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felix

The student newspaper
of Imperial College

No. 1,365 • Friday •
24 November 2006 •
felixonline.co.uk

Students say yes to NUS



Left to right: Jon Matthews (Returning Officer) announces the result; John Collins (Union President and Yes supporter) loses his cool; Gemma Tumelty (NUS President) letting those back at NUS HQ know the result; Alex Guite (leader of the Yes campaign) embraces Ms Tumelty; and Stephen Brown, vocal No campaigner, expresses his dissatisfaction

Andy Sykes
Editor-in-chief

Imperial College Union will affiliate to the National Union of Students (NUS), pending approval by the NUS conference, after the referendum result was announced last week as "yes".

After three days of dedicated campaigning by both sides, the results were announced last Friday night in Da Vinci's. The final result showed 53% of those who voted chose to vote yes to the question: "Should Imperial College Union affiliate to the NUS?" 47% voted no.

The result has some historic significance, drawing the highest turnout of any referendum or election in living memory, with final turnout standing at just over 30%. In real

numbers, this means more than 4,000 students voted.

Though many around the Union had been predicting a landslide either way, the final result came very close, with only 261 votes separating the two camps.

As the results were announced, John Collins, Union President and supporter of the Yes campaign, let out a deafening yell. Ben Harris, Deputy President (Education & Welfare) jumped to his feet, and Gemma Tumelty (NUS President) looked stunned. The No campaigners present, including CGCU President James Fok and Live! Editor Ashley Brown, met the result with a resigned look. A few students in the bar were confused as to what was happening, asking this reporter what election had just been held.

John Collins, Union President, said he was "delighted [with] what has become the largest union democratic exercise ever to take place at Imperial". Collins also had words of praise for both camps: "I would like to thank both Alex Guite and James Fok for organising brilliant campaigns, *Live!* and *Felix* for co-ordinating a balanced debate, and I would like to commend Jon Matthews, the Returning Officer, for keeping a lid on what has been an explosive and heated week of banter."

Alex Guite, the leader of the Yes campaign, commented to *Live!*, the CGCU online newspaper: "This is an awesome result for Imperial students. It's right that as we move into our centenary year that we're back where we belong: leaders not

followers in the national student movement. We ran a clean and positive campaign, over the last two weeks we've put up hundreds of posters and spoken to thousands of students. Thanks to all those who voted yes to discounts and yes to a stronger Imperial College Union. Thanks also to those students who campaigned tirelessly for the yes campaign and thanks also to the no campaign for making it an entertaining referendum."

On the other side, James Fok, the leader of the No campaign and CGCU President, said: "I firmly believe that this is not the right decision for us, and that the money could be better spent elsewhere. Since the formation of the NUS, Imperial and its students have never had a good lasting relationship. However,

our students have spoken, so our sabbatical officers must work hard to get value for money from the NUS and push for the reform they have agreed it needs."

The Union has never affiliated to the NUS for more than 12 months at a time, with affiliation motions usually followed by disaffiliation in the following academic year. Rumblings have been heard from the No campaign, promising a disaffiliation petition next year. As it is, the No campaign are resolved to make sure the Union now makes good on its promise to reform the NUS from the inside, according to one anonymous A-NUS member.

The referendum was not without its fair share of problems, and *Felix* eagerly awaits the report of the Returning Officer.

Chem Eng incident

Fire Brigade called to investigate a waste barrel giving off smoke

Andy Sykes
Editor-in-chief

The Fire Brigade was called to South Kensington campus last Thursday, when a barrel containing around five litres of chlorinated waste chemicals began giving off white fumes.

According to the Head of Department for Chemical Engineering, waste was being disposed of into the barrel when a gas was released, which was mainly hydrochloric acid. The Fire Brigade were called, and within fifteen minutes a number of appliances had arrived; eventually there were more than 8 appliances and a number of incident support vehicles on site.

The cordoning off of the area closed the Walkway, the rear of the Sherfield Building, and the buildings around the Chemical Engineering building. However, a lone student was spotted striding purposefully towards the site, before being chastised by a security officer. Decontamination showers were set up, and a number of officers were kitted out with hazmat suits.

Fire hydrants around the Chem Eng building were found to be inactive by the Brigade, who had to bring water from the side of the Sherfield building. This was due to recent works to install a Combined Heat and Power (CHP) unit nearby. A number of students approached this reporter with concerns over the way the incident was handled, and Felix put these questions to Ceri Davis, Head of Security. No alarms sounded in the building; Mr Davis says that this is because the evacuation needs to be controlled to direct people away from the dangerous area. Exiting through the nearest exit could endanger students. The slow evacuation of the building was in response to the need to increase the size of the cordon based on advice from officers on the scene. Mr Davis added: "The management of the incident from a Security point of view went very well."



Firemen find the hydrants around Chem Eng inactive, requiring them to bring water from the other side of the Sherfield building

Referendum results

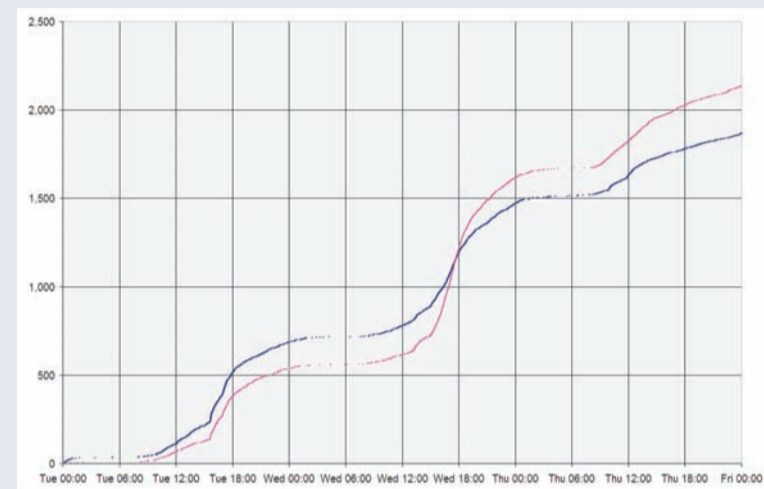
The graph below shows voting numbers versus time; the pink line indicates yes votes, and the blue line indicates no votes.

Initially, the no campaign were leading by around 200 votes at the end of the first day of voting. At this point, emails had been sent to all student eligible to vote, reminding them to vote. The sharp increase in numbers voting on Tuesday afternoon was likely due to the heavy campaigning by both sides at lunchtime on the walkway, in the JCR, Dalby Court and other

common areas of campus, with those canvassed returning to computer rooms to vote.

On Wednesday, personalised emails were sent to all those who had not voted already, and the Medic President reminded his constituents to vote, resulting in the huge spike in voting.

The yes campaign took the lead just before 6pm on Wednesday, and remained in the lead by around 250 votes until the close of voting. Percentage results were 53.3% for yes, 46.7% for no.



Students targeted for sex acts in UCL campus toilets

UCL's new student newspaper, *Pi Squared*, has uncovered a bizarre story involving older men "cruising" the male toilets on the UCL campus at Gower Street, looking for sex with students.

Rumours that the toilets were known as a regular spot for older men to pick up younger male students have been floating around the campus for a number of months. However, the team at *Pi Squared* discovered posts on an Internet forum, dating back as far as 2004, stating that the toilets were a good

place to find "horny fresher types," and that there is "tons of action going on". The site urges readers "to be discreet so this place is kept!"

The reporters even managed to locate one man, known as "Steve", who had apparently been cruising the facilities after finishing work.

Students have complained of men attempting to climb into their toilet cubicles, with the same student being targeted twice this year.

"Cruising" describes the act of searching a public place in order to find a sex partner.

felix 1,365
Friday 24.11.06

Sudan Tragedy

"The cause of Sudanese internal conflict is generally attributed to ethnic divisions and control over vital natural resources as well as the disparity in development between 'outer' regions such as Darfur and the wealthier 'Blue Nile' area."

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Shlo-motion hip hop

"It is often suggested that he now represents Britain's most gifted beatboxer and the set was certainly amongst the best I've seen."

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A thorny subject

"I've been looking forward to Double Agent ever since Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory ended in an orgy of silence and darkness last year."

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Lo-fi fashion

"A lot of the price tags will make you choke, but you can find some key fashion pieces here. So, if you factor in the amount of wear you'll get per pound, you can easily justify the silly prices."

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Angry letters clues

"The most common obstacle to solving crosswords is not knowing the types of clue commonly used, and finding them too complicated as a result - in actual fact, there are only a dozen or so frequently used types of clue (or parts thereof) that are needed to solve most crosswords."

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IC rules the water

"Imperial dominated the competition, as well as being the first university on the water. Notable highlights included: a top 5 place for Chris in the highly competitive Freestyle, a 2nd and 3rd in the advanced racing for Chris and Niall and top 5 places in the intermediate fleet for Jahn and Jake - and this was Jahns first SWA event!"

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Daniel Craig as 007 in the rawest Bond film yet, *Casino Royale*

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Imperial answers Blair's campaign

As Science awakens to the need to reintegrate with society, Imperial takes leading outreach initiatives

David Ellis
News Editor

Tony Blair has burst onto the science stage, campaigning for a greater prominence in today's society.

The Prime Minister delivered a speech to the Royal Society in Oxford, and gave an interview to *New Scientist* magazine on the subject. Sir Richard Sykes, Rector of Imperial College, wrote a paper for the Prime Minister to prepare on the subject.

The move came as a decline in the number of science students became evident. Tony Blair said: "We need our young people today to embrace science enthusiastically, to realise that challenges like climate change can only be beaten by motivated and dedicated scientists, and to understand that a career in science today is not a life all spent in a laboratory but has the best business and job prospects the modern world can offer. Science today abounds both with noble causes and with glittering prizes: reach out for them."

"We need our scientists today to be as celebrated and famous as our sportsmen and women, our actors, our business entrepreneurs. Scientists are stars too. This is Britain's path to the future, lit by the brilliant light of science."

To follow up the Prime Minister's comments, *Felix* spoke to Professor Lord Robert Winston, the celebrated fertilisation expert. Prof. Winston said that the problem facing science in modern society was cultural, and that scientists should "stop talking about science and the economy", he also said: "Scientists come across as being dry, cold and unethical, and that is our fault."

He drew attention to the fact that scientists are sometimes perceived as being arrogant and speaking down to people. This view point is also held by Mrs. Justine Jones, an expert on public speaking who works with Imperial's Maths students, she said: "When communicating love of science in Maths, remember it is your challenge to make the people you're speaking to feel smart."

Prof. Winston noted that it was not 'cool' to know about science, that for many people the social standard when it came to science

was to claim 'I don't know anything about that.'

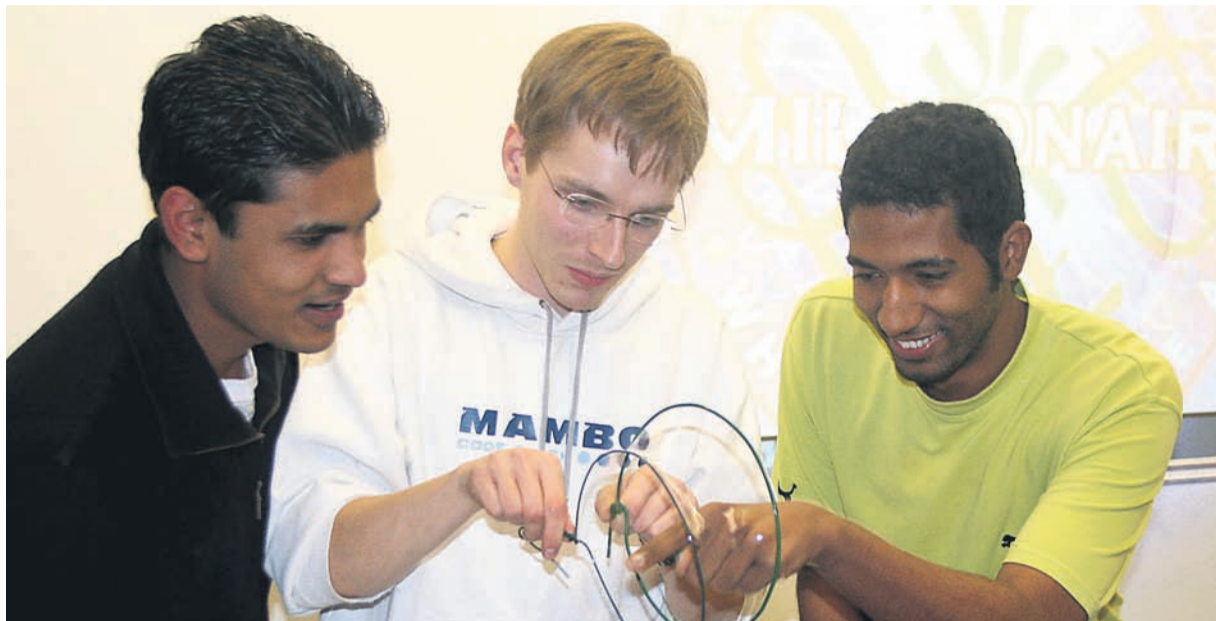
Your reporter took up the challenge of putting this opinion to the test. He asked many people what they knew about maths, the vast majority responded by saying that they 'don't know about that'. By comparison, very few claimed to know nothing about music or film, and not one claimed to be illiterate.

So how is this issue being addressed? One scheme that has been particularly successful is 'Maths Matters', based at the Maths department at Imperial College. Under the scheme students work with Maths department staff, Exscitec, who also work with the Pimlico Connection, and public speaking expert Justine Jones to prepare exciting presentations based on their own mathematical studies. The presentations aim to inspire pupils by showing how mathematics is key to many developments in society at large, and are delivered to school pupils around London. The presentations are often politically relevant, for example, one presentation last year showed how maths is used in disease modelling, and was delivered at the time of the Bird Flu scare.

The scheme has received 100% positive feedback, and students had to be protected by the college from demand by schools that could potentially have damaged their studies.

Kam Cheng was a member of the 'Sexy Maths' team, the precursor to Maths Matters and has stayed with the scheme, now helping a new generation of presenters. He recalls how cauliflowers were the unlikely link between sexy and maths: "With the help of a brilliant speaking coach who also advised on how to capture the audiences' imagination, my group was able to create a presentation that involved Powerpoint slides, visual aids and interactive props, thus covering all the bases when it comes to teaching a new concept and making sure it sticks."

"The first school my group were invited to was a Catholic faith secondary school. The kids were very well behaved and were braver than we had planned for; every time we needed a volunteer from audience, many hands would be raised (although the lure of chocolates as a



Left to right: Rohit Biyani, Gareth Williams and Abdulaziz Mohamed practise their Maths presentation

reward always helps, I guess!) Even handing out bits of cauliflower (yes, a cauliflower) for the kids to peruse over did not result in mayhem or destruction. In fact, they were fascinated by how maths could be applied to the real world; at the end we were asked questions ranging from 'What is the food like at university?' (Clearly inspired by the sight of the cauliflower), to whether people used maths in to solve crimes, like in a TV series."

Kam went on to speak at other schools including inner city schools, the pupils of which he describes as who he describes as "the kids we were aiming to encourage; those that may not have thought about further study, let alone further study in maths." He also said: "Using props not only brings to life what numbers cannot, but also it provides a chance for interaction with the audience, something essential when you are dealing with an audience who have a short attentions span."

Viki Howse, a colleague of Kam's, said that she had gained confidence, public speaking skills, and learnt how to explain complex problems to people with less experience on the subject, she also added: "We encourage to kids to continue studies in science and maths... We're answering the questions that teachers hate."

One of the main enabling factors in this success has been the level of support provided. Professor Darryl Holm of Imperial College's Maths department first thought of the idea when Sir Richard Sykes called for outreach programme involvement in 2005. Prof. Holm said: "An e-mail went round asking for volunteers to take part in outreach programmes, but the suggestions were along the lines a soccer league or a charity sale."

"Justine and I had just helped a bunch of 2nd year students with a presentation they were giving on mathematics. They improved so much, and so quickly. I just thought that there were all these students making very good presentations for their course that would just sit on the shelf once they got their marks."

"Why not come up with a programme that involved academics doing what they actually do?"

The idea was further developed

by Minna Ruohonen of IC Volunteer Centre who helped turn the idea into practice by providing contacts with external training, CRB checks and funding.

Felix asked Justine Jones what sort of person should get involved, she said: "No experience is necessary; you don't even need to be confident because it's a learning process. Whoever you are when you walk in, we'll teach you how to give presentations and you'll walk out a confident public speaker. The one thing you do need is commitment."

Alan West of Exscitec, who also works with the Pimlico Connection, enabled training and contact with schools. Students became Science and Engineering Ambassadors and received training in presentation skills over the course of a couple of months.

A further indication to the remarkable success of the team came when they were asked to speak to the Lighthill Institute of Mathematical Science (LIMS) and the London Mathematics Centre (LMC) in March 2006, after a meeting between Prof. Holm and Professor Lord Julian Hunt, who was then Director of LIMS. The students were also asked to take part in 'think tank' sessions at the conference that aimed to bring together university students and lecturers and school pupils and teachers. The objective was to "Bridge the gap at the school university interface." Ideas generated have been shared between institutions in London and there are plans for an annual joint event with LIMS and LMC addressing the issue. Teresa Smart, Project Manager for LMC and Imperial alumni said: "The conference was very successful, both sides opened balanced dialogue... [The conference] is something people still remember and that gets them speaking."

The event was co-organised by Professor Celia Hoyles OBE, the Chief Adviser for Mathematics at the Department for Skills and Education (DfES) installed by Charles Clarke in 2004.

Prof. Hunt expressed a desire to speak to *Felix* on the issue, but unfortunately is occupied in the US. He did point out that there is now a similar scheme to Maths Matters running at UCL.

Dr. Lynda White and Dr. Frank

Berkshire of Maths department are a particularly innovative pair, organising undergraduate studies at Imperial's Maths department. Having set up a pioneering course unit where undergraduates deliver projects and presentations a few years ago, which would eventually provide the material for Maths Matters and later securing funding for Maths Matters. A new idea being put together by them with Dr. Emma McCoy, also of the Maths department, is to send undergraduates to schools around London to teach pupils as part of their undergraduate degree. The scheme is only in preliminary planning, but has received a high amount of interest from undergraduate students. Dr. White said that if the course were to go ahead, admission to the course would be limited and an interview process would be necessary.

Science today is facing a problem; that much is clear. The problem is in the very culture of scientists who talk down to those they do not consider to be as enlightened as them. A lack of communication skills, or perhaps a lack of will to communicate, that leaves the general public in the dark over developments in this area of our culture. Apparently science needs to realise its place as another part of culture just as arts such as music, film and theatre are.

Felix asked Prof. Winston what advice he would give to students wanting to be involved in reintegrating science into modern culture, he said: "Go to the theatre, read literature, play a musical instrument, humanities are very important, try to realise it's not wrong to do these things, in fact it's right." The advice raises an important point. Scientists cannot afford to segregate themselves from modern culture in the pursuit of science.

On the other hand, it is also apparent that there is a whole community of very talented individuals working to resolve the issue. Some of these individuals are at Imperial College, and they provide the opportunity to students here to succeed in winning round future generations to the science as a part of culture. Others are doing the same at their various universities and institutions, and all are open to sharing ideas and discussion.



