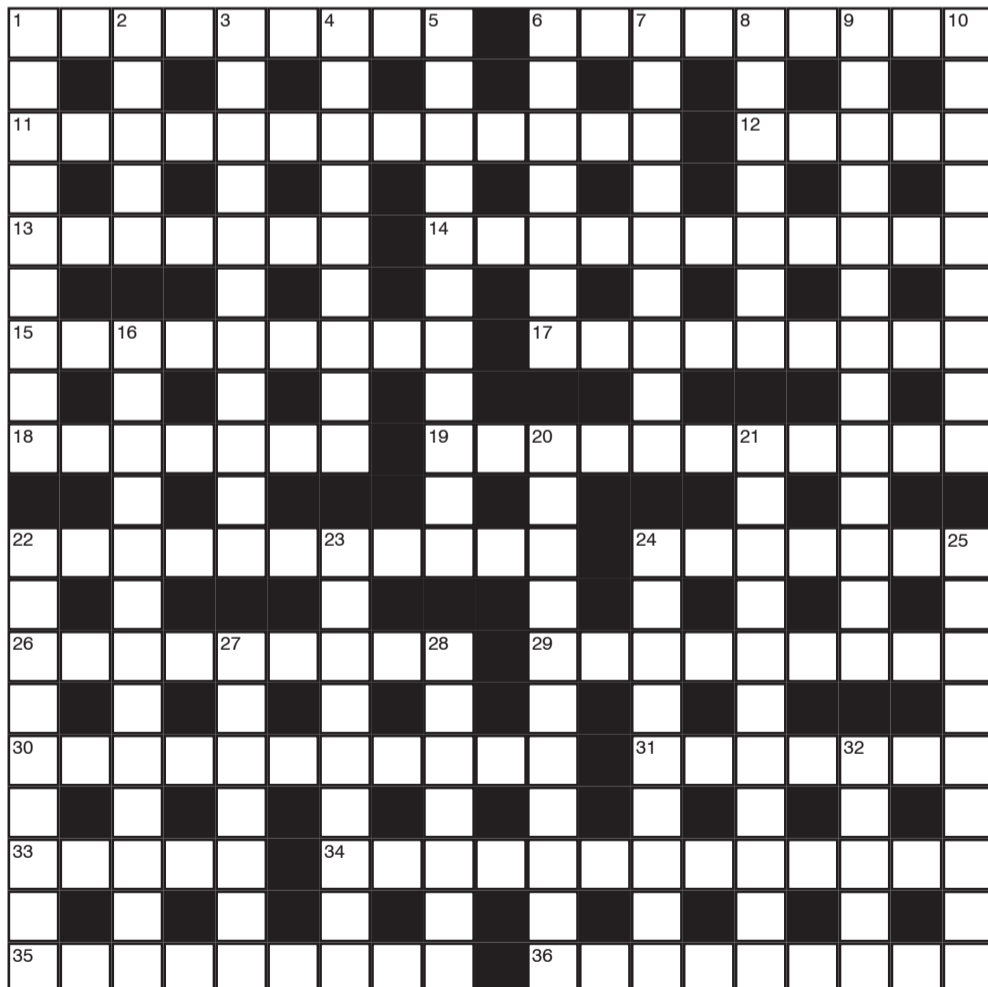
COFFEE BREAK

coffee.felix@ic.ac.uk



Felix Giant Crossword 1309

by Snufkin



Across

1. Copper slept with ready child models using this (4-5)
6. Does my pun upset "Snufkin"? (9)
11. 22across's pop star concerned with silence (6,2,5)
12. Redgrave's limitless scoring (5)
13. A possible result of collapsing regimes (7)
14. Ogre shadowed wizard and elf, initially, for Plant family (11)
15. Idaho city's dreadful local poet (9)
17. Ten-strong council bust crime dive (9)
18. Troublesome children go astray in hills (7)
19. Not missing any of the athletics, whatever happens (2,3,6)
22. Unclued - see preamble (5,6)
24. Hop over crumpled cone in farmyard building (3-4)
26. Spooner's sodomizing deer for seasonal treat (3,6)
29. Mother, or mother's father (9)
30. Susannah swimming around that French river (11)
31. Egyptian king taking reasonable line, according to reports (7)
33. Caterpillar perhaps hiding in cellar vault (5)
34. Dogs hit riser twice, strangely (5,8)
35. It's all downhill from here! (2,7)
36. Unimaginative doctor developing measles (9)