Left to right: Min Jung Son, Sharmishtha Roy and Mohammad Akhtar wrote the script for their presentation on Random Mechanics

Barbed wire, lesbians, and poetry

Peter Dominiczak and a man known only as Big Iain explore England's near-mythical hills, the Quantocks

As a Scotsman, I had always been of the opinion that England's landscapes were no more than the unwanted bastard children of the Highlands; the lands which the glaciers felt too beneath them to twist and trample beneath their icy mass, leaving them flat and pointless, useful only for daffodils and Little Chefs. I always thought of Scotland as Zeus atop Olympus; violent, magnificent and powerful, hurling bolts of lightning down at inferior England below – mere mortals at the foot of the mountain, having a good think, nibbling feta, and bending over.

But a couple of years living with an Englishman who gets teary at the very thought of an oak tree has softened my heart and, bags packed, I decided it was time to venture forth into Albion; leaving preconceptions behind in jagged glens and crystal-clear lochs. Compete, England, compete. Deciding where to go was problematical, like choosing between the various shades of brown paint at B&Q. There were dales and moors, coves, caves, meadows and marsh. But out of nowhere, from the very depths of my soul, poured the word that would change everything: Quantocks. Now virtually nobody in England knows where the Quantocks are, or if in fact they exist at all. They are a void, a fable; like Narnia, or the Midlands. Big Iain – travelling companion, giant, and English patriot – suggested that the Quantocks were possibly a distant galaxy visited on occasion by television's own Lycra-clad fools, trekking the stars, seeking out knowledge and females that would finally touch them. Inspection of a cartographer's magical produce revealed that the Quantocks exist in Somerset, just over the water from Cardiff, in that area of the world where people insist on worshipping large stones and oftentimes apples. We were off.

Getting to the Quantocks is a kind of township-filtration process, tak-

ing one through more and more trifling places, until you finally arrive in 'nowhere' – the wondrous centre of absolutely, bloody nowhere – and fall to the ground, writhing in rural ecstasy. First the bus rolls through Bristol – giving me just enough time to caress civilisation once more – and then onwards to uninspiring Taunton, the 'hub' of Somerset. For a hub, Taunton contains little more than a few idiot youths clad in garish sportswear, inhaling spray meant only for their grubby, miscreant underarms. Taunton also contains one or two pubs selling oddly fruity beer to idiot adults who clearly misspent their own youths inhaling the same sprays as their inglorious progeny. We sit and watch these semi-vegetative goons, now able only to slump awkwardly, beer clenched tight, exclaiming four-lettered examples of finest Saxon lingo, and occasionally creating a unique sort of art atop the mahogany bar with their dribble. All hail Taunton!

Trundling further into unknown England, we are distilled to our penultimate destination: an unspoilt, perfectly formed piece of total aimlessness. When the directions to a place are given by the phrase: 'get off the bus at the smell,' one knows the jackpot has been well and truly hit. Welcome to Watchet, Somerset: a shatteringly pointless seaside retreat that does indeed exist in an otherworldly scent-bubble that nestles comfortably between sewage and the long-neglected gusset of a darts player. Save for the smell, a pub, and loose connections with Coleridge's 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner', Watchet has almost no redeeming qualities. Its postcards claim points of interest, but these are lies invented by the presumably now-suicidal tourist board. Our happiest discovery was that of the 'Gay Archer': a rather large gunship cloistered in the dock that explained a great deal about why the Iraq war has descended into such catastrophe. Much discussion as to who this homophobic mariner



Our intrepid duo, Peter (left) and Iain (right), swapping Lithuania for, uhm, the glamour of Somerset

was or is obviously ensued, but no answers which would vindicate the funding of this floating hate-crime could be reached. Mr. Blair has a lot to answer for.

After a final bus journey up-wind of the stench, we neared our destination: Holford. It has to be said that quite suddenly on that bus everything became incredibly beautiful. I was experiencing a kind of pastoral Stendhal syndrome. All at once, I was hit by the astounding wonderfulness that rolling England has

to offer. The surroundings – finally panoramic rather than glimpsed in snatches from a grubby coach hurtling along a motorway – took on a new sharpness and significance; hills lolling as far as the eye could see. Kites, hovering delicately, scouted for prey and great lumbering sentry-like trees guarded some gargantuan secret garden – it was all quite startling. My bucolic revelations were confirmed to me by Big Iain, who – I'm not joking – began singing 'Jerusalem' to the majority of the bus with the kind of genuine emotion reserved for funerals or stubbed toes. I asked him what he was doing and with a tear in his eye he merely sighed: 'Ahh-hhh... England. Sweet England. Oh look, A copse!' and with that Jerusalem rang out once again. I tried to imbibe the spirit of England, revelling in the atmosphere Iain was creating in his portable Albert Hall: the rickety number nine to Holford, driven by a cold-hearted man who I could only presume had suffered all of this many times before in the past.

We stepped off the bus to a cluster of cottages and a defunct pub. The pub had been bought by two smiling Americans who were in the process of renovating it in order to create – one can only assume – some nightmarish calamity of Yankee histrionic décor. We trudged off, thinking about the arduous walk we would be forced to make to the next pub, but maintaining good spirits, safe in the knowledge that within the year those grinning buffoons would either be back in Florida, aghast and confused as to why farmers wouldn't want to drink in a Mickey Mouse-themed Olde English Pube (sic), or – we can but dream – peppered with Olde English bullets. Having no real concept of where our accommodation was, we proceeded to wander aimlessly

up hills, dense with woodland and sheep. Having done our Holford homework, we recognised Hodders Combe (a combe being one of England's more spurious geographical features. Where I come from, we don't register 'narrow valleys', only calamitous glens), and the red-brick dog pound where, a few hundred years ago, the absent-minded huntsman got eaten by his once-faithful beasts. Staring at that scene of grizzly death, I expressed deep regret that Otis Ferry and company clearly have their hounds under control. Past elegant thatched cottages – one which boasts of housing Wordsworth for about three days in 1798 – we trekked onwards; allowing ourselves a moment to recreate a scene from Robin Hood that was filmed here. I was a magnificent Kevin Costner, whilst Iain performed admirably as Little John; fighting with big sticks and shooting invisible arrows brought us closer to nature than ever before. It was a heart warming event.

Suddenly, through a crowd of trees, the hostel appeared like manna from heaven, offering tired souls sanctuary from all the fresh air. The hostel was an architectural phenomenon: an enormous magnolia shack at the top of a hill, porches and balconies jutting out willy-nilly, seemingly disrespecting gravity and engineering convention. It didn't seem to suit Somerset so much as Tennessee Williams' deep south of the U.S.; if Marlon Brando had stumbled out of the front door, screaming about 'damn broads' and swigging from a bottle of canned heat, I would have expressed only mild surprise. Once inside the hostel, our zeal soon gave way to woe and trepidation. For, you see, hostels are frequented by a truly alarming bunch. They are a refuge for the great pantheon of the globe's oddities and cranks.



The Gay Archer. I feel that this picture doesn't really need a caption, in the interests of correctness

We were greeted by a duo of middle-aged leftist Canadian lesbians, who took our money whilst looking lovingly at one another and then promptly showed us to our dormitory which contained a veritable confederacy of non-compos. In hostels, there exists an almost cultish belief that this is the only way to travel. This is delusion on a grand scale, the constant elephant in the room being the fact that hostels are basically countryside hideouts for bearded sex-pests and socialists: two of the most hideous fringe groups our society has to offer. Quite frankly, sharing bunk-beds with strangers ceases to be appropriate some time between getting your bike's stabilizers removed and the dropping of one's testicles.

This is not outrage at having to slum it, I assure you; I have stayed in some alarming holes in my time (I live in one now, in fact). Spectacular monstrosities of cockroach-mottled bathroom floors and flea-crusting beds with gruesome stains of blood or vomit as a bedside companion. But at least they had locks, and there wasn't a blimp called Kevin sleeping above me who lists his hobbies as walking, ales, and stroking cadavers. A lock frees the mind from worries normally reserved for showering convicts, and will forever be my only necessity when on country jaunts. 'Settled in', we attacked the pub with aplomb, returning seconds before the hostel's curfew – covered head to foot in stings resulting from an ill-advised, alcohol kindled leap over a wall into a well-cultivated patch of angry nettles. Day one: success!

The next day we wake early to the sight of a bulging, bearded galoot wearing only loose pants. Dressing hastily with eyes averted we stoically shake off hangovers and stride out onto the hills.

My word, are these ever hills. These are merely hills, as the Eiffel Tower is merely a jazzed up electricity pylon. The Quantocks are an expanse of undulating land as far as the eye can behold, you wander over verdurous land with sinuous sea as a navy backdrop. We were wandering adventurers from ages past, but instead of hunting for food to support clans, we were hunting for the pub over the hills. Dressed in jeans and t-shirts, we spectacularly blew apart the dogmas of the GoreTex brigade: loners with an outward-bound store upon their back and a scowl on their face. They walk up and up, grinding towards their goal then reach the top, mark a tick in a leather notepad, and walk straight back down to the nearest festering hostel. To hell with them. We were innovators; we climbed the Quantocks highest peak and feasted on slightly rotten chicken and Chianti of an unknown age.

Yes, we stumbled through a deer sanctuary in a haze; yes, we practised Karate Kid moves on a fallen tree in a wood; but we conquered those hills like no GoreTex-monkey ever will, and after five hours in a pub we found ourselves in pitch darkness: back on our conquered hills, lost and very afraid.

Somehow we had wandered off into marshland and were now knee-deep in sludge. We were inebriated and, owing to fear, had worsened the situation by topping up our levels with the emergency whiskey. Fear had claimed me. I heard distant mammalian noises: 'Iain, are those wolves?' I asked, 'Shit. Wolves.' It took us an age to figure

out that they were just geese. Sadly, we were still lost on a Quantock. Escaping the marshland, we came upon a wire fence at the foot of the slope. We had to try. Just making it over, I looked over my shoulder just in time to see Big Iain come close but fall at the last, jagged hurdle. If you have never seen a 6' 7" man skewered on a barbed wire fence, I can assure you it is a sight to behold.

Like an abandoned marionette flung haphazardly on the floor, strings knotted and tangled, Iain was attached at the arm. "I'm stuck," he said morosely. I laughed; he swore. For seemingly an age he struggles; finally looking up, with a look of terminal despondency, saying: "just go on without me." I remembered all the Vietnam films I'd ever seen. When you're in the suck soldier, you never leave a man behind! We heave and twist, scream at each other until finally he is free and over the barbed obstacle. We scramble up the slick, muddy slope, and at the top strain our eyes in the moonlight examining the deep blue rivulets trickling down Iain's arm. The relief is palpable and, a few hundred feet along the path, we see the landing strip of life beneath us signifying our village, and (more importantly) the pub. Quantocks conquered again.

The next morning we wake, and beard and pants man tell us the socialist Canadians are after us. Perhaps we stormed in post-libations, and tore the hostel apart – waking everyone and causing much distress. We pack and escape through the back door. The best way to escape an enraged crocodile is to run in zigzags. Their turning circle and lumbering mass are such that the scaled monster cannot work with either the zig or the zag for sustained periods of time. Socialist-Lesbian-Canadians, however, are not flummoxed by the zigzag, or indeed sprints through dense woodland. They are an angry bunch, a hardy predator, and a worthy foe to the city-dweller seeking nourishment from the verdant teat of Somerset.

The above chase is a fabrication, I admit. The lesbian-Canadians merely wanted to pleasantly thank us for purchasing them milk the previous night. It was the countryside that made me re-arrange the truth: it enervates the spirit and demands the elevation of the mundane to the intrepid. The ladies quizzing me on my socialist virtues (lost in a near-fatal collision with reality in 1999) was not enough. The Quantocks had caused my heart to demand the chase!

Somerset is London's antithesis and its spiritual nemesis. Somerset is the Arcadian Albion that Coleridge and Wordsworth cooed over – "So will I build my altar in the fields / And the blue sky my fretted dome shall be." Beauteous, rolling England distilled perfectly. London is Dante's first circle of hell – metropolitan nightmare, chaotic and lung-chokingly smoggy, but essential and somehow we think it's absolutely wonderful, just a little bit better than the rest of Lucifer's domain.

So for goodness sake go and enjoy the nation fate has bestowed upon us. Forget middle-class wet dreams of Tuscany and the Algarve. The Quantocks can change us all. But before departing, be sure to learn the words to 'Jerusalem', or your trip will be entirely pointless.



Top: no explanation was offered with this picture. I'm sure it made sense at the time
Middle: Iain, presumably after his battle with a fence, pretending he's some kind of commando
Bottom: the beautiful countryside; spoiled by a shot of Peter's boxer shorts as he attempts a cartwheel

Imperial says "yes" to NUS

So what happens now?

After thirty years in the wilderness, the students of Imperial College London have voted to rejoin the National Union of Students.

Although the perceived wisdom was that Imperial students would never vote to join the NUS, I was confident that a sizeable cohort of Imperial students believed that the benefits of affiliation outweighed the benefits of isolation. I think that the message our members are sending is that they're not 100% sure if the NUS is right for us, but seeing as we're leaving the University of London Union, they're willing to give it a go. I also believe that the majority of our students are open-minded about what NUS can do for us but they expect to see results soon.

Whilst I am delighted at this result and, more importantly, the record breaking turnout we registered last week, I must acknowledge that a significant number of our students oppose affiliation to the NUS and these students will be understandably disappointed. To those who voted "no", I urge you not to panic or feel too despondent; the Union isn't going to burn down tomorrow and our clubs will still be as well funded next year as they are now. Now let's move forward together and try to make the NUS work for all of our students.

When will we start to see benefits of NUS membership?

Some of the benefits of NUS affiliation will be realisable very soon - support services for our staff and senior officers are now available and our representatives will soon be invited to contribute to regional conferences, policy forums and seminars. As we have simply swapped one federal organisation (ULU) for another (NUS), problems relating to reciprocal agreements with other Students' Unions and additional University of London Union withdrawal matters have now been instantly resolved without extra cost or fuss.

The benefits of the NUS discount card will take a little longer to kick in. As our membership will not be ratified until February 13th 2007, our Union will not be allowed to sell NUS Extra Cards until Valentines Day.

In terms of participating in the democratic processes of the NUS, you can expect to see developments here soon. We will be running cross campus elections for delegates to next year's national conference in the New Year, so if you're interested in standing then look out for further publicity this January.

The next step

Now that we have chosen to join the NUS, I believe that we need to be proactive within it. Our members didn't vote us in to sit on the sidelines - they expect us to work with those within the NUS who support reform.

During the referendum campaign I spoke to many students who told me that they would like the Union to push for the expansion of electronic voting, the establishment of a science and engineering network, and stronger representation for international students within the NUS. These are great ideas that I believe we should pursue. However, we need time to prepare these proposals, seek allies and build support for the reforms we want to implement.

This is why I think calls to hold another referendum in twelve months time are misplaced. Our students have told our Union to give the NUS half a chance to prove itself. How can we tell out members that we have tried to work with the NUS and reform it before we have even had the opportunity to draft a motion for consideration by national conference?

So let's give the NUS a chance. In around 18 months time we can reassess the situation, but for now I suggest that we go with the will of the majority of students who voted in the record breaking referendum last week, and support our National Union.



John Collins

President

president@imperial.ac.uk



GSA Update

Well boys and girls,

Hope you've had an eventful term and as it comes to a close I thought I would advertise the GSA Christmas Ball on Monday the 11th of December. Please buy tickets online at imperialcollegeunion.org.

This event promises to be a lavish affair with 3 course meals, complimentary drinks, live band, hookah, luges and an "invisible" guest-speaker! Tickets are £25 all inclusive (vegetarian options available) and will be on sale for the next 2 weeks. If you have any problems, don't hesitate to email me at dpgs@imperial.ac.uk

The "3 Colleges Night" was very successful with more flamboyance than a GSA night has seen for a while!

All agreed that this should become a regular event and we're even looking for a GSA-RCA representative, so if you're interested please do contact me!



Shama Rahman

Deputy President
(Graduate Students)

dpgs@imperial.ac.uk

Remembering the Sudanese

Li-Teck Lau

On February 23rd 2003, a group known as the Darfur Liberation Front took public credit for an attack on the Headquarters of the Jebel Marra region in Sudan. This is regarded as the beginning of a conflict described by the outgoing UN co-ordinator in Sudan, Mukesh Kapila, as the "World's greatest humanitarian disaster", but was merely the side act at a time when the Sudanese Government and the international community were engaged in drawing the north African country's second civil war to a close at the 'Navaisha show' negotiations.

The area of Darfur has a population of around six million, of which approximately half are black African. The other half are ethnically Arab, and form the ruling government. The cause of Sudanese internal conflict is generally attributed to ethnic divisions and control over vital natural resources as well as the disparity in development between 'outer' regions such as Darfur and the wealthier 'Blue Nile' area. One of the primary goals of the black African rebels is to gain greater ethnic representation in Parliament and to have a Dafurian Vice President.

The rest of 2003 saw the Sudan Liberation Army and the Justice and Equality Movement escalate attacks on Government of Sudan forces in the Darfur region. In April of that year, 33 Landrovers were used in an attack on an army garrison which claimed the lives of 75 soldiers and military personnel, the destruction of several bomber units



Displaced Sudanese children

and the capture of 32 others, including a General. This unprecedented victory by an increasingly unified rebel faction sparked a change in the psychology and tactical approach pursued by the Government regarding the emerging crisis. With national troops positioned in the south to maintain peace at the end of the civil war, and in the east protecting various important infrastructure from other Eritrean sponsored rebels, the defence of the western province of Darfur was then delegated to a militia group known as the Janjawid.

The Janjawid had first come to prominence in the suppression of similar uprisings in 1996-1999, also backed by the government, only this time they were better equipped and with more weapons, including artillery.

With a mandate to stop the insurgency, the Arab paramilitary force proceeded to wage a technologically one sided war which has grown into

a humanitarian tragedy. The Janjawid have been accused of murder, loot, pillage, rape and mutilation.

By spring of 2004, over a million people had been displaced fleeing the violence with 100,000 crossing into Chad, creating the worst refugee crisis of recent times. Virtually all of them were from the Fur, Masaleit or Zagawa tribes and none were of Arabic origin, making the conflict appear racially motivated. The current death toll as a direct result of conflict today stands at 200,000, and in May 2004, International Crisis Group estimated a further 350,000 people will die from starvation and illness due to the remoteness of the Darfur region.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1564, passed in October of 2004, set up an investigative unit into Human Rights abuses in the region. Resolution 1590 in March of the next year acknowledged the seriousness of the situation and called for the return of refugees to their homes and more aid to get to the affected populations. After the Darfur Peace Agreement was signed in May 2006, the UN passed another Resolution, 1679, stating the need for an accelerated UN peace keeping plan, and called for 17,000 troops to replace the token and ineffective 7,000 strong African Union force. Even on the day of signing, an attack involving 200 Janjawid on camel back entered various villages killing civilians and destroying and looting property. The Sudanese government maintains its opposition to a UN mission as a violation of sovereignty, and describes the situation as an 'internal matter'.

The international community is

seen to have been reluctant to act in a full and forceful capacity to end the crisis. Although the UN investigative team reported have 'mass killings', the official term of 'genocide' was not attributed to the situation. Genocide would have demanded action to be taken. Many argue that the US interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan have prevented it from engaging in other conflicts such as Sudan. There is suggestion that a possible veto by permanent Security Council member China may have prevented a resolution implementing a UN force because of economics interests in the area.

Sudan Liberation Army troops and Government of Sudan forces may have, up until now, adhered to such ceasefire terms in the May Agreement, but the treaty has only lead to a more factitious and chaotic situation with those unhappy with the terms continuing to fight unilaterally.

The last weekend saw a visit by UN humanitarian chief Jan Egeland to the affected areas, but his trip was cut short due to Khartoum restrictions and increasing violence.