Down

1. Cheer up important salesman with tableware (6-3)
2. Excuse a politician's ego (5)
3. Festive ornaments and speeches at end of December (11)
4. Spurious Latin coined for shrew-mole genus (9)
5. Bloated creatures in cool rivers by army road (11)
6. At first, private dancer minced and strutted (7)
7. Melancholy, as Gray was in a country churchyard? (9)
8. Speak out about French allegation (7)
9. Pine for the fjords? (9,4)
10. Cockney eyes Santa's presents (5,4)
16. 9down, perhaps, put up before 22across's birthday (9,4)
20. Nervous author initially dropped page with scribbled signature (11)
21. One may display membership in set-theoretical circles with this (4,7)
22. Where 22across's feet *did* walk in ancient time (9)
23. Catch a lift? (5-4)
24. Helmet woven from cheap eider, mostly (9)
25. Aggressive sibling's mental illness (9)
27. Student union missing deadline? Moan! (7)
28. Grow uncontrollably in tangled rot and ruin (3,4)
32. Mountain ridge visible through Poincaré telescope (5)

Here's a festive treat for you: not quite a jumbo puzzle, but perhaps a bumper one. The unclued entry at 22 across is thematic, but don't be scared - there's not much of a theme, and it's pretty obvious. 4 down is obscure, but can be easily verified online.

A final note about clue types, to wrap up the present series of columns. Some clues, known as '&Lits' ('and literally so'), are so ingenious that their cryptic wordplay doubles up as the definition. These are difficult to think up and hence rare, but perhaps the most satisfying of all. You'll find one here at 13 across.

That's all folks - see you next term!

Snufkin

Last week's winner is Oliver Butters, Physics IV. Well done!

Send your answers to coffee.felix@ic.ac.uk or bring this page down to the Felix office in the West Wing of Beit Quad. Everyone who provides us with a correct solution will get an entry into our prize draw at the end of the year

Issue 1308 solution



SPORT

UCL no match for Wye

RUGBY

Wye Women's 1st 78
UCL Women's 1st 5

By Suzanne Horn

Wye weren't lying about their winning streak. With a convincing win over UCL, who would have thought that Wye had just gone a month without a match? The team were on fire and ready to throw themselves at any opposition.

The massive score shows our complete dominance in this game. The amazing rucking skills of our forwards made sure we nearly always

had the ball, while the flair and sheer speed of the backs gave the crowd some exhilarating runs.

Em scored two amazing tries, managing to run around all of the opposition, obliterating the UCL defence. Winger Kipling also added some points to the score, with her storming runs from set plays. Her talking on the pitch was excellent. Gobby's kicking was superb, converting over half of all tries.

However this isn't to say our forwards weren't exciting. Our sweaty Hetty managed to score a flurry of tries, all of which would have led to Jeremy Guscott leaping

out of his commentary seat with pure amazement! Liking the netball moves, Hetty was deservedly given player of the match for her fantastic five tries, her solid rucking performance and simply raw aggression.

The scrum was viciously contested at every chance by both teams. But the Wye pack lead by hooker Cat was awesome, turning the ball over in the scrum on many occasions through brute force. Pike's tackling and mauling was on top form throughout the entire match. Lineouts were also strong with excellent jumping by Spaz and Zena.

The Wye girls did themselves proud. Rugby is a team game, so without the 100% effort displayed by all, the fantastic score of 78-5 could not have been achieved. Kate, Kayleigh and Alice braved the opposition and the cold to participate in their first match of the season. Well done girls. There were almost too many tries to count. Let's hope this will be the case in a week's time against the Virgins.

Thanks go to our coach, the referee, the two touch judges, all our supporters and of course our two cheerleaders/water boys. Let's keep up the winning streak.

Seconds first at last in ULU

FOOTBALL

Imperial Men's 2nd 4
SOAS Men's 1st 1

By Chris Jermyn

On a crisp Saturday morning, Team Bouncebackability made their way to Fortress Cobham to take on the School of Oriental and African Studies.

It was clear from the off who the better side was, the Seconds passing the ball around well with Has and Easter dominating the middle and Leigh and DAL flying down the wings. Still, in true Second team tradition, SOAS scored first, Geike impersonating a dying penguin by falling over at the back to allow their centre forward to walk through and score. The goal didn't faze us though as it was clearly only a matter of time before our dominance paid off, although for all of our possession the score remained 1-0 at half time.

The second half started as the first half ended, with Will

and Geike solid at the back and Kimmo steamrolling his way down the wing. After ten minutes we finally broke through, Greedy weaving his way past their entire team to slot the ball past the funboy 'keeper. The goal settled our nerves and apart from a few smart saves from Von Orford there was only going to be one outcome.

After more pressure, Greedy bagged his second, a Bergkamp-esque flick from Jermyn putting him through to finish coolly. Some neat interplay around the box then allowed Garro to turn on a sixpence and finish in the bottom corner.

With five minutes to go, a long ball from goalkeeper Orford and an uncanny Geike impersonation from SOAS' Hobbit centre back allowed Jermyn to walk through their defence and roll the ball into the empty net.

The Seconds can look forward to a spring term with confidence to ensure a third season in the ULU premier league.

Vets get lucky... again

FOOTBALL

RVC Men's 1st 1
Imperial Men's 4th 0

By Michael Nicholson

The intrepid Fourths made the trek to deepest darkest Hertfordshire to face RVC, who had emerged from fortress Harlington with an ill-deserved draw in the previous meeting between the two sides.

Due to the total idiocy of the RVC captain, the majority of the Fourths went to the wrong ground, meaning that at kick-off the sun was already beginning to set. The only option was to play a shortened game of thirty minutes each way.

It was an unfamiliar side that took to the darkened pitch, with illness, injury, and random trips to Bury (Aldridge-Carlos) taking their toll. New signing JJ continued at right back with Toony moving across to the centre to partner Shinguards. The surprise choice at left back was Jai, whose place up front was taken by another new boy, Danny.

The lack of a warm-up led to a horrifically scrappy first half with neither team getting into their stride. The makeshift defence was coping admirably, and Vanni was performing well in a sweeper/

keeper role. Chances however were at a premium, and even when shooting opportunities did present themselves both sides were strangely reluctant to let fly. The only real moment of interest came when the Mullet got away from Shinguards after what looked like a blatant push and found himself through on goal. However, the veteran centre half showed speed to recover and get the ball away with a well-timed challenge.

The second half provided a lot more in terms of goal-scoring opportunities; unfortunately they all fell to the Vets. The Mullet twice managed to produce decent shots from tight angles, and Vanni managed to make a couple of outstanding stops.

The game was destined to finish nil-nil until the very last moment, when the Vets got the break of the ball in midfield allowing their winger to escape down the right. His cross was met by the Mullet whose shot deflected off Toony right into the path of their onrushing midfielder, who had no problem finishing into the corner.

It was a sickening blow, worsened by the referee's whistle before Imperial could even kick off again. I could go on a rant about how unfair all this was, but I won't. We'll just win the Cup instead.



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SPORT

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Rugby Firsts overcome GKT and King's

RUGBY

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Imperial Men's 1st 21
GKT Men's 1st 12

By Michael Hicks

After a stunning display beating Chichester 39-14 last week, Imperial Firsts faced a strong side in GKT.

Before the match, spirits were high and despite several regular faces missing, the team was looking sharp. This showed on the pitch as, after a tense first five minutes, Raph broke through the back line to score a superb try near to the posts, Pedder

duly converted and it was 7-0 to Imperial.