On Wednesday 15th November, the government of Sudan is reported to have launched major offensives in the north Darfur area, though it denies this. Foreign journalists are now being denied visas. There are still 2 million displaced persons in the western Sudanese province, unable to return because of continuing violence and lawlessness. African Union troops are also unable to protect all the refugee camps from Janjawid and Government of Sudan strikes.



Omar Hashmi
Politics Editor

I think that you will agree, that there are often so many tragedies in the world that occur in such frequency and quick succession, that we do not ever do justice to each individual one. A gift of charity or a passing thought are often all that can be given, and in the grand scheme of things it is hardly enough from any one of us, even though the act itself may be quite impressive. If we remember these events and resolve to do whatever is in our power to do, then perhaps we can as a society, hope to truly help those in need.

If even the UN finds it difficult to maintain peace in countries riddled with war, then surely it is incumbent on all of Humanity, each and ever single individual, to help in ways that we can. Let's not be unrealistic, not everyone can give up their day job, sell their house and move, but if we all collectively give the small amount of time we all have spare to the "good cause" then that amount of effort is enough.

Now what remains is to see that no external controls hold back a country's healing, which is usually due to the actions of a neighbour or a far richer, developed power further away.

Our effort must not be plagued by corrupt ineffectiveness.

Bush's Latest Visit Learning from the leaders

Adil Hussein

U.S. President George W. Bush visited Indonesia on Monday, the last stop of an eight-day post-election Asia tour that included visits to Singapore and Vietnam. Bush held talks with Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. He heaped praises on Indonesia, considered a key US ally in the war against Islamic militancy.

"I admire your nation's diversity and its plurality. I admire your president and his commitment to reform and strengthening democracy," Bush told them with Yudhoyono at his side. Amidst the visit, thousands of protesters ignored monsoon rain and thunder to chant anti-Bush slogans. Some protesters held banners that read "Bush is a terrorist!" and "You're not welcome here!"

President Bush was unruffled and commenting on the protests surrounding his visit, praised what he said was a display of Indonesia's democracy. "People protest, that's a good sign," he said. "It's a sign of a healthy society."

At the joint press conference, he said that he "applauds a society where people are free to come express their opinion". He continued, "It's to Indonesia's credit that it's a society where people are able to protest and say what they think. And it's not the first time, by the way, where people have showed up



Bush meets President Yudhoyono

and expressed their opinion about my policies." "That's what happens when you make hard decisions".

Asked how he would comfort Muslims who fear that his policies target them, Bush replied: "I believe freedom is universal and democracy is universal, I don't believe it's the sole right of the United States, or the sole right of Methodists."

The US president added, somewhat ironically, "I believe the vast majority of people want to live in moderation and not have extremists kill innocent people."

With security concerns paramount, Bush stayed only about six hours in Indonesia. After dinner with Yudhoyono, Bush set out for Hawaii, where he was to have breakfast with U.S. troops and visit the U.S. Pacific Command.

Omar Hashmi

You know what? It may only be my second week in the job but I've decided to calm down for now; heck maybe drop this column. I've decided to follow the lead of the noble Matthew Taylor, Tony Blair's outgoing chief strategy advisor. This week he commented that for all its achievements, the Internet was fuelling a "crisis" in today's democracy. Mr. Taylor claims that blogs encourage "citizens to participate in a shrill discourse of demands" rather than more reasoned debate. (Am I the only one worried by that phrase? Are the Labour party planning to send us off to an alien planet to fight big bugs to learn to be 'True Citizens'? It scares the living piss out of me!). He also complained that internet articles gave the impression that "our leaders are out there to shaft you".

So this week I'm not going to be cock-eyed about politics. Instead, I'll be straight-faced. Who's a better example to learn from about reasoned argument that from our dear leaders themselves? Take the loveable, happy, go-lucky guy David 'Dave' Cameron; who, in a response to the Queen's speech made a drawn out and not at all immature attempt at humour with a joke where the punch line called the Labour government: "a whiter shade of fail". I can feel my ribs breaking as I write. I tried to contact Davey

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21 November 2006
By Andrew Mitchell
Shadow International Development Secretary, Andrew Mitchell, accompanied David on his visit to Sudan and Darfur.

What everyone's talking about

Latest guest...

Is the WebCameron blog fueling a crisis in today's democracy?

afterwards to ask him to clarify his position but he only replied with an Internet clip of himself riding on a bike, telling me that he's 'considering my letter which was very nice, incidentally!' (See? WebCameron is a perfect example of how leaders discuss policies fairly! The system works!)

It was now time to contact Labour to discuss some of their fairer policies; I had naive hopes that this would work, considering the famous press conference last week when our dear leader, Tony Blair, showed an amazing example of leadership by squirming out of denouncing the death sentence of Saddam Hussein (the evil scum-bag himself. Altogether now - Boo!). Bear

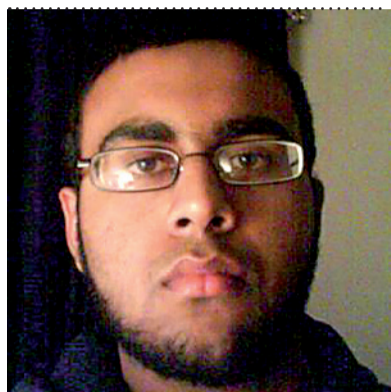
in mind that as signatories to the EU's Human Rights Act, the UK is committed to condemning the use of the death penalty. When I sent an email confronting him on this, I immediately got a reply from Mandy@Newlabour.org.uk, which consisted solely of a spinning picture of a vortex and the words "This did not happen" in large red font. I only broke out of the spell by breaking the monitor with my fist. That's £300 you owe me, Labour.

So as you can see my adventures to engage with politicians on a straight level has kinda fallen flat. But nil desperandum, I'm sure I'll learn to engage coherently in time and raise my debating standard to that of our leaders!

Comment & Opinion

A psychotic death cult?

Saad Raja responds to "Islam, Violence and the empires" (*Felix* 1364, 17 November)



Saad Raja

"The key to overcoming such obstacles is to educate ourselves about what Islam actually teaches"

Last week Samuel Lynas shared his thoughts on Muslim military conduct during the fall of Constantinople, the subject of an article on Imperial's Islamic Society (ISoc) website. Unfortunately, his account of this historic event is both misleading and misinformed. Predictably, his conclusion – ISoc celebrates barbaric 'unprovoked Muslim conquests' – suffers accordingly. Muslims agree that war is not good per se but nonetheless maintain that it can, at times, yield a greater good for humanity: such was the understanding of Sultan Mehmet II.

The siege of Constantinople was not, as was suggested, an unprovoked imperial raid, but can be justified by the standards even of 'decent people' today. The Byzantine Empire had actively encouraged and facilitated Crusaders in their crimes against the peoples of the Levant, indiscriminately slaughtering not only Muslims, but Jews and other Christians as well. The capture of its capital created a buffer zone between the Anatolian plate and mainland Europe, thereby ensuring the safety of its citizens. In addition, the Byzantine emperors were oppressing their own subjects, over-taxing the poor and persecuting religious minorities. It would have been a crying shame indeed for any authority to stand by in face of such atrocities. History demanded intervention. This, evidently, was also the view of contemporary Europeans: not a single European nation, leader or

authority assisted the Byzantine ruler during the siege of his capital. Their silence here was not a protest against foreign invasion, but consent to the arrival of a much-welcomed force.

Lynas described the blood bath that the invading army made of Constantinople's citizens with the accompanying 'rape, pillage and enslavement of the defeated peoples'. How could a prophesized Muslim army behave in such an inhumane manner? The short answer is that they didn't. Lynas seems to have based his gory account solely on the uncritical adoption of Steven Runciman's 'The Fall of Constantinople 1453', a book which has little, if any, academic authority in the field of Ottoman history. Not only does this author lack command of the Ottoman-Turkish language (a pre-requisite for access to reliable archival material) but his work is poorly referenced with sources that are false, biased or out-of-date. Had Lynas made reference to established scholars of Ottoman Studies, like Stanford J. Shaw and Halil Inalcik, the story of the conquest would have been dramatically different and far closer to the truth than Runciman's politically motivated description.

For example, in contrast to Runciman's portrayal that the Muslim invaders 'slew everyone that they met in the streets, men, women and children without discrimination', Stanford Shaw in his 'History of the Ottoman Empire' informs us that 'Mehmet kept his troops under

firm control, killing only those Byzantines who actively resisted', i.e. soldiers. The merciful entry of the Ottomans was such that 'decrees were issued guaranteeing protection of the lives and properties of all inhabitants, regardless of religion'. So welcomed was the Ottoman conquest of the city that 'Muslims, Armenians, Jews, Greeks, Slavs, and others came from all parts of the empire. Many Jews were attracted from as far away as Western Europe, where they were being subjugated to a new wave of persecution at this time'. Why would all these people come to the new Ottoman administered Constantinople if conditions were as bleak as Runciman had described? Such was the religious tolerance of the Ottomans that 'the Greek clergy were exempted from taxes and left in charge of Church administration. The danger here is not in remembering worthy conquests like that of Constantinople, but in writers 'unfamiliar with the history' misconstrue the evidence at hand and thereby portraying Islam as a 'psychotic death cult'. The key to overcoming such obstacles is to educate ourselves about what Islam actually teaches rather than taking wholesale media misrepresentations like Lynas' article. (Everyone is welcome attend ISoc events for this purpose). This is why ISoc must be encouraged in their efforts to highlight humanity's struggle against tyranny and not bow down to the pressures of unqualified pseudo historians.

Halls watch



Warden
Mike Bluck

I'm no authority on statistics, and even less aware of current thinking on social psychology but when I became a warden a few years ago, I had always imagined that a sample of 270 people would be a reasonable representation of the graduate population. (OK, I know, it's hardly scientific and it's really a very small sample of the whole, but 270 is a big number as far as I'm concerned – especially when they've discovered absinthe...) I had tacitly assumed that one year would be largely like the others. Of course, basing any assumptions on such weak statistical evidence is bound to produce some eye-opening conclusions: Did you know in my time as warden, of the great family of Wilsonites I've known, there is likely to be at least one who will serve time at Her Majesties Pleasure? Or that there are perhaps thirty who would admit to supporting Manchester United. I'm not sure which is worse...

Experience has taught me only one maxim: Every year is different. Some years have been noisy – which presents its own problems but creates a fantastic atmosphere. Other years have been highly competitive – both in the conventional sporting sense and the social sense. Some years are quieter but no less sociable for that. Even the use of the hall facilities changes. Some years the TV lounge is the centre of hall life, other years it's the entrance foyer. Sometimes it's the area just outside the hall – possibly to watch our exotic neighbours ply their trade! Part of the whole Wilson experience is the sheer variety of life here: Minutes from the wealth of Hyde Park and Marylebone, yet yards away from the seedier side of life in Paddington, with its largely vice based economy. Such a refreshing change from the hermetically sealed sterility of South Kensington and its environs!

It is impossible to say why there are these differences, but some things stay the same. Throughout my time, Wilson House has been blessed with hardworking seniors and dedicated wardens and I thank each and every one of them for making Wilson House what it is today – a home for some of the brightest, friendliest students I've ever met. What's more, it gives me a lot more interesting things to say at dinner parties than my day job, especially when my list of anecdotal statistics has dried up.

Student politicians: hang them all now!



Christopher Thomas

"On the plus side this should at least serve to expose the weakness of the union election system"

Having already bored the pants off anyone who's tried reading felix over the past fortnight, let's all be grateful that this whole 'NUS referendum' bollocks, or I mean debate is finally over and done with. Perhaps now I'll be able to walk down the walkway without being accosted by someone wearing a monkey outfit and a nus t-shirt trying to tell me how to vote. Anyway whilst ploughing through some of the garbage written in felix by some so-called campaigners – most of whom appear to have never written more than two consecutive sentences before, I was struck by a couple of quotes from some Very Important and Distinguished People. For instance I was somewhat perturbed to see Gemma Tumelty, NUS President, exclaiming to us "You are not my member" – well thank god for that, or else her picture would have been pretty misleading.

Perhaps more shocking however was the statement written by the Rt. Hon. John Collins that "We could spend our newly acquired £79,000 on beer but... I would suggest that is not a mature or inclusive way of allocating iCU's resources"... what? Come again? Not mature or

inclusive? What could possibly be more socially inclusive than having a successful, thriving social scene centred around a popular and well-frequented union bar? A bar which students flock to for a quick ploughman's and orange juice at lunch, a couple of beers in the evening to discuss the day's equations and finally a great night out accompanied by a few snakebites on a Friday night. A bar renowned for its friendly and exciting atmosphere! Yes, in case anyone hadn't noticed, the above is a picture of a typical university student bar, replicated many times throughout the country, and which we sadly don't have a great copy of. Don't get me wrong – I don't think the union bars are bad as such, despite the best efforts of last year's sabbs to turn DaVinci's into a clinic, thoughtfully ripping out the carpet and replacing it with grey plastic – however not many people would argue that the affirmation that it's certainly not as good as it could be, or even as good as any other London union bar – why? Because not enough people go there. How can you make more people go there? Cheaper drinks, its as simple as that. The union bar is surely a vital service which the union provides us students rather than a way to milk

us out of our precious little cash so they can throw it all at clubs & societies.

On the other hand charging students £2.05 for a Grolsch or £3 for an Old Rosie, in a bar supposed to be run for students by students, and then expecting people to flock to it is madness, unless you have a really nice set-up, like LSE or Kings, or at least a wider mix of people and genders than we do at Imperial. It is especially painful to have to shell out this much when the current Deputy President (Finances & Services) last year promised, if elected, to lower drinks prices. He also stated immediately after his election that he would seek to "correct the unacceptable increase in bar and events prices". Well, either due to convenience or sheer incompetence, it seems the very same man has overseen a situation where we've come back to find that prices have actually gone up since last year – thanks Jon Matthews, we're all really happy we voted for you, and don't feel at all betrayed! Oh well, on the plus side this should at least serve to expose the weakness of the union election system, in which the sabbs do not appear to be held to account for anything they promise in their manifesto.

Wielding the mighty organ



Andy Sykes
Editor-in-chief

What the hell am I going to say here, now that all the drama of the NUS campaign has died down? I could rant on about the Islam article in last week's comment section, or I could tell a story about someone I consider an idol.

Edgbert Roscoe Murrow (Ed Murrow to his friends) was a broadcaster who worked for the Columbia Broadcasting System, or CBS, in the 1950s. Murrow was an odd character; on the one hand, he was a journalist of the highest order, and on the other, he was an entertainer at the head of the hugely popular "Person to Person" shows, a forerunner of celebrity chat show.

Murrow pursued the truth, with little regard for the elaborate network of advertisers, television executives, and shareholders that controlled TV then and now. He is best known, though still not well known enough, for his "See It Now" show, which tackled issues other broadcasters were afraid to face in the cloistered atmosphere of 1950s America. Of course, this was the era of McCarthyism, and of "reds under the bed". McCarthy had yoked the nation with fear; fear that "card-carrying" communists had infiltrated the government, the movie industry, and the media. It seems laughable now, but the junior senator from Wisconsin held almost as much power as the President, calling people before the Un-American Activities Committee and accusing them of, basically, treason without giving them the chance to answer the charges against them.

Ed Murrow was the first to stand against McCarthy, when the media mainly ignored the subject, or toed the line. His show of March 9, 1954, took McCarthy's words and speeches and questioned how valid the Senator's tactics were, and how he contradicted himself. This was an extraordinarily brave thing to do, knowing that anyone who had stood against McCarthy before faced accusations of being a communist. He knew full well what he was doing; using his medium to expose the hypocrisy and untruths perpetrated in the people's name by attacking a single man.

McCarthy was offered the chance to reply, and used it, predictably, to accuse Murrow of communist sympathies and membership. Murrow's reply was succinct and to the point, clearly refuting each of McCarthy's points. In the end, these broadcasts were enough to bring down the giant, and McCarthy was censured by the Senate.

What was Murrow's reward as a tireless champion of truth, for holding public officials to be held to account? He was shuffled to a Sunday afternoon graveyard slot, and quietly forgotten. Murrow was, to my mind, the last man to be able to hold the title "journalist" in its truest sense. I'll use his glorious sign-off here, though it makes no sense, and I make no pretence of being Murrow's peer: good night, and good luck.

felix

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Felix, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, London SW7 2BB. Tel 020 7594 8072. Fax 020 7594 8065. Printed by The Northcliffe Press, Northcliffe House, Meadow Road, Derby DE1 2DW. No. 1,365, Friday 24 November 2006. Registered newspaper ISSN 1040-0711. Copyright © Felix 2006.

Extremism on campus?

The Flaming Rat tells of the dark forces at work deep in the Beit Quad

In a shock expose, *Felix* has learned of a dark side to ICU. Some of you may previously have seen the Union as a benign organisation that run your bars and look after your clubs. All is not as it seems my friends. Undercover journalists have spent the last 3 years infiltrating a part of ICU that few know about and even fewer will dare speak of. Operating out of their secret headquarters located deep underneath Beit Quad are PICU, the Paramilitary Wing of Imperial College Union and the most feared organisation in South Kensington.

PICU was originally formed by a group of students back in the 1970s who objected to women being allowed in the Union Bar, a move they described as "political correctness gone mad". Their faith in the democratic system was decimated and members were compelled to take matters into their own hands. They resolved to continue their struggle until their uncompromising demand that our bar was again a bastion of misogyny was met. Their guerrilla campaign has caused over 300 injuries, mostly in the form of leaving tripping hazards for the lady drinkers they so detest. As the saying says, violence begets violence and PICU have suffered themselves due to revenge attacks from irate lesbians who naturally are staunchly opposed to the aims and values of PICU.

After their formation it looked like they might just succeed in their goal of returning the bar to male jurisdiction. An early victory was won when they organised a farting competition which turned away many of the new women customers. Their movement soon fractured and as a result of their infighting over the past 30 years they are not looking like succeeding anytime soon. The first spilt in their movement

occurred during the NUS disaffiliation referendum in the late 1970s with several volunteers expressing irreconcilable views on the subject. This resulted in the only example of an open battle between the factions and the only time in living memory that trench warfare has occurred on Queens Lawn. Both sides suffered massive casualties and have learned from their mistakes with both vowing to continue their struggle underground. Even to this day PICU members against the NUS are still willing to lay down their lives, with 3 of them currently on hunger strike since the "yes" result was announced on Friday evening. This was too much for one member who cried "not only was our defeat announced in the bar, there were also women drinking snakebite. This is one insult too far and I have no other method of protest but to starve myself to death."

"First drinks for women, now votes for medics. We're going to hell in a handcart"

PICU fractured further during the early 1990's with the establishment of the C&G Martyrs Brigade who battled against the RCSU faction for control of the disputed Department of Computing territories. Brothers who once fought together for the bar to return to all male status now wrangled with each other over the status of a dank, dark corner of the Huxley building. The C&G Martyrs demanded that Computing was com-

pletely under their control while RCSU insisted on the right to defend the minority interests of JMC students who are in the no-mans land position, straddling both faculties. A bitter conflict was fought but after a JMC-brokered ceasefire they re-united to oppose the establishment of ICSM. "First drinks for women, now votes for medics. We're going to hell in a handcart" shrieked the newly appointed leader Ben, a 4th year JMC student who asked both faculties to put their sectarian differences to one side and fight the medics. "The medics have caused nothing but trouble at IC. They still think that they are a separate entity from ICU and keep demanding more and more freedom. If they won't learn to love ICU, then they will have to fear ICU" says Ben.

Naturally, faced with such aggressive language ICSM have responded in turn by forming the ICSM Freedom Fighters (ICSMFF). The ICSMFF have been denounced as terrorists by PICU on several occasions. "Not all medics are terrorists, but all terrorists are medics. When will ICSM get their house in order?" demanded Ben. The newly reformed PICU will not compromise over the existence of ICSMFF. This war cannot end until they have disbanded and admitted themselves proud members of ICU."

So there we have it. We all thought everyone in this place was apathetic but it turns out hundreds of people devote their existence to mounting guerrilla wars against fellow students fighting for what they believe is right. Felix has tried to talk directly to PICU but we were unable to contact them. We believe the entrance to their underground bunker is hidden somewhere in the Sci-Fi library although at the time of going to press this is unconfirmed.

You do not get what you pay for



Hugh Mansfield

I was browsing through the books in a charity shop on Gloucester Road the other day and marveling at how unaffordable most of them were. In fact, the only book that seemed to be at a reasonable price was a copy of *Ulysses* for an astonishing fifty pence. It was only later that I discovered this suspiciously low price to be down to the book being in Norwegian, rendering it almost as incomprehensible as an untranslated edition would be.

It has come to something when even second-hand books are unaffordable in anything other than an entirely useless form. Since I started buying books around a decade and a half ago, the average price of a novel has roughly tripled and continues to increase. It has reached the point where I will no longer

buy books at the cover price, instead choosing to buy them for a fraction of the price on sites such as Amazon or to wait for a few years and pick up a second-hand copy from one of the less cut-throat bookshops, of which fewer and fewer remain. In fact, it is rare to find a book older than I am whose price does not exceed its original RRP by a few times.

"It has come to something when even second-hand books are unaffordable in anything other than an entirely useless form."

As an avid reader, I find myself resorting to buying any even remotely interesting books I find at remaindered bookshops, which leaves me with piles of books with intriguing titles but little else to recommend them. The inevitable upshot of this is that my enthusiasm for reading deteriorates, so I read less

and less as time goes by. While this does admittedly give more free time in which to solve crosswords, it highlights a worrying consequence beyond being slightly more out of pocket after a purchase - that excessive increases in price deter even the most ardent of readers.

Given the proliferation of schemes designed to encourage literacy and increased readership, it seems bizarre, not to mention irresponsible, that book prices should be so high, which can only serve to alienate those on lower incomes, toward whom much of the literacy initiatives are inevitably aimed.

Since opera is able to receive government funding and subsidies on the ground that it qualifies as art, it would hardly be unreasonable to deny such funding in support of a more accessible, enduring and, arguably, worthy form of art, in the shape of literature. Less reasonably, but still wholly justifiable would be removing any such funding from opera and instead channel it all into books - to subsidise publishers in order to lower their prices or even to provide grants to struggling authors torn between neglecting their art or failing to make a minimum wage, amongst other things.

Incidentally, if any Norwegian-speakers would like a copy of Joyce's *magnum opus*, don't hesitate to email me and I can provide you with a good condition copy for free. If my experiences are anything to go by, you're unlikely to get such a bargain elsewhere.

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Reviews

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Emotions, TVs, and radios

More live reviews including the omni-present Feeder and TV on the Radio

live review



Feeder
Roundhouse

Colossal base lines; intense guitar riffs; voluminous rhythms; thundering lyrics. There is an emotional underlining to the three-piece that make them stand out from the crowd, which was all the more prominent during their performance at the Roundhouse, a gig in aid of the charity War Child.

Initially starting off as a pure indie band with rock at its heart, Feeder suddenly took on a far more sentimental, moving and often emotive approach to their music, culminating in *Comfort In Sound*, an album clearly influenced by the suicide of their original drummer, Jon Lee. In every performance from that point on, Feeder concentrated on making their sound more personal, and it could not have been more appropriate for this particular gig.

Come Back Around, a fairly energetic piece, proved to be a suitable opener to get the crowd going, although with Feeder's reputation among the nation and the dedication of its fans, they simply needed to walk onto the stage for the audience to be at their beck and call. Interestingly enough, unlike most bands around today, Feeder does not have one lead personality, such as Chris Martin of Coldplay or Gary Lightbody of Snow Patrol. They function as one unit, with the vocals of Grant Nicholas, the pounding bass of Taka Hirose and drum-work of Mark Richardson all playing an equal role, musically and visually.

This was clearly evident in the undeniably impassioned performance of fan favourite, *Feeling a Moment*, a soaring track with the lead guitar riffs and effortless vocals propelling the audience into a plethora of excitable leaping and backing vocals. Whilst Grant hammered gracefully away at his guitar, he made way for a very jumpy Taka – who both used their guitar bridges as extra drumsticks for Mark – all merging into one quite energetic stage performance as well as a musical triumph.

Another particularly poignant track, *Just The Way I'm Feeling*, saw Grant wield his acoustic guitar to great effect, and the crowd – with great gusto – was as moved as the band members themselves, judging by the huge grins on their faces; it must have been a wonderful sight to see hundreds of fans waving their arms in unison to the epic chorus.

This is not to say that Feeder solely based their setlist on emotional, moving tracks. Liberally sprinkled throughout the hour-and-a-half were the best in head-bang-

ing, mosh-pitting, sky-reaching indie rock.

Of course, *Buck Rogers* and Feeder go hand in hand, and the venue positively exploded into joy when the opening riff could be heard; this piece of legendary indie culminated in most of the crowd jumping to at least the height of the stage during what can only be described as the three guitar-riff explosions at the end of each verse.

Lost and Found again generated similar energetic leaping, this time with the bassist encouraging people to be as volatile as possible by mimicking their previous jumping efforts on stage. *Just a Day* – possibly the track that generated most of Feeder's fans – produced what was by far and away the most spectacular display of jubilation I have ever witnessed at a gig. The track itself is a rapid, rhythm-heavy piece with lyrics particularly relevant to students (“*Waking up at twelve in my clothes again/feel my head explode from a night of gin/another night out late*”), and I was amazed as complete strangers placed arms over soldiers to form one massive cascading wall of screaming fans.

From start to finish, Feeder produced both an emotive and energetic sound unique in the overpopulated indie circuit. A surprise cover of REM's *Everybody Hurts* during the encore, sung with absolute hand-on-heart honesty by Grant, proved that no other band around today could be more suited to not only producing this kind of music, but to support such an admirable cause with their near-perfect art.

Robin Andrews

ROBIN ANDREWS



Feeder rocking out (in-between another sickly, emotive ballad) some emotions with lots of emotional riffs

live review



TV On The Radio
Koko

The crowd at this TV on the Radio show is quite unlike any I've ever been to before. The people here vary greatly in age; from impressively young indie kids, copy of NME wedged in their back pocket, to wise old veterans still reminiscing about the glorious days of old when music was interesting and exciting for them. It seems everyone can find something to love in this band, and the diversity in age and race present at the packed-out Koko tonight is proof of that.

The band opens with the pacy *Dirtywhirl*, which starts slowly with gentle layers of guitars, before being brought to life by the energetic vocals of frontman Tunde Adebimpe. His sincere and heartfelt performance punctuates the otherwise peaceful guitars and sleigh bells which provide the rhythm. Interestingly coiffured guitarist, Kyp Malone, also joins in with some unbelievably high-pitched back-up vocals which perfectly complement the lead.

I initially imagined the gig would be a much more sombre affair than it is, as many of their songs are slow and down-tempo, but the band throw everything into their per-

formance and even speed up some songs with pounding drums to liven the mood. At some points the crowd really joins in with the feel of the show; flailing arms into the air and chanting the words to the anthemic *Let the Devil In*. The fans clearly feel a real connection with the band in moments like these, and the band are obviously enjoying every minute too.

At other times, parts of the crowd seem very detached and uninterested, talking during songs and not bothering to applaud the band for their effort in-between. These 'sceneesters' seem more bothered with being seen at the gig than actually enjoying it, and in doing so, really spoil the experience for others who are trying to appreciate the beauty of the music. The fact that Club NME started right after the band finished probably had something to do with the general attitude of some of the crowd, but the bar prices made sure I didn't stick around long enough to see if they hung around.

Predictably the band return for an encore where, unpredictably, the drummer and guitarist swap instruments and play out to the euphoric *Staring at the Sun* which is a fittingly intense conclusion to a brilliantly performed show. The sound quality of the venue and the attitude of the crowd are the only letdowns of a gig that I just didn't want to end. To remedy this problem I bought a T-shirt and listened to the album on the bus home, but I guess I'll just have to wait until they next play here to really satisfy my craving for more.

Toby Prudden



Matty Hoban
Music Editor

One thing that is really pissing me off at the minute is the amount of little rat dogs there are hanging around. I was in the union the other week and saw someone with what can only be described as mutant spawn of a drunk shag with a cotton ball factory and a shivering amoeba. It looked so pathetic, I wanted to step on it and put it out of its misery.

I know they're everywhere in this leafy crevice of London has an obligatory mouse-puppy, but come on, why would you put it through the misery of taking it for a walk? They're so tiny and inbred they can barely stand up without wanting to chew their already-removed private parts off, just to numb the pain of their existence. If you insist on getting a dog, get a proper one. Get a dog that is proud to take a dump on the street whilst the owner awaits eagerly with a plastic bag. Don't get a dog that every time it needs to crap, it fears for its life.

Why am I going on about crappy little dogs anyway? What's it got to do with music I hear you shout whilst perming your poodle's arse-curls? Well, I compare Feeder to one of these dogs. Feeder insist on making more music when – I'm sorry if I'm being disrespectful – even their drummer killed himself to get out of this band.

If you listen to their past two albums, all you will hear is a whimper. When the best thing you can say about a band is that they are 'anthemic' and 'emotional', you know you are scraping a barrel so eroded that you can see Grant Nicholas crying under said barrel as the fallen splinters scratch his eyes. The best thing they ever did was shout the word lemon over and over again. I assumed it was a satire on the objectification of lesbians in the music scene as shouty riot-grrrrrrrrl singers.

I could be proven wrong because I once drank cider from a lesbian and had my tongue cut on her numerous piercings. This may not be a true story. Anyway, I may not like Feeder, but some of you do and you're entitled to that opinion, so we've got a review for you. Also, Freddie Freeloader, who are reviewed on the other page are playing in dB's on Saturday, go pop along if you want.

Whole batchful of releases for you

Enjoy some of the reviews of the singles and albums that we've had a listen to in these past few weeks

album review



Scott Walker
The Drift
(4AD)
★★★★☆

Scott Walker has had a quite remarkable career. In the mid-60's, he was lead singer of The Walker Brothers, a hugely successful vocal pop group. At the height of fame, he left them to pursue a solo career singing Jacques Brel-inspired chansons. The 70s saw the increasingly reclusive artist slowly fade into obscurity. His last ever tour was in 1978 and his 1984 album, *Climate of Hunter* became the biggest commercial failure in the history of Virgin Records. After that, there was silence. For 11 years.

Then came *Tilt*. An unashamedly difficult album that was unlike anything before it. *Tilt* was dark and stripped down; a barren monolith constructed of monotonous rhythms, sweeping orchestral textures, weird sound experiments and operatic vocals. Needless to say, it didn't even make it close to the mainstream. However, it became an instant classic with the more open-minded (Goldfrapp, Brian Eno and David Bowie among others, have praised it highly). It may not come as a surprise that it's taken Walker another 11 years to produce a follow-up, with everyone wondering how he could possibly outdo himself.

As it turns out, it's actually quite simple; by taking things even further. While *Tilt* had its occasional rays of sunshine, *The Drift* offers only undiluted fear, pain and despair. There are no more melodies and no more grand arrangements, only ominous, brooding soundscapes alternating with brutal outbursts of pure dissonance. And, of course, some of the most bizarre noises ever integrated into music; a slab of meat being punched, someone walking up the stairs, a tortured donkey, a Donald Duck imitation and lots of unidentifiable chirping, hissing and rattling.

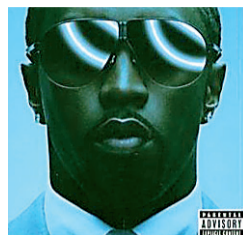
On top of all this looms Walker's baritone, reciting surreal lyrics about such cheerful topics as Mussolini's execution, Elvis Presley's stillborn brother, 9/11, famine and the war in Bosnia. The result is perhaps the most nightmarish, most intensely unsettling record I've ever heard – and I've heard a lot of sick stuff.

I'm not sure I can give you an accurate impression of *The Drift*, simply because there is nothing like it out there. It's perhaps closer to the work of modern composers like Schönberg than to anything in the popular music world.

The majority of you would absolutely hate it. But if you have an adventurous mind and you'd like to hear some of the most unique and brilliant music being made today, I urge you to give *The Drift* a try.

Ralf Damaschke

album review



P Diddy
Press Play
(Atlantic)
★★★★☆

It may come as a surprise to most but on previous albums Diddy didn't seem to mind sharing the limelight with his collaborators. His previous two releases, *We Invented The Remix Vol. 1* and *The Saga Continues...* were both co-credited to 'The Bad Boy Family', which was only fair considering the amount they contributed to them.

So when his latest offering was strictly credited to 'Diddy', you'd expect it to be a one-man show starring the self-proclaimed king of New York, but you'd be wrong.

In fact, *Press Play* features over 20 different guest appearances (which must be some kind of record) and that doesn't include the big-name producers who have left marks all over the record. From the likes of Christina Aguilera and lead Pussycat Doll, Nicole, to edgier artists like Nas and Mary J. Blige. It's an orgy and everyone's invited to help resurrect Diddy's fading rap career and record label.

The first song off this album, *Come to Me*, really wasn't a true representation of the album. It was pretty weak for a lead single and gave the impression that *Press Play* might not live up to the hype surrounding it. Fortunately, *Come To Me* was a fluke and the record has enough bubble-gum rap to keep mainstream listeners happy. A good example is the potent *Tell Me*, featuring Christina Aguilera which is set to be the next single off the album, and it is bound to be huge.

The first few tracks, *We Gon' Make It*, *I Am*, *The Future*, are devoted to Diddy's ego, telling us how he's not going anywhere and declaring himself the king of New York. He also makes a threat of running for President. These brags and boasts are a standard feature of any contemporary rap album but great rap artists know to keep it smart and keep it to a minimum. Unfortunately, Diddy isn't a great rapper and this inevitably takes over and becomes the theme for a sizeable chunk of the album.

When he does take time out from kissing his own rear and tries to tackle other rap staples – mainly hooking up and breaking up – he is a bit more interesting and it becomes evident that his rhyming skills have improved. However, it is a problem that he is still not as proficient as he thinks he is.

The best songs are the ones where Diddy's run-of-the-mill rap verses are broken up by catchy choruses by a guest vocalist or delivered over infectious beats. In a nutshell, it is never because of Diddy's skills as an MC but more because he has talented friends.

So will he have you itching to *Press Play*? Well, honestly, yes, he



Shiny Toy Guns looking... shiny and generally sexy; they're bringing chavvy back

will. But he will also have you hitting the 'skip track' button a lot; wading through the dull moments to get to the highlights. Smart Diddy fans will save themselves the trouble (and the money) and simply buy the better tracks. These include *After Love*, *Tell Me* and the bumping *Last Night*.

Jemil Salami

single review

Shiny Toy Guns
Le Disko
(Mercury)
★★★★☆

With the best band name I have heard for a long time, I was expecting much from Shiny Toy Guns. I was not disappointed! *Le Disko* starts off with ethereal swirling keyboards, before the pounding synths that drive the record forward kick in. The seductive angst filled vocals of 19-year-old lead singer, Carah Faye complements the driving rhythm brilliantly, and works well with the backing vocals of bassist Chad Petree. Then, at the bridge the whole song changes, from a claustrophobic electronic blast to sounding like Abba being fronted by Bjork! The song as a whole is filled with hundreds of electronic effects, but unlike lesser bands, the music never loses its clarity and sense of progression.

The b-side, *Starts With One* follows the same electro-rock sensibilities, but the two singers swap duties, injecting a little more variety into proceedings.

Shiny Toy Guns are already starting to make a name for themselves, having the most requested song on the influential KROQ Los Angeles, before even being signed. The band

put their snowballing popularity down to the internet, saying, "Zeros and ones are a nuclear weapon for a band." If Shiny Toy Guns can keep up the good work, and perhaps expand their sound a little into new areas, then they really will be a creative force to be reckoned with in the future.

Tom Roderick

single review

Orson
Already Over
(Mercury)
★★☆☆☆

Signed by Mercury Records in November of 2005, Orson closed the year as support on the UK leg of the Duran Duran arena tour and were still largely an unknown band but that has changed since the turn of the year.

Before they released their debut single, *No Tomorrow*, the band had already graced the cover of The Sunday Times Culture supplement, made their debut performance on Top of the Pops and been playlisted by every station in the land from Radio1 to Xfm. Quite a bit of exposure by all accounts.

On release, *No Tomorrow* entered the chart at number five, but within two weeks had risen like an old-fashioned hit record to take its place at the top of the charts. In fact, it was still in the top five seven weeks after release. Unfortunately, I doubt if their latest single, *Already Over*, would have the same impact.

This tracks sounds like album filler and doesn't show the uniqueness *No Tomorrow* brought to our stereos. We can hope for the best from the Orson and this isn't it.

Folake Adegbohun

single review

Gnarls Barkley
Who Cares
(Warner Music)
★★★★☆

Gnarls Barkley, an Atlanta collaboration between Maryland-based DJ and producer Danger Mouse (Brian Burton) and rapper/singer Cee-Lo (Thomas Callaway). Their first album, *St. Elsewhere*, was released by Warner Music in April 2006 in the UK. They stormed the UK with the amazing single, *Crazy*. Now the creative duo have a new single called *Who Cares*, which is pure genius. With skilful Cee-Lo dropping some imaginative and ambitious vocals on this track. Although this single has a very summery vibe to it and might not have the great success of *Crazy*, it is definitely a Gnarls Barkley signature single in its own right.

Folake Adegbohun

EP review

Freddie Freeloader
This is Powergrunge
(Self-release)
★★★★☆

This band coined their style early on as 'powergrunge' (a combination of grunge, funk, groove and metal). Powergrunge harkens back to early funksters such as the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Faith No More, with the addition of much heavier metal guitar riffs on the top, whilst the singer's elegantly sung vocals help steer the band away from nu-metal. There is great potential for this band. Let's hope they fulfil it.

Robin Smith



Alex Baldwin
Nightlife Editor

This week, I have been recovering from a terrible blow to my television viewing schedule: the sorry demise of the Quiz Call channel. And what has the gaping hole in my life known as Freeview channel 31 (on my box, at least) been filled with? The crime against scheduling that is Film4+1. Whoever invented video recorders is turning in his grave as all these needless '+1' channels jump up and down on his coffin. Honestly, what is the point? The invention of watches predates even that of the VCR, so surely there's nothing wrong with our timekeeping abilities, so why do channel 4 patronise us so? At least on E4+1 most of the programmes clock in at under an hour, so the dedicated viewer can see the same show twice, back to back, but on Film4+1 we must be content with watching a film just one and a half times, or worse! When will this madness end.

Getting back onto things a little more nightlife-related, I urge all of you to let your eyes stray a little further down the page and read the Our Disco preview we have furnished you with this week and then put on your dancing shoes and go! (Of course, you should read everything else on the page too). It's no secret that Our Disco has long been one of our favourite clubnights here at Nightlife and we are delighted to see it back again.