Shortly after, Raph broke through again and with great support from Andy Jasudasen, faced a two on one with the full back! Unfortunately Raph went himself, missing the opportunity for another score and earning himself a dirty pint after the match.

Luckily, our attack kept piling on the pressure and it wasn't long before Pedder touched down for Imperial's second try, and converting to make it 14-0 with only 15 minutes gone.

The score was then increased again when Achi went over for what was surprisingly his first try of the year. Pedder was on form with his boot and it was 21-0 to Imperial.

With the opposition's heads down and the game now looking like a formality, some confusion among the back three

left GKT with some good possession on our 22. This spurred them into action and after some desperate defending they crossed our line to make it 21-5.

Worse was to come, when they crossed again and with the conversion made it 21-12 after forty minutes.

The second half was now all to play for as both sides had showed some great form during patches of the first 40. As expected, the game was now much more even and despite best efforts, neither team put any more points on the board, making the final score 21-12 to Imperial.

Notable performances came from Jovan Nedic on his first team debut and John Bound on coming out of retirement to stand in for our honeymooning lock.

This puts the First XV back at the top of the league with only three games left to play.

RUGBY

King's Men's 1st 15
Imperial Men's 1st 33

By David Jackson

Imperial Men's First XV were ill-prepared to face King's, with a plethora of new faces in the line-up.

The pre-match warm up was shorter than a dwarf tying his shoelaces, however this did not phase the Imperial team by even a radian. Quick rucking from a strong but mobile Imperial pack allowed their backs to part the King's defence in a 'Moses-esque' fashion. Some sleeky footwork from Imperial number seven Raphael followed, and Imperial were jubilantly celebrating their first try.

This did not dampen regal spirits however: King's pressed hard and converted a

penalty shortly after. Imperial then began to dominate, urged on from the touch line by afflicted captain Michael Hicks and his subordinate Achi. Some good work from Jon Spencer offered Gabriel the invitation to finish in the corner, which he took with alomb.

King's were shaken but not stirred, and subsequently added a breakaway try of their own. Imperial increased their lead however when Mark Wills thundered over the line with King's defenders clutching at his garments. The half time score was Imperial 21, King's 10.

The second half proved much the same as the first; Imperial knocking at the King's door with the fervour of a ravenous wolf, but the King's defence wise to the danger, like three little pigs with television screen entry intercom on their cottage.

Eventually incessant pressure paid off, and following a superb catch and drive line-out and good work from debutante Nathan, James Pedder glided in for Imperial's fourth try.

Imperial's defence was then tested as Kings rallied for a late surge. Imperial prop David Jackson was harshly sin-binned. The writer of this report has it on good authority that he was incredibly unlucky.

King's made these numbers advantage pay and converted an overlap in the corner, much to the delight of their rowdy supporters. Imperial answered with a fifth and final try minutes after the restart, when a cleverly worked blind side move ended with Gabriel off-loading to the omnipresent Steve McLellan. The final whistle blew as Andrew Towers' conversion attempt was waylaid by the wind.

Surgical strikes dispatch St Bart's

RUGBY

Imperial Men's 3rd 77
St Bart's Men's 2nd 3

By Andy Wright

We found ourselves in South London about to play rugby. The mission: to destroy St Barts, I repeat - to destroy St Barts.

After an initial advance by the heavy armour of the Imperial forwards, a precision strike from Nick 'Iceman' Warde opened up the scoring.

His follow-up conversion shot was just as clinical. Then Joe 'Panzer' Sanders led a break into St Barts' rear echelon and after great support put the bomb on target.

On the next advance Ben 'Lamb Chops' Thompson received the ball, after the opposition were duped by Alex 'Ballerina' Fergusson, and went through for a score.

Great play throughout the squad led to more tries for Fergusson and Sanders, who used his forward-firing beer belly to barge through

the defence like a German tank through French resistance. Further scores came from Pete 'KGB' Sannikov, Will 'The Corporal' Mews and 'Lamb Chops' again.