UK hip hop scene hits Scala

Some of the country's top hip hop acts celebrate Foreign Beggars' album launch

Foreign Beggars
Album Launch Party
Scala
★★★★☆

Arriving at The Scala in London's Kings Cross to see one of the UK's largest underground hip-hop acts, you could be forgiven for asking yourself if you were going to get shot tonight. The bouncers seemed to understand this and were operating on similar levels of paranoia to West Bank checkpoint operators and one gained a rather more familiar experience of my anatomy than I usually allow so soon after meeting. Inside, however, I was pleasantly reminded that this was a better variety of UK hip-hop, where being straight out of Camden, or having hoes in different area codes doesn't take centre stage, so a refreshing atmosphere provided a close to flawless night.

Impeccable timing meant our arrival fortunately coincided with the beginning of Shlomo's set. It is often suggested that he now represents Britain's most gifted beatboxer and the set was certainly amongst the best I've seen. While it can't be denied that a large part of the effect is down to technical skill, style and musical dexterity has to be taken into account. Shlomo's set demonstrated this point excellently and he certainly put himself strongly in the arena with other heavyweights such as Killa Kela and Mr. Mouth. Using a loop sampler, a significant proportion of his set involved putting together a track layer by layer, then finally adding the vocals (of these, the most memorable included 'I Want You Back' by Jackson Five and 'The Magic Number' by De La Soul).

All too soon Shlomo was ushered off the stage, giving me the chance to explore this impressive, converted cinema a little more.

An intermission to the Pontius Pilate reinforced my impression of an ethereal atmosphere, after exchanging pleasantries instead of dirty looks when passing through the crowd, to find people freestyling by the cubicles that 'some don't understand them' ("that was some deep shit" apparently).

One floor up, room 2 was being set up for the open-mic cypher that was being held at this night of so many attractions. This kicked off after the main show and was hosted by Honey Brown, with beats supplied by DJ Snuff. Speaker's Corner regulars Rhyme Asylum, The Rippah and Kope among others, with more established artists on the UK hip hop scene, such as Kashmere, gave the mic the blessing it had been anticipating. Speaker's Corner excels at what they do and pulled through troubles with sound to provide entertainment and a platform of free speech for anybody with the cojones to step up on stage.

After an efficiently short break the beggars emerged on stage. First (and unashamedly) Orifice was rapidly on the stage making sure none of the hype from the previous performance died down. In succession appeared Metropolis and Doctor Syntax, with a full live band, backing vocals and variety of top British DJs, including IQ and Vadim, to bring the night to a climax. They immediately launched into a varied yet consistently great set, including many classics from Asylum Speakers and tracks from their brand new album (which looks to be a sure success). They had clearly done their homework before this performance and truly entertained and engaged the crowd. Orifice's banter continued throughout the set, about moving to London (in 1999) and his growing love for his home city. Perhaps this was a heart felt expression for a city he has come to love and feel



I have absolutely no idea what is happening in this picture

at home in, or merely an attempt to win over the Scala crowd. Either way, it would appear as though the audience needed little winning over as Foreign Beggars were hugely applauded as they left the stage.

Closing the night were Scratch Perverts, an institution in UK DJing to say the least. Many, I had thought, may have been present that night to see Scratch Perverts alone. However, as they walked on stage I was one of possibly only a dozen spectators to welcome them. Somehow, the main room had gone from being nearly full to embarrassingly empty. To make matters worse, as the two DJs worked their way through "Terrorist", "Witness" and many other hip hop classics, the audience seemed to disintegrate more and more. Nevertheless the duo continued long into the morning not letting this lack of audience affect their routine as they continued with great skill and vigour.

All in all the night turned out to be a fantastic offering of music; UK hip hop ability at its finest! However, it is still disappointing to see UK acts

as big as Foreign Beggars playing Scala on a Wednesday night, and it gives a little hope for the prospects of other UK acts just as able but less established outside of their genre. My only regret for the evening is missing Kashmere, but I guess you can't have it all, so I decided to console myself with some 'top notch' pizza prepared over the road.

Suddenly curious as to the function of a particular lever on my camera which I had used countless times, I almost saw in slow motion the rear door bounce open to bring the sensitive into the harsh and unforgiving light of the environment. Quick to react however, my fears of a ruined roll of film, and the tedium of now having to track down photos of the night, replaced by relief once development was finished. In fact, I was quite pleased with the one photo that was sodomised by the event. My precious silver-halide crystals were clearly in no mood for being tampered with, and left me with what I think is a fitting image to summarise the evening.

Laurence Fahrni

Our Disco is back!

Hooray, And Did We Mention Our Disco has finally found a new home! Sub Club near Liverpool Street Station will host the club night from now on. The venue has apparently recently been renovated, boasts sensible drinks prices (unlike Canvas) and has an extremely loud soundsystem! You'll be able to hear a delightful selection of (as they describe it) "post-punk, glitch-funk, schizo-electro and mutant disco" If you don't know what those words mean, they are basically synonyms for Super Duper Fun. You should therefore most certainly go and check out the opening night on the 1st of December, not only because it's the first Our Disco in ages, but also because the lineup is pretty damn good too.

The usual residents Glyn Campbell, Den Odell and Nadia Ksaiba will be joined by the amazing Optimo DJ JD Twitch from Glasgow and the mighty Simian Mobile Disco who, if you read our review on Adventures In The Beetroot Field, you will know are rather talented at DJing. You'll also have read how



The Our Disco DJs, outside

good the Our Disco guys were at Fabric recently, which must have been one of their last four dates before starting the new residency, and if it's anything as good as that night was, we're in for a treat.

If you're planning on going, we suggest you get there early; it may be popular so they might fill up pretty quickly, and judging by the past few events they've had, it probably will do. Check out the website www.ourdisco.com for more info and, most of all, enjoy the night!

Competition: Showtime at Egg

On Saturday 2nd December, 'Showtime presents...' is back to celebrate the holiday season in true festive style with a very special and exclusive pantomime performance from Jonny Woo and his friends performed to a backdrop of London's finest cutting edge house and electro music.

The newest addition to Saturday nights at Egg incorporates live music, cabaret, VJs and a host of internationally talented DJs. These themed fancy dress parties ensure that each event is very unique.

This time, the basement will see Mary Jane playing 'the freaky minimal style that is typical for electronic music in Berlin' alongside homegrown talent including Lisa German, Sophie Oliver and Claudia Lovista. The terrace will be hosted by Shack Music head Soy Mustafa in the form of a release party for Liquid People's new record "Song of the Siren" with Liquid People playing live. Finally, in the loft, Alex Phountzi and Daz-I-Kue (Bugz in the Attic) hit the decks with an eclectic mix of sounds played around



Hopefully it won't be too cold this December; I have high hopes

the exciting performance from Jonny Woo and friends.

In addition to all this, the Union Jaxx film taken at the last 'Showtime presents...' event will be premiered.

'Showtime presents...' takes place on Saturday 2nd December at Egg in Kings Cross from 10pm to 6am and will set you back £15 on the

door, or £12 for concessions.

If this sounds good to you, but you don't fancy paying, then send us a quick email to the address at the top of the page telling us you'd like to go and we will give away a few pairs of free tickets, including free entry to the Jaded afterparty, which runs until 1pm to ensure you get your fill of entertainment.

Next generation gaming has begun

Tomo Roberts gives his verdict on whether you should go for a Wii this Christmas or hold out for a PS3

With the imminent release of the Nintendo Wii worldwide and the third incarnation of the Sony PlayStation already available in Japan and the USA, the companies' marketing departments are working overtime to create the loudest buzz about their respective consoles.

On Monday 13th November, I was lucky enough to be given the chance to put both consoles through the paces. The opportunity arose when Radio 1's technology reporter Iain Mackenzie posted on a message board I regularly view, requesting a number of gamers to come along and try out the two next-gen machines. The catch? Unfortunately, masses of listeners had to be subjected to my not-so-dulcet tones as my analysis soared out over the airwaves.

I was giddy with excitement; partly because I felt like a member of an exclusive 'I've played the Wii and PS3, who wants to touch me?' club, but mainly because both consoles are ones that I can't wait to get my grubby mitts on. So far, I've held out from buying an Xbox 360. I've come close at times with the allure of *Dead Rising* and *Table Tennis* especially beckoning me to purchase Microsoft's beast, but the price tag has remained beyond my cash-strapped reach. With Christmas and my birthday around the corner, Microsoft and Nintendo will need to convince me to buy their console. Or, would I hold out until next year and hand over a chunk of my student loan for Sony's latest offering?

As each generation of consoles are gradually ushered in, a number

of decisions have to be made. Which has the best games? Best graphics? Which justifies its price tag most sufficiently? But whereas my previous console choices have often been made largely on the basis of which company offered my favourite exclusive titles, this upcoming cycle of consoles each offer a varied and diverse package compared to their competitors – something arguably unseen in previous generations.

On one hand, Microsoft offers high definition graphics, some cracking original IP and a superbly implemented online experience thanks to the company's expertise in this area, all at a very reasonable asking price. The PS3 claims to offer all this and then some whilst probably being capable of frying you breakfast somewhere inside its shiny plastic casing. But coming in at £425 you might expect it to rear the porky pigs too. On the freakish third hand, Nintendo's baby cannot compete graphically. However the Wii is a courageous attempt to revolutionise the way we interact with games using a motion sensitive controller whilst remaining affordable at £179.

Pre-orders for the Nintendo Wii began last month, but I was tentative when deciding to put my name down for one. From videos and other peoples' impressions, I was concerned the 'Wiiote' was inaccurate, often shaking around erratically. Videos of the next *Zelda* incarnation showed Link's archery skills leaving a lot to be desired, as he zipped in an instant from looking at the sky to staring at his feet. Was it the player's fault or were the shakes setting into the young lad's bones? As with all new technology,



The Nintendo Wii, three Wiimotes and the infra red emitter bar due out in Europe on December 8th

caution is required and Nintendo had to answer the question persistently nagging me. Simply: does it work?

As for the PS3, which is not arriving in Europe until March, I was eager to see how much of a leap Sony had made from the PlayStation 2 and whether it could justify such a hefty price tag.

Four eager gamers arrived outside the 'Wii House' bright and early on the Monday morning. Situated on a quiet residential street in Holborn, this was the last place we expected such a massive corporation to hold its latest money making machine. The Wii House contained five floors of a gamer's

nirvana: spotlessly clean minimalist contemporary furnishings, complimentary biscuits and drinks, roughly ten to twenty Wiis and an attractive PR lady to greet and tend to our needs.

First off, we were taken to the first floor lounge where I managed to sneak in a few minutes on *WarioWare Smooth Moves*. A four player game of tennis on *Wii Sports* was already prepared for us, but whilst my other three companions stretched and jogged on the spot, I had instantly taken control of the Wiimote and 'nunchaku' for two brief mini games on *WarioWare*. No sooner than I'd plucked a man's nose hair, I was thrust a different remote ready for tennis.

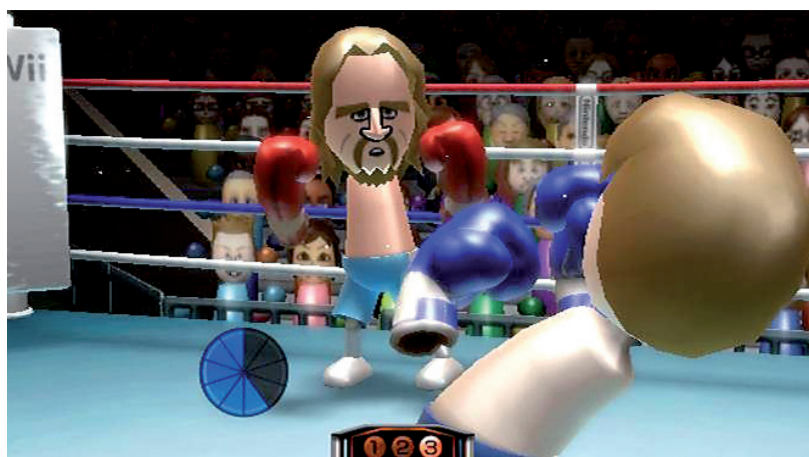
Within the first game, I felt immediately familiar with the remote. The tennis game required only use of the Wiimote. Strokes were exactly as you imagine, with the console recognising the difference between backhands, lobs, dinks and passes.

It was my turn to serve. I flicked the remote upwards, and then struck the "ball" with an emphatic overhead swing. Ace! Take that! No sooner than I tossed up my next serve, the ball was immediately coming back across court. Damn. My ego took a bashing as my second serve was returned across court with authority. As the games progressed, my competitive nature began to rear its ugly nature to the displeasure of my right elbow. Even a simple tennis game such as this managed to flex my muscles using the Wiimote. Once the chalk had settled thought, each of us was sporting a beaming smile.

Ten-pin bowling was up next. The graphics in both this and the tennis were clean, colourful and certainly functional. Whilst *Wii Sports* was certainly not pushing the console's graphical prowess, it was immediately obvious that the console would never ever be challenging the Xbox 360 and PS3 in a beauty contest.



Four intrigued gamers listening intently whilst receiving coaching tips before getting stuck into a round of tennis on *Wii Sports*



Here's what boxing looks like in *Wii Sports*

Whereas the tennis consisted solely of motion detection, bowling required you to use the buttons to position yourself pre-roll. Once positioned to take into account the natural spin due to left or right-handedness, you were set to roll. Motioning your hand in a clean sweep from back to front was immediately familiar as well. After my initial shot straight down the left hand gutter, I was scoring well even managing the first strike of the morning.

I managed to sneak in a quick par on *Wii Sports* golf later on in the day, which was instantly playable even with my limited experience of the real thing. Boxing also received high praise from two fellow gamers who duked it out. *Wii Sports* was so entertaining we could have happily spent all morning competing. Nintendo have packaged the title with the Wii itself and whilst it's questionable whether this was a ploy created to set the console's higher than expected price, I would have recommended you buy *Wii Sports* at launch regardless of this anyway.

As much as I wanted to continue bowling, I asked to sneak off downstairs to the burgundy lounge where *Zelda: The Twilight Princess* was on display. I jumped straight into

somebody else's saved games. Once again, the combination of Wiimote and nunchaku felt as recognisable as Link's green garb. Visually however, *Zelda* was very jaggy – with mountainsides and walls looking as smooth as bread knives. One gamer observed that the graphics were washed out and I agreed to an extent. Nintendo have reverted back to a more mature *Ocarina Of Time* appearance but there has never been a more beautiful *Zelda* to explore and conquer.

However, I had still yet to test Link's archery skills – the biggest issue I wanted answering during the day's play. A spider was climbing a rope ladder. Immediately I whipped out a bow and arrow. My view was thrown to the dangling dungeon stalactites. After a period of hand waving adjustment, I began to find my aim and successfully shot the ugly arachnids. Playing *Zelda* brought a sense of relief. With practice, I feel the game will be as playable any of the previous titles, but it remains to be seen whether it can top the rest in the series.

Before leaving for the Radio 1 office and PS3 play test, I was lucky enough to play on Ubisoft's first person shooter, *Red Steel*. Previews and video footage that I'd seen were incredibly disappointing with



And here's what 'boxers' look like playing *Wii Sports*. Watch out, you may 'accidentally' whack your mates

dull, blocky graphics and an erratic aiming system. Since my favourite genre is the FPS, I was interested in picking this up at launch. To my surprise and also the other gamers present, *Red Steel* was enjoyable. Adjusting to the highly sensitive controls took some time and whilst I didn't manage to perfect my aim during the time I spent with the

title, I believe this will come with practice again. The sword combat was especially entertaining and with a classic Japanese Yakuza plot, I am still coloured interested by *Red Steel*.

Quick games on *Need For Speed Carbon* and *Call Of Duty 3* were not extensive enough to give a detailed opinion, but I would suggest avoid-

ing *Carbon*. The controls feel horribly shoehorned onto the console and there will likely be better-adapted racers such as *ExciteTruck* instead. The *Call Of Duty* series has always left me colder than a soldier fighting in the Battle of the Bulge, but I'd suggest it was a worthy alternative to *Red Steel* if that's not your bag.



From left to right: Radio 1 technology reporter Iain Mackenzie and the other lucky lads Kay, David and Phil putting the PS3 through its paces in the 1Xtra meeting lounge

A short taxi journey later and we were sitting on the sofas in the Radio 1Xtra meeting lounge. A massive 40" plus flat screen television was hooked up to the PlayStation 3. Unfortunately, the HDMI cable hadn't arrived so the games wouldn't be running in complete high definition glory. Upon initial inspection, the console was smaller than I expected. Whilst slightly larger than the Xbox 360, it was deadly silent even when churning out the graphics of some seriously good-looking games.

Motorstorm was up first. Eventually, that is. The PS3 was one of the debug units sent to press companies and as such, the games frequently took longer than five minutes to load. Once we were in the driving seat of a massive truck, it was reaffirmed that the Wii would never be nearing these visuals. Even without an HD cable *Motorstorm* looked next-gen. Racing against ten or more computer controller vehicles, with mud flying everywhere, huge draw distances and highly realistic physics, the PS3 hadn't even shifted into second gear. It remained confidently silent – I could see Sony Computer Entertainment's CEO Ken Kutaragi's smug smile inside the shiny black casing.

Motorstorm also utilised the tilt sensitivity that the new SIXAXIS controller possesses. Interestingly, it functioned well as an alternative to the analogue sticks. It's doubtful that you would use it instead, but it played better than *Carbon* on the Wii. All in all, the SIXAXIS remains very faithful to the original PlayStation controller. The new L2 and R2 buttons are depressible, similarly to the GameCube's shoulder buttons. Overall it feels slightly lighter without the cord and rumble feature inside. The other gamers believed it felt like a rushed piece of kit, but I failed to comprehend this – after all, if it ain't broke...

Back into FPS territory, we fired up *Resistance: Fall Of Man*. Taking elements from world war shooters,

Gears Of War, *HalfLife* many other successful FPS games, I was most excited about this compared to the other PS3 titles. Whereas *Zelda* had appeared washed out, *Resistance* was plainly lacking in colour. The monochrome backdrop was harking back to the days of pig-stickers and Carbines, but felt pointless in a world repeatedly recreated, only now it was populated with aliens. Once again though, the PS3 didn't struggle in the slightest when churning out the detailed graphics. Everything ran smoothly and not a signal incident of tearing was spotted by my eagle-eyed acquaintances. Whilst the game play was solid, I was reminded of EA's *Black*, a game that I became very bored of once I got over the fact I could blow the shit out of almost anything on screen. *Resistance* lacked destructive environments too, so by comparison I should have been greatly disappointed. However, the story was appealing and if the developers have nailed the narrative and created exciting set pieces, *Resistance* could certainly be a must have.

The rest of the afternoon was spent playing *Ridge Racer 7*, *Genji: Days Of The Blade* and *Formula 1 Championship Edition*. *RR7* was exactly as expected – more of the same, but at blisteringly high speeds with slightly shiner graphics. I'd rather wait for the coconuts to fall from the palm trees in the background than play any more of the games in the series, but for fans, this version should be no less essential than the others. After a ten-minute unskippable cutscene, *Genji* wowed us with some fierce fire effects, but after mashing the X button for a thousandth time, we'd had enough of pummelling useless samurai enemies. *Formula 1* was a pleasant surprise once it entered the PS3's Blu-ray drive, recreating the sport to a precision that has never been seen before. The cars roared round the bends, you could feel the smooth carbon fibre bodies and taste the petrol fumes in the roof of your mouth. I never ex-

pected to be so impressed by such a launch friendly title.