Chris 'Budgie' Gosden converted most attempts, and some excellent strike tackles were seen from Tom 'The Hitter' Peatman. It was a total victory, thanks to good team work and discipline and to the planning and leadership of Wing Commander Dan 'Peanut Head' Lindsley.

RSM bombard the Honourable Artillery Corps

RUGBY

RSM Men's 1st 21
HAC Men's 1st 7

Captain Eddy Poulding didn't know whether to laugh or cry when he marched his group of rotting miners past a fit looking HAC team sporting a fresh tan from their recent tour of southern Iraq. Little did he know that the most valiant warriors would turn out to be on his side.

The kick off was shortly followed by savage screams from scrum half and vice captain Quincy Allan, in an attempt to somewhat intimidate the opposition. The screams, however, didn't last for long, as Allan was forced to come off due to fatigue.

After some ferocious driving from rucking team alpha (Tom Hawkins, Joe Franklin,

Stefan Nubert and John Sykes) the firsts points finally came from Imperial legend Tim 'the prowler' Praill, who, with his huge tackles and mountains of experience, was kind enough to provide the Royal School of Mines team with a magnificent try which fly half Nick Warde converted with exceptional ease.

Unfortunately for the RSM, the Honourable Artillery Corps were able to scrape a handful of pathetic points when, after a mistake from the forwards, Chaps club president and full back Rob Thomas was faced with a one on one with the HAC fly half. The fly half would certainly have ended up in hospital had Mr Thomas not attended the formidable '22 dinner the night before.

Nevertheless, the mighty RSM struck back with superb

perforating runs from centres Alex O'Rourke and Andy Irving.

Eventually, sometime after the kick that went straight into water boy Fergusson's face, Kim Grogan body checking his opposite winger and Quincy's 'double dummy side step', Eddy Poulding decided it was time to score two outstanding tries to demolish the shell-shocked HAC side.

Special mentions should also go to rucking team bravo (consisting of Tim Praill, James Davies, Josh Wright and James Clark) for their swift clearing out and hands on approach towards the HAC pack, and to the side's only person who plays rugby on a regular basis for the Imperial medics, RSM vice-president Mike Seager for being such a cool guy.

Results

WEDNESDAY 1 DECEMBER

BADMINTON

Surrey Women's 1st 4
Imperial Women's 1st 4

FOOTBALL

Imperial Men's 4th 2
GKT Men's 3rd 1

Sussex Men's 1st 4
Imperial Medicals Men's 1st 0

HOCKEY

Sussex Women's 2nd 4
Imperial Medicals Women's 3rd 0

RUGBY

King's Men's 1st 15
Imperial Men's 1st 33

Imperial Men's 3rd 63
Queen Mary Men's 2nd 5

Bristol Men's 1st 34
Imperial Medicals Men's 1st 8

GKT Women's 1st 5
Imperial Women's 1st 25

TENNIS

St Mary's Men's 1st 3
Imperial Men's 2nd 7

THURSDAY 2 DECEMBER

BASKETBALL

LSE Men's 1st 38
Imperial Men's 1st 47

SATURDAY 4 DECEMBER

FOOTBALL

GKT Men's 1st 2
Imperial Men's 3rd 1

Imperial Men's 5th 2
UCL Men's 7th 2

St Bart's Men's 3rd 0
Imperial Men's 6th 2

Imperial Men's 7th 0
University of the Arts London Men's 1st 6

King's Men's 3rd 3
Imperial Medicals Men's 3rd 0

SUNDAY 5 DECEMBER

FOOTBALL

GKT Women's 1st 17
Imperial Women's 1st 0

VOLLEYBALL

Essex Men's 1st 2
Imperial Men's 1st 1

MONDAY 6 DECEMBER

WATER POLO

Imperial Medicals 1st 4
UCL 1st 14



Sport

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Fairies show magical skills

NETBALL

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High performance. Delivered.

Imperial 2nd **42**
St George's 2nd **10**

By Celina Rughani

Once again, the Imperial Seconds, also known as 'The Fairies', have demonstrated their magic. They won not one but two matches in a row. With a flick of their wand, a sprinkle of some fairy dust and a damn fantastic team, the Seconds held down their high standards and arse-whooping antics!