On our journey to the nearest tube station after leaving the Radio 1 towers, we shared our views and tried to draw some conclusions. It was agreed that the PS3 was stunning visually, but it's arguable whether the launch titles are next-gen. *Motorstorm* impressed the others more than myself, but my apathy for racing games is the likely explanation for this. Whilst this and *Resistance* had potential, the launch line up appears vastly underwhelming. However, the PS3 has so much more to offer than just games including a Blu-ray player, Linux compatibility and a whole host of multimedia features. But, the touchy issue about price cannot be avoided. At a minimum of £425 without games, controllers and an HD television, the PS3 is an expensive acquisition. Come Spring 2007, we should expect to see *Singstar* available in the launch window along with a few other excellent Sony exclusives, but even then I could never justify buying a PS3. Another 12 – 18 months down the line and the story may be completely different. *Final Fantasy XIII* and *Metal Gear Solid 4: Guns Of The Patriots* are killer-apps that many, including myself, will be gagging for. But until mid 2008, resist the temptation to queue when you see a long line of people outside GAME in March. Besides, you might get shot in a drive-by if the American launch is anything to go by.

In the meantime, if you really need a truly next-gen fix, Bill Gates is the man whose pension fund you need to donate too. Personally, I've gone for a Wii. [Ed - 2300 words before for the first piss joke! Not bad!] The remote controller is a revelation – it is precise, intuitive and a genuinely successful alternative to conventional game pads. My pre-order is submitted and although you'd be lucky to find a place still taking them, I suggest you beg, steal or sell your gran to grab one. Go on, it'll put a smile on your face.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF LADY WITH PS3 PROVIDED BY EUROGAMER.NET



PS3 exclusive *Motorstorm* looking stunning even without running in high definition

Unfortunately, £425 will only get you a PS3 in March and not the girl

I, Gamer



Michael Cook
Games Editor

Child labour – it's the way to go. This week's focus on fun leads us to ask ten year-old Andrew Cook what he thinks of *Lego Star Wars 2* – cheap, punctual, and he even threw in his own illustrations. As long as I keep below Amnesty International's radar, I'm onto a winner.

Of course, we were all like that once. We did work when we were told to, we played when we were told to, we ate what was good for us. Most of us started as gamers when we were that age too – and when you're young, a good game is something totally different to what we now see as being a great experience.

So this week, Felix Games goes off in search of smiles and lollipops as we take a look at gaming then and now.

As a generation of gamers, the market largely targets us when they design new titles – but through doing that, it's easy to forget that once upon a time we liked pretending to be rock stars using brooms as guitars, or spent hours and hours building elaborate fortresses out of plastic bricks.

Andrew's review, and Matthew's article on it, shows that kids are onto what fun really is. They don't necessarily want to beat the crap out of legions of bad guys and cackle as the blood spills. Sometimes they just value what's fun – and our comment this week from James Skuse claims that we don't give them enough credit for doing this.

But fun *is* making a comeback – and not just through the infamous controller for the Nintendo Wii, or the block-bashing mayhem of *Lego Star Wars*. Peripheral gaming in general has gained momentum over the past years, not only securing the Playstation 2's success – as Chris Hemmens explores overleaf – but also opening up a whole new style of play, and a whole new style of gamer, in the way we interact with our consoles.

The festive season is almost upon us, and next week we'll be exploring the highs and lows of what's to come during December.

A lot of it is the same old shooting, slashing and scoring – many good games, but essentially tired concepts – so it's good to see that both in the near future and ten years down the line lies a fresh breed of gaming, as well as an enthusiastic breed of gamer.

SC4: A splintered game?

James Freedman takes a look at the darker side of gaming and sees the light

Like so many dedicated fans of Sam Fisher, I've been looking forward to *Splinter Cell: Double Agent* ever since *Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory* ended in an orgy of silence and darkness last year. Ubisoft's stealth franchise has been previously extraordinarily successful over across all platforms, offering an intelligent alternative to the horde of first-person shooters flooding the market.

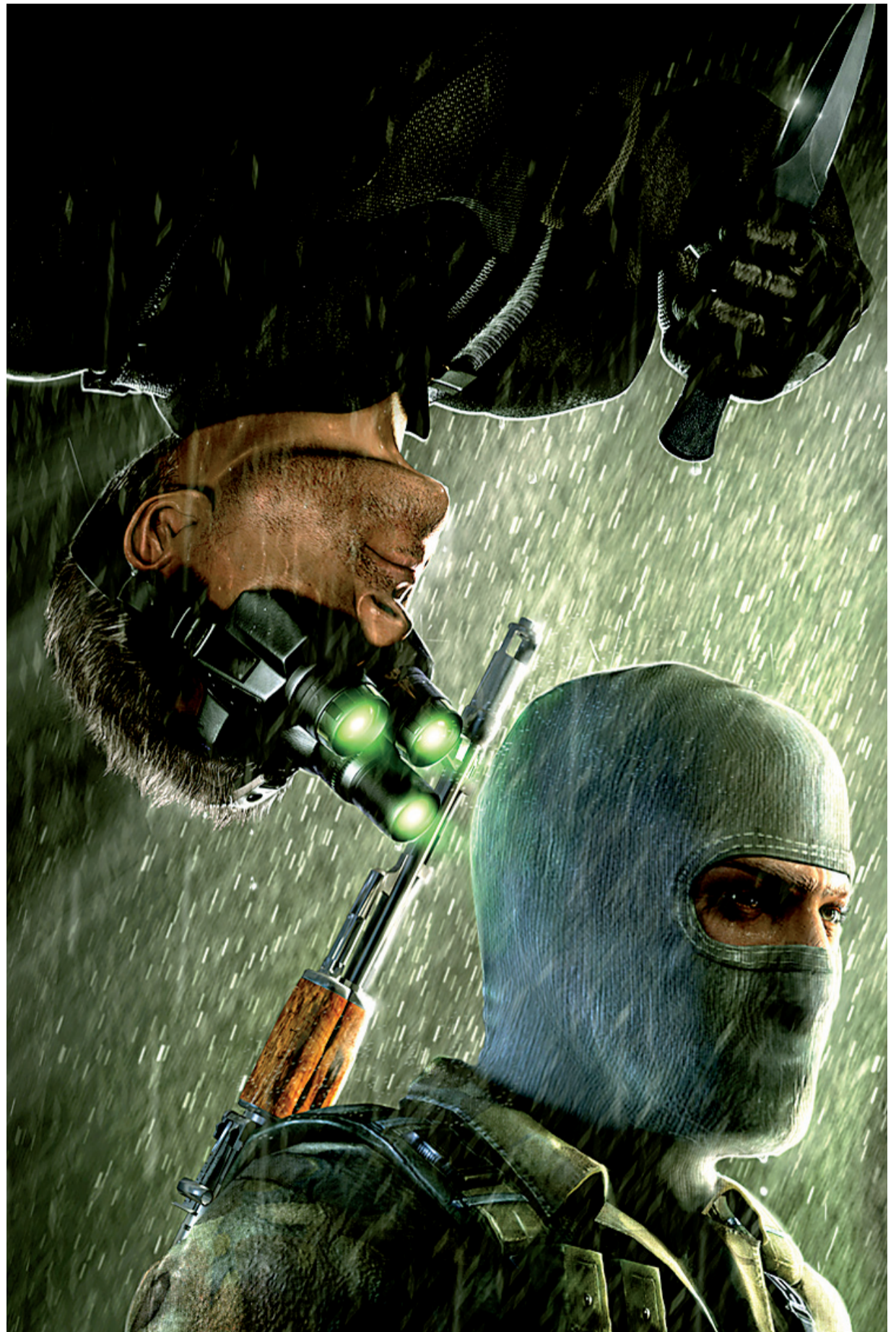
The story takes a slightly more personal turn than before – following the accidental death of his daughter, Sam Fisher accepts an extraordinarily dangerous mission to infiltrate a terrorist organisation known as John Brown's Army. He's thrown into Ellsworth Penitentiary to earn their trust by helping a known member escape. After a brief introductory mission, the player takes Sam's role for his escape, and must gradually earn the JBA's trust by helping them prepare a major attack on several cities. Curiously, JBA seem to have access to the same technology as the National Security Agency, so any players wishing to see an alternative to the standard headgear, or the SC20K, will be disappointed.

Double Agent is powered by the Unreal Engine 2; whilst levels and characters are well detailed and the game does look good, it is difficult to believe that this is the same Unreal engine that delivered the vast expanses and beautiful environments we have been treated to in *Unreal II* and *Unreal Tournament 2004*. Individual levels are incredibly small, reminiscent of *Deus Ex*'s downsizing for its port to Playstation 2.

And not only are they small, but there also aren't very many of them. The *Splinter Cell* series has always kept things short and sweet, and *Double Agent* is no exception. There are 11 levels, not including tutorials, of which two time under ten minutes, and four are set in the same building. That aside, every single level is extremely well designed – the number of pipes, vents etc. available to circumvent the enemy is astounding, and there is always a way to avoid conflict.

However, there's a far more serious problem: Even at night, in a room with all the lights turned off, the game is still bright. The guards may not be able to see Sam, but the player can still clearly see all the contents of the room. In the entire game, I barely used night-vision, never touched the thermal vision or the 'wave' vision (which unlike previous games, is never required for an objective). The iconic three green eyes have been such a staple of the series since its foundation, and I was dismayed to find that they now so surplus to requirements, that in some missions Sam doesn't even bother to wear his headgear. A high price to pay for a new twist in gameplay.

The trust system, and the array of objectives (most of which are optional, and some of which are conflicting), allow several different paths through the game. There are multiple endings, and these depend on more than just the last fifteen minutes of the game. Whilst playing I genuinely got the feeling that my choices were affecting the outcome of the conflict – and although I had



Splinter Cell 4 might be good, clean, throat-slitting, terrorist-beating, fun – but it's not one for the kids

no problem keeping my trust with both organisations at a respectable level – some of my decisions had notable permanent effects – without giving too much away.

So while *Splinter Cell: Double Agent* seems on the whole to be an improvement, even with these shortcomings, it has several far more fundamental problems that make the entire experience intensely frustrating. The ragdoll physics are appalling – an enemy shot in a chair will often end up perched above the chair, some become stuck in a wall on their way to the ground, and occasionally a corpse will just remain floating in the air. It is ex-

tremely difficult to place a corpse in the sparse and small dark spots so necessary for concealing them, and on one occasion, when I had a pile of unconscious enemies ready to dump off the edge of an iceberg, all but two of them disappeared.

I found *Splinter Cell: Double Agent* to be a frustrating, disappointing but still thoroughly enjoyable game. It was only at the end, when I was treated to soundbites instead of a cinematic, that I noticed the absence of videos throughout the game.

The brilliant faux news footage of previous stories has been replaced by faceless talking, and this

is symbolic of laziness and apathy with which the whole product was put together. The care lavished on *Splinter Cell*, *Pandora Tomorrow* and *Chaos Theory* by Ubisoft Montreal seems incomprehensible to the European continental development team responsible for *Double Agent*. Make no mistake, I had a great time playing this game. I feel as if I got my money's worth, and I will still look forward (although somewhat apprehensively) to the next episode of what may now be a tired franchise. But I will always pine for the astounding game that, with a little more love and an affection, it certainly could have been.

Kids play: Lego Star Wars 2

Andrew Cook and Tony Plana get to know the lighter side of the dark side

What I love most about Lego Star Wars? You know exactly what is going to happen when you push the start button. You're going to be playing a game based on the Star Wars franchise. And it's going to be constructed with Lego bits. It's Lego... but in Space!

And that's what Lego Star Wars is. Not Lego in Space – although, of course, it's that too. What's more important though is that it's *simple*. It's the most basic good versus bad story ever married with the most basic block building toy ever. And simple is good. Simple is always good.

Superb graphics – second in Andrew's list after the jokes which, despite not quite being of the giddy intellectual level of BBC Three – or, say, The Beano – are pitched perfectly to the light-hearted feel of the game in general.

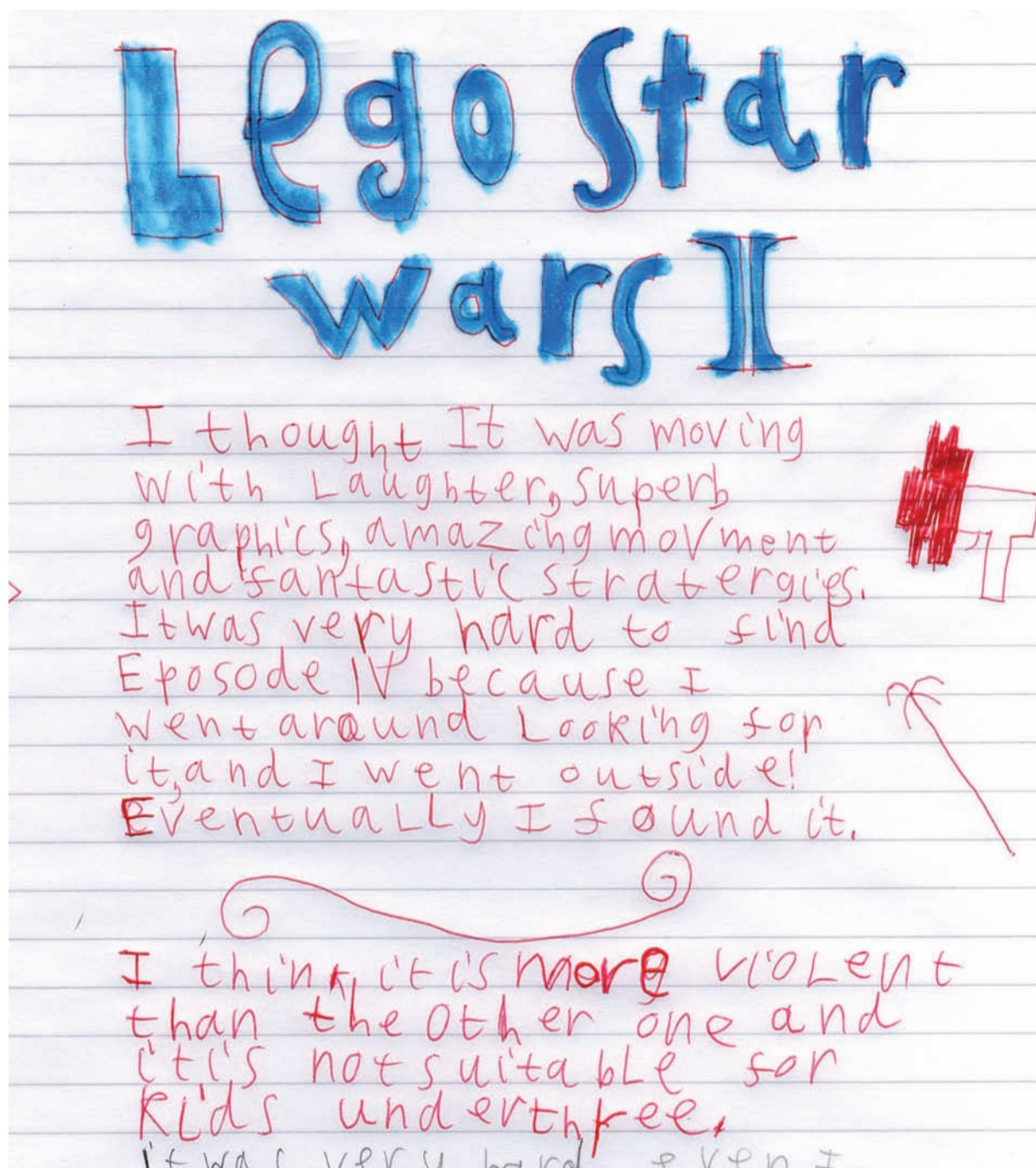
But the graphics. They're not FarCry in their scope, nor UT 2007 in their detail, but they're Lego. They're sharp, they're bright, and they crucially never get in the way of the gameplay. Kids don't want atmosphere so thick that you can't tell what's the player and what's just a big area of shadow. They just want to kill stuff with lightsabers.

At the Game On exhibition, currently showing at the Science Museum, the older games are more immediately attractive than the newer ones, for me. It's not because there's something satisfyingly snobbish about refusing to play any game that has more than two dimensions – it's simply because you only need to look at Space Invaders to 'get' the entire game. It has a *feeling*.

Lego Star Wars 2 has a feeling. Every level – whether it's bombing around the desert town of Mos Eisley or trying to work out what's going on in the Battle Of Hoth – flows from one section to another without feeling too restrictive.

If you're expecting non-linearity, though, this is the planet where you get off, because Lego Star Wars 2 is the complete opposite. In fact, if you expect anything less than a run-through of the titular Original Trilogy of films, you're going to be more disappointed than the last Stormtrooper to be picked for the annual hoverball match.

But again – that's why the game works. There are no complications



Andrew's Review of Lego Star Wars 2

"I thought it was moving with laughter, superb graphics, amazing movement and fantastic strategies. It was very hard to find Episode VI because I went around looking for it and I went outside! Eventually I found it. I think it's more violent than the other one and it's not suitable for kids under three. It was very hard – even I can't do it! I think this game is not as good as Lego Star Wars."

once you take up your lightsaber and step into the robes or fur of the franchise's finest – you're here to play pretend, and nothing else.

It's interesting to consider what kids games really are. When you look at Lego Star Wars 2 – rated 3+ by the powers that be – you think that it's just blocky fun with no bad

endings. You still respawn every time you die, and there's no blood.

But you can pull bits off people.

It's funny when you first see it, and it's not something that's going to give the average schoolkid nightmares given that any Lego-based experience tends to involve pulling heads and legs off hapless yellow

men, but the fact that the kids notice it at all says something.

I think it's often too easy to make assumptions about young gamers that are completely wrong. Just as I'm far too scared to ever play past the first ten minutes of Silent Hill, someone half my age knows what they like and what they don't like. They don't need to be pandered to. They just need designers to think about what's *actually fun*.

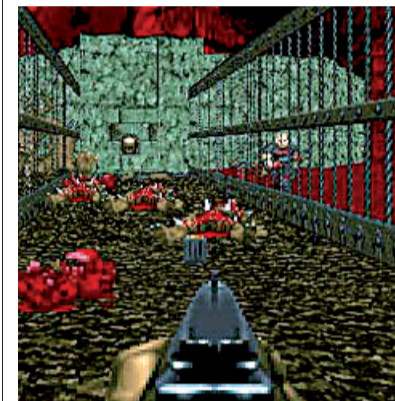
And he's got a good point. Lego Star Wars 2 isn't the result of pandering to anyone – the game's just as fun for me to play as it is for any other self-respecting gamer. But it's not quite as good as the original.

Why? Because it's more Star Wars and less Lego. And to put a finer point on it – it's more Lego Star Wars and less pure fun injected into your eyeballs.

It's still a laugh with an extra player – dropping in and out of any mission, and lightsabering your best mate to bits – and unlocking the copious characters is something that keeps you interested. But it feels like they're trying too hard. You can't force fun – it just happens. Force. Anyone?

Play Again?

Despite the increase in availability of purely child-audience games for PC and handhelds, they all seem to be pretty rubbish rip-offs of each other, or of 'classic' titles (such as Mario). Children may be easily entertained at first, but the shallowness of these games soon shows through and they are soon tossed aside. Taking the recent Finding Nemo game for GBA as an example, it is just a clone of a maze-based game from yesteryear, with exceedingly similar 'puzzles' and small changes to surroundings as the game progresses.



Look familiar? There's a reason

However, is that not what all (single player) gaming is? FarCry; a recent hit PC game is basically (read: cynically) a clone of Doom, with islands and hired grunts instead of the walls and zombies? This may be an over simplification as there are differences, such as much better graphics & physics, jeeps & boats as well as the AI players you fight with, but the general gist is the same: shoot guys and run.

New, inventive, games and game types are needed to stimulate the kids' games market if it wants to improve the quality of its output, and make the parents want to play the game as well (as many 'children's books' such as Harry Potter and His Dark Materials have done). The game design (quality of writing) will be what pulls the parents in and hooks the children, not the characters and big names which is the major force currently. Detractors of computer games may brandish even these children's games as BAD AND EVIL, harming children's health. The initiative therefore lies with the hardware makers to ensure their point is null, as with the Nintendo Wii where physical movement is encouraged, nay, required, to do well.



No, we can't bear to look either

Everything aside, children's games will still get lots of sales because children want everything and anything to do with a certain show/movie/toy, so even if it only gives a little bit of entertainment, does quality really matter to the child?; probably not. The parent however will probably be frustrated that the toy (as with all toys) is never touched after a month.

James Skuse



"These aren't the droids you are looking for. Move along."

New breeds of control freak *Out now*

Because real gamers don't waggle joysticks all the time, explains Chris Hemmens

On November 9th, Sony Computer Entertainment Europe announced that the Playstation 2 had become the best-selling computer entertainment system in Europe. Having sold 40 million units, it overtook its predecessor by a few hundred thousand units. David Reeves, SCEE President and CEO, cited that "the social gaming phenomena such as EyeToy, SingStar and BUZZ!" were a major factor in the PS2's success.

So, quick question here, what do all these games have in common? If you said that they all use peripherals, give yourself half a point. The true answer is that they appeal to a wider audience, so a more pertinent question would be: does a game that appeals to a wider audience require a peripheral?

It must certainly help. Gaetan Lee, one of the main organisers of the science museum's Game On exhibition, told Stoic TV in a recent interview "if you see a device that looks like a guitar, you know what you're meant to do with it; you pick up a microphone, you know what to do with it." In an industry where input is generalised to something as generic as possible, seeing something that's familiar can be a real incentive to give it a try.

Of course, that's only one type of peripheral. If you want full immersion, you could always give Steel Battalion's controller a try. Involving two control sticks and around 40 buttons, including one for washing the windscreen, it is one of the most complicated gaming peripherals in existence. My friend Tom and I had a go on it at the aforementioned exhibition and during a play, Tom exclaimed "How do you get it to go forward?" "You have to press one of the pedals," I said, to which he replied in horror "there are pedals!?"



"You have to press the pedals." ... "There are pedals?!"

Modern peripheral gaming grew out of the success of Dance Dance Revolution and other dancing games as they made their transition from the arcade to the home in 1999. In the good old days, peripherals tended to come in the form of either steering wheels or arcade sticks. Guns also featured in the retail sector, though they embodied wilder designs, as owners of SNES's super scope can attest. Rhythm action games caused a stir as a wider variety of inputs were concocted. Whereas steering wheels and the like fit one model that could apply to a genre as a whole, in the years

following DDR's dancemat, we saw the release of maracas, bongos, guitars, microphones, keyboards and even drumkits. Using music as a universal language, new ways of play found their place in the home and new ideas began to perpetuate in the minds of designers.

Sony's "Fire it up" campaign in 2005 promoted their SingStar, Buzz! and EyeToy IP very heavily, and in the long-run has been very successful. SingStar has shipped all over the world and has

just released its 7th incarnation here in the UK. EyeToy has reached 17 specifically designed titles to date, and Buzz! already has 5 titles dedicated to it despite only being released in 2005, with a movie quiz due for release in early 2007.

I finish with a look at the Wii. Is it possible that the Wii controller is the peripheral of all peripherals? You may have to swing it like a tennis racket, use it as a samurai sword, or even turn it like a steering wheel, but herein lies the problem: it's designed to be as general as possible. Looking back over the resurgence of peripheral gaming in the late 90s and early 2000s; are we about to bear witness to the first step in combining accessibility with generality, and how will this affect the outcome of the decisions that the three major hardware manufacturers have made? Sony are unerringly going to continue to make add-ons for their machines, it's what they're good at and why they're so popular. So that leaves one final question; will Microsoft lose that mass-appeal that comes from everyday familiarity, or do they have the charisma and online audience to go the distance?

More From Chris

Chris is one of the co-presenters of Stoic TV's *Games Watch*, a show dedicated to gaming news and reviews that airs once a week on the Imperial TV station.

You can find an entire archive of the show online at www.stoictv.com, as well as catching the show every Friday at various places around the University. There'll be more features from *Games Watch* coming in the future.

Felix Games knows a lot about you, reader. We know what college you go to, what your favourite student paper is, and we also know *exactly* what noise you make when given a plastic guitar and a copy of **Guitar Hero II**. It goes a little something like this - "Weeeoooooww weowow-owowowwww." and then you twiddle your left hand a bit. You get the idea.

Yes, it's expensive, and yes, you might feel it a bit short-lived if all you're going to do is play it on your own. But you're never going to play a game quite like **Guitar Hero**, and the sequel is every bit as entertain-



A guitar hero, yesterday

ing as the first. One of the greatest party experiences since Dance Dance Revolution whilst drunk.

But we also know that some of you are a bit too refined to be prancing around with what looks like a demonic sex toy in your hands, so for something more cerebral this week, **Warhammer: Mark Of Chaos** finally makes a release. It's not the detail orgy that some fans may be expecting, but an RTS that's well worth a look for those still waiting for Supreme Commander.

Speaking of which, coming nearly a month late for spooky season, **Rule Of Rose** is out for the Playstation 2 this week. Set in 1930s England and surrounding a group of



Rule Of Rose: It's scary. Really

young girls called the "Red Crayon Aristocrats", RoR seems at first to be usual horror fare, but the narrative really does make a change from the endless combat that *Silent Hill* and *Resident Evil* are now plagued with. And no - no, the group of girls do not 'get it on'. At all.

Though you may be interested to know that **Dead Or Alive: Extreme Beach Volleyball 2** is still on track for a Christmas release.

We're just saying, is all.



Chris Hemmens at the weekend - Guitar Hero's rock stylings are a big draw for those put off by geekery

"Raider, turn the game console off right now!" - The Colonel, *Metal Gear Solid 2*

Casino Royale: 007 returns

Has Daniel Craig got what it takes to maintain one of the world's favourite franchises?

Yuen Ai Lee
Film Editor

The previous James Bond was the striking Pierce Brosnan who dealt more with cool machinery than any real fighting tactics. Daniel Craig has stepped up to the platform, chided to be the geek who would bring the downfall of the 007 series. But the critics and naysayers have been proven wrong. Daniel Craig has brought a new angle to James Bond. He is tough, lethal, lacking in etiquette but still a winner with the ladies.

Casino Royale heats up with a freezing start in Prague. Accustomed to talk and slick language manoeuvres, this James Bond is all about cold-blooded action. Witness the black-and-white fighting scenes and the cold gargle of water as a man takes his last breathe. Swift assassination skills gain him the status of a 00 agent. And his first mission is to track down the terrorist, Mollaka in Madagascar.

No prizes for guessing, but things did not go quite as planned for James in Madagascar. Instead of catching Mollaka, he changes tactics mid-strike and blows up the Nambutu Embassy. The lady, Judi Dench who resumes her role as M, is obviously pissed with his wild-child tactics. She becomes increasingly displeased when she finds out he's been breaking every rule in the 007 book.

Daniel Craig as James Bond is a man on a mission and he has reason to suspect that he has just latched on to the core personnel of terrorist activity, the Banker. James Bond follows his instincts to the sizzling beaches of the Bahamas. Ladies,

there is good news to be heard. This time, climbing out of the waters, we don't have Ursula Andress in her trademark white bikini. We have instead, the very tanned and sinewy Daniel Craig. However, there is no cause for worry gentlemen. Across the glittering jewel-like waters of Bahamas, we have the beautiful Caterina Murino. And she is no less of a goddess on a white horse.

Caterina Murino takes the role of Solange, the girlfriend of Dimitrios. Dimitrios is involved with Le Chiffre, banker to terrorist cells. Secret Service informs 007 that Le Chiffre plans to raise money in a high-stakes poker game at Le Casino Royale. (Hence, the name.) And so it is up to James Bond to save the day by playing his hand against the poker talents of Le Chiffre.

No James Bond film is truly complete without the cool cars and gadgets. The internal microchip in his arm and the classic silver Aston Martin should be suffice to satisfy your technological addiction. To teach him to play poker, M16 dials up the service of Vesper Lynd (Eva Green). Finally, we have an intelligent, librarian-chic Bond girl who can meet Bond's mental and physical abilities tit for tat. Tension is high and sporadic bursts of flirtatious spats add light-hearted comedy to this well-packed action film. While she does not don leather outfits and smash fists with terrorists aka Michelle Yeoh, she is a Bond girl in her own right.

Unlike many sequels to well-known series, you do not have to watch *Casino Royale* just to achieve a sense of completion. *Casino Royale* marks the beginning of a new James Bond era.



Daniel Craig, the sixth James Bond, stars in *Casino Royale*. Out now

Something big or a bit of nothing film?



Schwimmer remained oblivious to the stream of urine trickling down his leg as Pegg relieved himself

Camilla Weiss

With a well-worn plot concerning a mismatched trio embarking on a seemingly foolproof blackmailing scheme that could not possibly go wrong and the relatively unknown French director Jean-Baptiste Andrea (JBA) at the helm, you would understand my initial doubts about the film. But I was in for a surprise.

Big Nothing tells the tale of Charlie Wood, played by David Schwimmer, a frustrated unemployed teacher. He reluctantly teams up with the unpredictable scammer Gus Dickinson, played by Simon Pegg and his ex-squeeze Josie

McBroom (Alice Eve) in a seemingly snag free plan to get rich quick. Of course, absolutely nothing goes according to plan and to say 'things spiral out of control' would be putting it rather mildly.

Surprisingly, *Big Nothing* delivers far more than your average scam-gone-wrong comedy. The script-writing duo, a combination of JBA and American, Billy Asher, have managed to produce a dark comedy that is all at once hilarious, absurd and tense enough to keep you on the edge of your seat. It plays like a deliciously twisted fairytale, reminiscent of the Coen brothers. It's visually enthralling story tell-

ing lulls you into a false sense of security whilst secretly setting you up for a twist after twist. Richard Greatrex (*Shakespeare in Love*, *Mrs Brown*) adds a compelling sense of energy and style with his often quite beautiful and imaginative shots which works really well with the director's dynamic vision.

What really makes the film so fun is the quirky ensemble of A-listers and newcomers which comprise the eclectic cast. I'm a big fan of Pegg's comedy genius, having watched *Spaced* one too many times and I have always had a soft spot for Schwimmer's character, Ross. Not an obvious pairing though, coming

from almost opposite ends of the comedy barrel. Curiously the two brought out the best bits of each side without going over the top. If you're not a fan of David Schwimmer, this might just change your mind. He gives a grounded, rather understated performance, which is a refreshing change, and is obviously enjoying the challenge of not being Ross forever by exploring his darker side. *Felix* is happy to report that he has done it to great effect. He plays off brilliantly against Pegg, doing what he does best, just with an American accent.

Alice Eve brings the threesome together never failing to charm. They're supported by the likes of Natascha McElhone, Mimi Rogers, who has possibly one of the most bizarrely wonderful cameos, and the consistently fantastic Jon Polito who is so enjoyable to watch.

A highly stylish and entertaining tale of karmic retribution. It could easily have become ludicrous and dull, and there are a couple of moments where it seems to lose momentum, but thanks to some inspiring directing and great acting talent it leaves you, somewhat ghoulishly, wanting just a little bit more, with a final wicked twist sure to fire up the imagination and linger for longer than you'd like.

VUE

CINEMAS

www.myvue.com/students

Film times for Fulham
Broadway from Friday,
November 24 to Thursday,
November 30, 2006

Paid Previews

Flushed Away (U) (RT1h50)
Sat/Sun only: 10:20 11:30
12:40 15:00 17:20

Subtitled Shows

Pans Labyrinth (15) (RT2h20)
Daily: (12:10 Not Sat/Sun)
15:10 17:50 20:30 Fri/Sat
Late: 23:30

New releases

Pans Labyrinth (15) (RT2h20)
Daily: (12:10 Not Sat/Sun)
15:10 17:50 20:30 Fri/Sat
Late: 23:30

Jackass Number Two (18) (RT1h55) Daily: 11:10 13:40
16:05, 18:30 21:20 Fri/Sat
Late: 23:50

Tenacious D (15) (RT1h55)
Daily: (11:20 Not Sat/Sun)
13:50 16:20 18:50 21:10
Fri/Sat Late: 23:40

The Santa Clause 3 (U) (RT1h55)
Daily (10:10 Sat/Sun only)
12:30 14:45 17:00 19:15

General showings

Casino Royale (12A) (RT2h50)
Daily: (10.00 Sat/Sun only)
11.00 12.00 13.00 14.00 15.30
16.30 17.30 19.00
20.00 21.00 Fri/Sat Late:
22.30 23.10

Prestige (12A) (RT 2h30)
Daily: 21:30

Breaking and Entering (15) (RT 2h20) Daily: (Not Sat/Sun
11:50 14:40 17:20)

Borat (15) (RT 1h45)
Daily: (12:20 Not Sat/Sun)
14:30 16:40 18:40 20:45
Fri/Sat Late: 23.00

Open Season (PG) (RT1h50)
Sat/Sun only: 11.20

KIDS CLUB:

Cars (PG) (RT2h25)
Sat/Sun only: 11:40

The best lo-fi fashion labels

Sarah Skeete browses quirky shops in central London, so all of you can be individual

Lazy Oaf

A very twee brand, born as a t-shirt company, and now expanded into sweaters and accessories. They also have a line of designer toys. As in, toys by Lazy Oaf, not toys dressed in couture. Although rather disturbingly Lagerfeld has just designed a range of the figurines wearing Chanel. Who the hell buys Chanel figurines? If I found myself round someone's house, and saw the shelves lined with Chanel figurines, I'd assume I was stuck in some sort of crazy horror film featuring Paris Hilton. There's only one Lazy Oaf store in London, off Carnaby Street, in Kingly Court.

www.lazyoaf.co.uk



Oki-Ni

Oki-Ni clothes are currently a little too fashion forward. And by fashion forward, I mean totally hideous. They do however have a great range of footwear, at ridiculous prices, that only 30-year-olds who dress inappropriately young can afford. However they have a sale on at the moment, so take advantage of the temporarily student-friendly prices. Or, if you wait until 1-3 December, they have a sample sale, with 80% off. Go to www.secretssamplesale.co.uk for the sale.

www.oki-ni.com



BAPE

OK, arguably so 2003, but still uniquely awesome! Originating in Japan, this once difficult to find brand has a shop on Upper James Street. Its distinctive patterned sweaters and jackets are popular with hip hop artists, in particular Kanye West (who features in their Autumn-Winter 06 catalogue) and Pharrell Williams. Pharrell also collaborated with Nigo, the creator of BAPE, on his own BBC (Billionaire Boys Club) clothing range.

www.bape.com

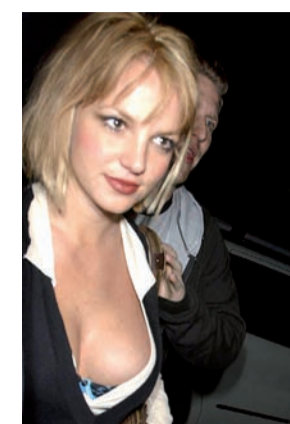


Cult

Also located in Kingly Court, Cult stocks a range of brands, including Ringspun, Cheap Monday, Pop, Religion & Penguin. You can find most mid-sized street brands featured in the OC at Cult. A lot of the price tags will make you choke, but you can find some key fashion pieces here. So, if you factor in the amount of wear you'll get per pound, you can easily justify the silly prices.

www.cult.co.uk

COOL



Britney Spears

She finally ditched K-Fed, lost weight and is ready to make a comeback. OK, so the partying with Paris Hilton is a PR mistake, not to mention a definite health risk. Maybe she was just asking Paris' advice on sex-tape scandal damage limitation. If she doesn't make a comeback, then there'll be a highly public spiral into decline. Hopefully the rumours of Justin Timberlake and Britney planning to record a joint album are true (but don't hold your breath. You'll die).



Gwen Stefani

Her new single and video are hot. But her style these days has gone seriously downhill. And what is up with that Gucci-style logo for L.A.M.B. that she's wearing everywhere these days. It's so 90s.



Ankle Boots

They make you look like you have hooves for feet. Unless you secretly want to be a woodland deer, I would say this isn't a good thing. Although if you did have those kinds of aspirations you probably have bigger problems than ankle-boots. For example, the lack of green spaces in London.

LAME

Policing London, post 7/7

Discussing the way London is policed with senior officers from the Metropolitan Police

The panelists:

Chaired by **Nicholas Owen** from ITN

Tarique Ghaffur

Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service

Rose Fitzpatrick

Metropolitan Police Service

Musa Admani

Director of the Luqman Institute and London Metropolitan University Imam

Geff Edwards

Mirror Columnist and Chair of the Crime Writers Association

Reshard Auladin

Metropolitan Police Authority

Wednesday 29th November 6pm

Lecture Theatre 220, Mech Eng building

Followed by refreshments



www.imperial.ac.uk/chaplaincy



Solving cryptics



Scarecrow

As promised two weeks ago, though delayed a week due to a lack of consideration on the part of a sub-editor, and due to popular demand, this is the first in a hopefully regular series of columns that will hopefully allow more people to solve the Felix crossword and, less importantly, cryptic crosswords in general.

The most common obstacle to solving crosswords is not knowing the types of clue commonly used, and finding them too complicated as a result – in actual fact, there are only a dozen or so frequently used types of clue (or parts thereof) that are needed to solve most crosswords. Before going any further, it is important to recognise that a cryptic clue will almost invariably mean something very different on the surface to the answer it is driving you towards, and most punctuation is thrown in to further obscure the true meaning. For instance, “Brutally slain with talons (5)” does not refer to any sort of violent act. Instead, it leads to the answer “nails” for reasons that will be described below.

Clues almost invariably consist of two parts – a definition of the answer and some form of word-play. Crucially, these can occur in either order, and the setter of the crossword will do their best to make it difficult to tell which is

the definition – in the example above, the definition could be “brutally”, “talons” or perhaps “brutally slain”. In this instance, it is “talons”, while “brutally slain” indicates that it is an anagram of “slain”, since any word or phrase which imply disorder – along the lines of “brutally”, “confused”, “disfigured”, “mixed”, “disperse”, etc. – can be used to indicate that an anagram is to be taken.

Anagram-based clues are perhaps the most infamous, though amongst the easiest to begin with, but far more common are those that contain a number of smaller words pieced together to form the answer. For instance, “I go around truncated low ice house (5)” means the letters “Igo” around “lo”. (Since “truncated low” indicates that “low” is to be truncated – this almost invariably means to do so by one letter. Other words used to mean this can be “endless”, “unfinished” or “headless” to mean the first letter is to be removed.) This gives the answer “Igloo”, the ice house referred to in the clue. While this may sound far too complicated, this sort of clue becomes easy with practice.

Common pieces of such clues include numbers, which will generally indicate their roman numeral counterparts; “point”, which indicates n, s, e, w or any other points of the compass; “king” indicating r or k; “way” indicating st or rd; elements indicating their abbreviations from the periodic table; translations of simple words – le or la indicated by “the french”, for instance; “that is” indicating ie; “for example” indicating eg; and any other common abbreviations may be used.

This Week's Horoscopes

Scorpio (23 Oct – 21 Nov)



Huge gaping wounds appear in your face. Hahahaha. You look ugly. Double hahahaha. Also, you smell of vinegar constantly because you work in a Walkers factory. Well, not vinegar, but vinegar flavouring. Triple hahahaha. I've got nothing here, people.