Both matches were against St George's. The first was won by an outstanding score of 39-17, but the latest match confirmed that the Fairies are a force to be reckoned with, winning 42-10.

Aiming to maintain their unbeaten record, The Fairies pulled together to show great skill and the determination to win. Besides the blistering cold and a few accidents that called for the first aid box, the matches were smooth and to their favour throughout.

With the arrival of a new uniform, not only did we kick arse, but we looked hot, the skirts putting a new definition to mini!

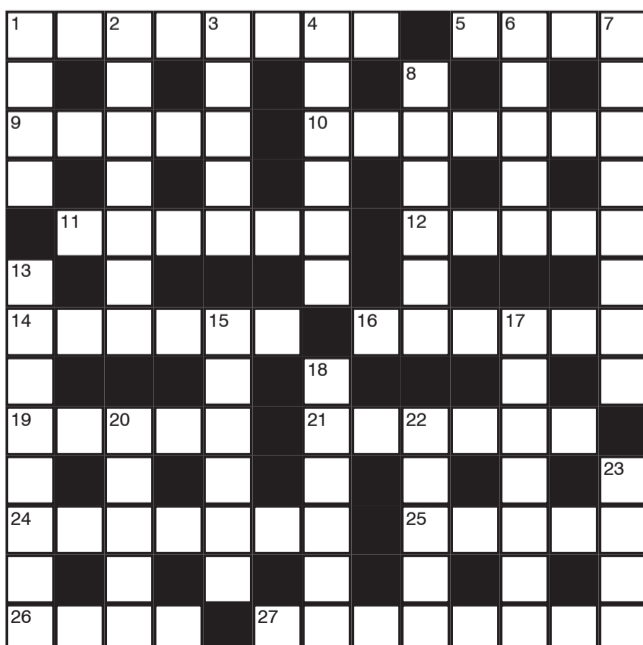
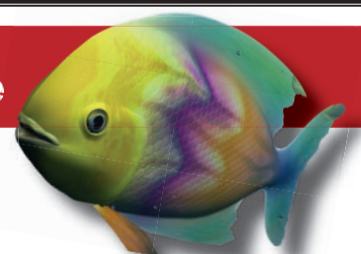
Overall a great performance by The Fairies and the most positive we've been all term! And to all our supporters out there: "Fairy love to you all," as Hen would say!



Imperial netballers in action against St George's

Quick Crossword

by Fishface



Across

1. Strange (6)
5. Bird (4)
9. Logo (5)
10. Ruin (7)
11. Cloth (6)
12. Ice house (5)
14. Flowers (6)
16. State of reduced sensibility (6)
19. Period of time (5)
21. Sport (6)
24. Martial art (2,5)
25. Thoughts (5)
26. Breeze (4)
27. Defeated (8)

Down

1. Military unit (4)
2. Sport (7)
3. Direct (5)
4. Capture (6)
6. Month (5)
7. Electric piano (8)
8. Item of clothing (1-5)
13. Type of accent (US) (5-3)
15. Invent (6)
17. Student officer, esp. in private school (7)
18. Bird (6)
20. Cooking style using hot seasoning (5)
22. Country (5)
23. Manipulated (4)

Send your answers to
 coffee.felix@ic.ac.uk or bring
 this page to the *Felix* office in
 the West Wing of Beit Quad

Issue 1308 solution

B	O	Y	B	A	N	D	E	N	N	U	I
R	I	R	R	I	A	E	M				
O	V	E	R	R	U	N	S	L	U	M	P
W	L	I	I	E	T	I					
N	O	D	I	V	I	N	G	W	R	E	N
			A	G	C	O	G				
T	R	A	I	L	S	C	H	A	N	G	E
R	I	S	O	A							
I	S	L	E	E	X	E	R	C	I	S	E
R	M	E	T	A	N	R					
E	J	E	C	T	A	U	D	I	T	O	R
M	N	N	I	E	R	O					
E	X	T	R	A	L	A	S	S	O	E	R