Sagittarius (22 Nov – 21 Dec)



You are a disgusting sadist. You have a sexually transmitted disease (say, genital warts) and spread it to as many people as you can in order to inflict the maximum amount of pain on the largest number of people. Get to a GUM clinic or I'll hurt you.

Capricorn (22 Dec – 19 Jan)



This week, you'll feel a strange compulsion to smear your back in peanut butter and sled down nearby concrete ramps. After eighteen hours in A&E, the junior doctor on call finally removes all the glass from your spine. You fall in love with him or something.

Aquarius (20 Jan – 18 Feb)



Look, we in Felix have had a hard week. I know it looks like the newspaper just appears every Friday to sate your need for bizarre writings, but it actually takes us hours and hours to do. So while you're getting loveless sex from strangers, we're in the office.

Pisces (19 Feb – 20 Mar)



You like immature humour, don't you? Of course you do, or you wouldn't be reading the horoscope. Well, this week's crossword has a lot of immature jokes in it. Go on, take a look. Have a go at it. You know you fucking love it.

Aries (21 Mar – 20 Apr)



The problem with you is that you don't listen. I tell you things here every week, and you don't do them. How the hell am I supposed to write news if none of you go out and get raped by a labrador or set fire to a school? I think it's just selfish, and I quit. Screw you all.

Taurus (21 Apr – 21 May)



You think noone is watching when you migrate your hand to warmer climates to measure the humidity. You are wrong! Jesus is watching you, and He's loving every minute. To spite you He gives you the stigmata. No more rub-fun for you!

Gemini (22 May – 21 Jun)



Jesus is also God apparently. I thought I met Him once, I found Him under Battersea Bridge nibbling at the corners of a twiglets packet for sustenance. He told me his name was Fernando and that there was a job for me as a waiter in his gingerbread house. He lied.

Cancer (22 Jun – 22 Jul)



Do you like money, naked ladies and drinking Kristal? Well this week you appear in a hip hop video featuring all of these. Then you get told at the end to foot the bill or the very large Bruno will play jazz with your organs. The bad news is that he hates music.

Leo (23 Jul – 22 Aug)



You get mistaken for Keanu Reeves in a bar one night. Laughing off the comparison, you go home and sleep. You then are unsure if you're asleep or awake. A black guy in leather turns up at your door. It's Bruno and you still haven't footed the bill.

Virgo (23 Aug – 22 Sept)



Oh, you lot think you're so fucking funny, don't you? Well, “Felix Horoscope” is a euphemism for “syphilitic inflammation”. You filthy bag of plague-ridden fuckwits. Keep away from me, I don't want to catch anything. (Too late - Felix Horoscope Squad)

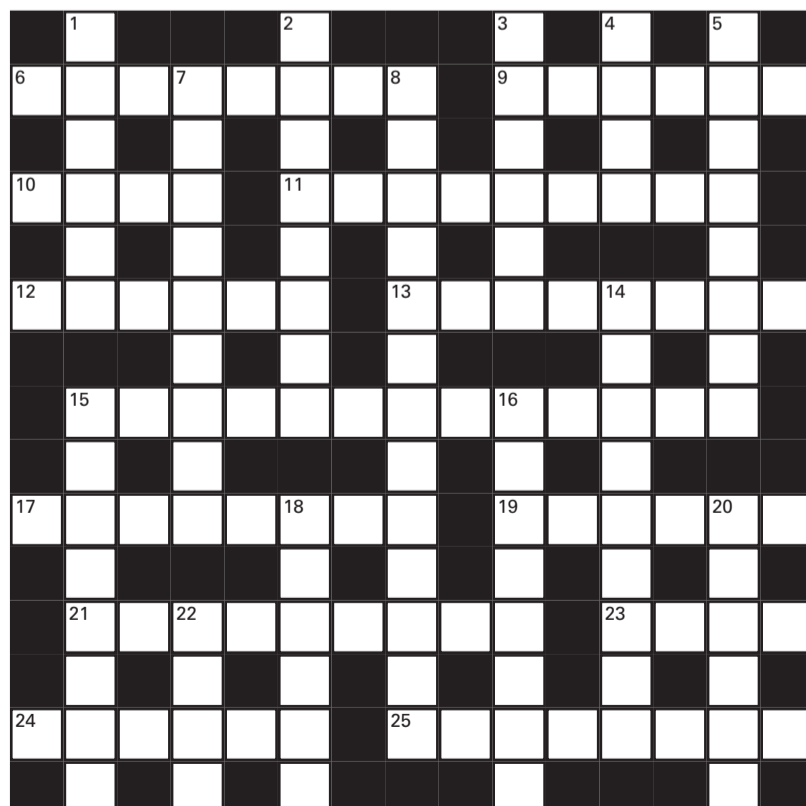
Libra (23 Sept – Oct 22)



You've completed all your problem sheets. Feeling studious you take a walk through the park, kicking the leaves. You then realise every situation that happened in your problems is happening to you. Bad news my friend, part 7a wasn't 23.4 eV. You're going down.

Felix Crossword 1,365

Scarecrow



ACROSS

- 6 Common sense contains a use that causes sickness (8)
- 9 Move forward a few centimetres (6)
- 10 Flow back into wild animal (4)
- 11 Double positive? No! (4,5)
- 12 Given food or a hat (6)
- 13 Urge to sweep a beater (8)
- 15 Applaud pig at usual tube station (7,6)
- 17 Force health inspector into cut (8)
- 19 Drink from the honourable tube (6)
- 21 Invigorated umpire about to drop (9)
- 23 Finished a round of cricket (4)
- 24 In Levi's, go purple (6)
- 25 Dish with french flats (8)

DOWN

- 1 Conditional release of father figure (6)
- 2 Half of mammoth in way of a renaissance man (8)
- 3 Ejaculate at girl back on platform (3,3)
- 4 Point to see a grand heroin (4)
- 5 Dump badly-set joint (8)
- 7 Cut off sea cut and cut off air (9)
- 8 Diplomacy that means “piss off” (13)
- 14 Sounds like a prostitute is Oedipean and neon (9)
- 15 In the disco her entirety is connected (8)
- 16 Out of bounds, two boys turn black (8)
- 18 Cool alien maimed by a leopard (6)
- 20 Rotten song to confide (4,2)
- 22 Charge sounds reasonable (4)

Following a week of repeats, this week brings a brand new crossword with entirely new clues. The week before last, however, only one person sent in a solution. This was a little disappointing, as I know for a fact that at least three people completed it. Please send in your solutions - you can win actual hard cash for your troubles. Given last fortnight's odds, you would be *certain* to win **ten whole pounds** if you send it in. Given the level of response last time, you wouldn't even have needed to get a single clue right. You *literally* can't get better odds than those.

Scarecrow

Last week's crossword

There was a massive mix-up in the *Felix* basement last week, as the sharp readers amongst you may have noticed. We (and by we, I mean me, Andy) managed to upload the wrong page to our printers.

We are truly sorry, and will spend this evening whipping ourselves with birch twigs in penance for this hideous mistake.

Send your answers to sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk or bring this page down to the *Felix* office in the West Wing of Beit Quad by **Tuesday 9am**. Each week, we'll choose a winner and print their name, thus providing them with almost unlimited kudos and a tenner. Everyone who provides us with a correct solution will get an entry into our prize draw at the end of the year.

at the union nov 24th - dec 7th

WEDNESDAY 29TH & 6TH

SPORTS NIGHT

29th November - 18-30 Holiday Reps
6th December - ACC Bar Night

Hookah Cafe and chill out in the Union Dining Hall

Every Wednesday At The Union!

Carlsberg, Tetley's & Blackthorn only
£1.30 a pint



Free entry before 9pm, £1 thereafter

FRIDAY 24TH NOV

the mingle

Vodka and draught mixer £1.25 all night in all bars.

Friday 24th November
20.00-02.00



The Mingle was our sell-out Freshers' Week party. For those who attended - you already know how much fun it is!

DJ Sami Sanchez, DJ Rimmi and the DMC Scratch Champion, Blakey, are all returning with the best RnB and hip hop tunes around.

We are also opening the Hookah Cafe with the relaxation generation, and offering a special promotion of £3 per hookah all night

THURSDAY 30TH

Corona Bottle & lime only £1.50

salsa
world music
with free salsa lessons

FRIDAY 1ST DEC

subredo

upfront drum and bass

FRIDAY 1ST DEC 20.00 - 02.00

With upfront tunes from:
Bryan G Movement: Chronic Records, V Recordings
Paxo and Terror: Kool FM - the drum and bass award winning radio station
Miss Pink: Blackmarket Records
Dj Surreal: Streetwise Music
Macpherson: Fabric Live

Also our Hookah bar with the relaxation generation. £1 from every Hookah sold will go to Aids Week.

Positively Red

Admission is free before 9pm and £3 thereafter. 50% of pre sales will go to Aids Awareness Week please buy from Aid rep's or imperialcollegeunion.org

buy your eTicket online now at imperialcollegeunion.org/ents

Vodka and draught mixer £1.25 all night in all bars.

ALSO ON THIS FORTNIGHT

Fri 24th	The Mingle
Tue 28th	Da Vinci's - Quiz Night
Wed 29th	Sports Night - 18-30 Holiday Reps
Thu 30th	Salsa World Music
Fri 1st	Subred
Tue 5th	Da Vinci's - Quiz Night
Wed 6th	Sports Night - ACC Bar Night
Thu 7th	Alternative Music Night

imperialcollegeunion.org/ents

Imperial College Union, Beit Quadrangle, Prince Consort Road, London SW7 2BB
The Union encourages responsible drinking. R.O.A.R. Student I.D. Required.



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SMIRNOFF

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The Union encourages responsible drinking. R.O.A.R. Student I.D. Required.

 imperial
college
union

Windsurfers sail away with victory

Niall Thomson

Autumn has to be my favorite time of year; the leaves turning, conker competitions and, of course, it's often very windy! Because of the fantastic conditions this is a hectic time for the windsurf club with weekly events taking us all over the country: Cornwall, Cardiff, Poole and Nottingham all in the last month, with Cambridge this weekend and Exeter coming hot on its heels.

Having focused on the beginners at the awesome Aussie Kiss festival in Cornwall (all 700 of them) it was the turn of the advanced sailors to show their skills at the Cardiff wave event over the bonfire night weekend.

Unfortunately the wave series didn't start with the eagerly anticipated bang as the wind decided not to blow. Instead we got a final glimpse of summer in November; many thanks to global warming!*

Donning out favorite board shorts for probably the final time this year Imperial dominated the sun filled weekend. Highlights included an Imperial one-two, from Chris and Alex, in the land-boarding speed challenge, team victories in the beach volleyball and ultimate Frisbee competitions, then wowing the crowds and drinking de Apple Fizz as mock rock band Full Power played at the eurotrash-themed party. Honour Imperialite Lidl Miss Lucy won best costume (a surprisingly classy affair made entirely of Lidl Bags).

A special mention must go to Chris who somehow forward

looped a mountain board, attached to windsurf sail, on a flat beach with very little wind to aid take-off.

Most importantly though, we demonstrated our engineering prowess by running away with the sand castle competition, bringing Egypt to Wales, building not only the Pyramids but also a replica Sphinx. If you fancy getting a bit closer to the real thing, as well as some sunshine and wicked windsurfing, the windsurf club will be running a trip suitable for all levels to Egypt during the Easter holidays; contact Chris for more information at chris@imperialwindsurf.co.uk.

Following the success of the Cardiff weekend the whole club were reunited for the first Student Windsurf Association (SWA) core event of the season. SWA events are designed to let windsurfers of all levels meet up, windsurf, then party the night away which is exactly what we did in Nottingham (and this time it was windy)!

With a solid force 5 blowing and a good sized chop ripping across the reservoir, the windsurfers threw themselves out there with passion; what better way is there to clear your head in the morning?

Again Imperial dominated competition, as well as being the first university on the water. Notable high-lights included: a top 5 place for Chris in a highly competitive Freestyle competition, a 2nd and 3rd in the advanced racing for Chris and Niall and top 5 places in the intermediate fleet for Jahn and Jake - and this was Jahn's first SWA event!



Giant windsurfers flatten ancient Egyptian landmarks. Or maybe the landmarks are just far away

What did the Romans ever do for us? Toga, toga, toga! To celebrate another Saturday, 200 windsurfers graced Nottingham in evening wear- fashioned from bed sheets, safety pins, leaves, a toy sword or two and a smidgen of face paint. I think it will suffice to say for now it was fun... wasn't it, Jake? Yvonne?

The Imperial windsurf club is going from strength to strength this year; making an impact not only on the dance floor but also at top com-

petitions. For this we have to thank the Union for its support, allowing the purchase of high quality equipment which allows us to compete at the top levels where we couldn't in the past; long may it continue. With 4 fully qualified instructors and many old hands happy to throw a tip your way, the windsurf club provides the ideal environment for people to take the first steps in the sport or show off their skills to an educated audience. If you like what

you hear and would like some further information please contact us at committee@imperialwindsurf.co.uk or pop along to our weekly socials.

* The windsurf club does not endorse the abuse of our planet, in fact, far from it; every SWA event is carbon neutral making sure we don't leave an unwanted footprint on our future.

Lack of backs causes IC 3rds a lot of pain

Mens Rugby



Sussex	25
ICURFC 3rd XV	19

Oliver Bevis

After last week's hard victory, the IC 3rds arrived at Fortress Harlington, fired up for another battle.

IC's kicker Antoine got the game going with a good boot into the Sussex half, where IC managed to keep the ball in Sussex territory for the first 20 minutes of the game. But, after this almost promising start, the IC's play started to go down hill. Sussex shipped the ball out to a strong runner in their back line who, after a couple of missed tackles, managed to touch the ball down for his team. Following this, things became pretty dark; the home team making more mistakes than a dyslexic trying to copy out the dictionary.

IC seemed to be giving away pointless penalties every minute, to the extent that captain Ben Thompson a.k.a. Pork Chop Loin (PCL) received a mini bollocking from the referee for it. Despite this, IC managed only to concede one more try before half time, which the Sussex kicker failed to convert despite it being taken from a position where even the average prop forward could have made it.

The team knew there was an almighty half-time bollocking on the

cards; Coach Dave did not fail to deliver. Apparently it was like watching fifteen "raving homosexuals", finishing up saying the 3rds needed to "fuck off back out there and grow a pair."

The words of wisdom seemed to work; after an almighty charge from Imperial and some very sexy rucking, captain PCL dived over the line for our first try, which was cleanly converted. This lifted spirits and heads were held very high as IC returned to their half. Unfortunately Sussex got a very lucky bounce from the kick and managed to touch it down under the posts within two minutes of the restart.

The game slowed down a notch and IC began to dominate up front, the wheeling of the scrum that had happened last game (mainly thanks to monster prop 'Satcho Relaxo') and during the first half had turned into a full on drive over the ball, which produced many turnovers. IC's domination was confirmed following a line out mid-way through the half. A clean take from Nicolas jumping at four then, as directed by Penfold, the forward bound round and drove the maul just under half way up the pitch. Upon reaching the line the ball went through Penfold to our flamboyant Frenchy Antoine who dived in low for a try in the corner. Unfortunately IC failed to convert.

The remainder of the match was very close fought, both subsequent Sussex tries were runs by the backs, around the wings; where



IC thirds taking a line out; surely that's going to hurt that gentleman's downstairs mixup? It looks painful

they managed to break tackles and get through.

Soon after the second of these, IC were rewarded with another seven points, scored due to a hard tackle-breaking run by Charlie, something that he, along with fellow forward turned centre Sam, had been executing all game.

This left IC, in the final ten minutes, with only a three point deficit. Both teams seemed to wake up to the fact that this match was still anybody's, and the intensity raised accordingly. We seemed to be pushing

up to their line slowly; unfortunately, after a turnover, a Sussex boot sent the ball back into our territory.

The defence of this kick was a little scrappy and a stupid penalty was awarded in front of the posts for use of hands in the ruck. This did not dampen IC spirit; the restart saw some super rolling forward play; helped along with good strength from PCL and our Brown Bullet Satcho.

In the last few phases of play, PCL secured himself twat of the match with a dive over the line from the

back of the scrum to put the ball down. Unfortunately, in the heat of the moment, he confused the five metre with the try line causing Sussex, along with everyone else, much amusement.

Through the final minutes, we kept on fighting in vain with the game ending with Sussex kicking the ball out of play.

The mood was extremely sombre in the après match huddle, with more words from Coach Dave, leaving us with a lot of sorrows to drown at the Palais later that evening.

Rugby 1sts triumph over Bucks 1sts

Men's Rugby



Bucks Chilterns 1st XI 11
ICURFC 1st XI 17

Alexander Johnstone

After the previous week's poor performance against South Bank, the team were anxious to improve and prove the true ability of the squad. Similarly to last week, Imperial came out all guns blazing to score an early try through, fresher, Dan.

Fletcher couldn't quite make the kick, but it seemed like Imperial meant business. Unfortunately, from the restart the Bucks side tackled strongly and, with some impressive counter rucking, turned over a lot of balls they shouldn't have been allowed. Their efforts were soon rewarded a couple of minutes later, when they slotted a penalty in front of the posts.

With the backs trading kicks, after the restart, it fell to Rob Phillips to make some good penetrative runs, feeding both wings to make some much needed yardage. However well the backs were playing, the forwards just weren't providing an adequate platform for them to play off. The lineout was uncharacteristically poor, with both wayward throwing and static jumping, the Bucks team deservedly took possession of the ball.

It became increasingly difficult for the backs to do much with the ball as the team was constantly pinned in our own half. The larger Bucks pack was making it hard to win any set piece and it was inevitable that eventually we would concede another score. It came from a scrappy passage of play with some very poor first tackles from both the Imperial forwards and backs. Eventually Bucks found the space to move the ball out wide. The only consolation from this score being that the forwards had held out against numerous attempts at catch and drives; something that had been worked on extensively during Monday's training.



Imperial set up for another movement general attack against a bewildered opponent; the ref looks on, bemused and slightly off balance

With 25 minutes gone, team coach, Joycey drew on his international experience (Swedish ladies) to take the decision to make the back row more dynamic. With the departure of Flannan (noticeably unfit and a little overweight) it fell to fresher James Petit to bare the burden of the no. 7 shirt.

The second half closed itself out with the departure of fresher and team mullet Dan sustaining a suspected dislocated-relocated ankle. Dan, in noticeable pain, decided to try and walk off from one side of the pitch to the other slowing up proceedings, but giving the Imperial forwards a much needed water break. His replacement, Tom Carroll, seemed eager and ready for his second 1st team appearance.

The second half started similarly to the first with Imperial building 3 or 4 good phases before fresher James Audford cut through the centres to score a confidence boosting try. The kick was missed, leaving the score at 10-8 in IC's favour.

Something stirred within the Bucks team, and they really began to make their weight advantage pay, taking scrums and line outs at will. It became evident if Imperial were not prepared to man-up in their tackling, it would be costly and the game would be lost.

After sustained pressure and numerous catch and drives the Bucks team were close to the Imperial line, some strong defending (only near our try line) prevented a try. Special mention should go to Andjit who managed to hold up one or two try attempts.

Bucks were eventually rewarded for their efforts and a cheap penalty in front of the posts gave them 3 more points; letting them nudge into the lead 11-10. It was as if the fight was out of Imperial as Bucks reinstated their physical superiority and had us pinned back in our half. But for a massive let off, where one of the Bucks players dropped the ball as he attempted to put it down over the line, the match

would surely have been taken out of contention. Only then did Imperial realise the embarrassment that would ensue if they were to be beaten by a side that boasted course titles such as "International football management".

As the half started to close out, Nathan a.k.a the second heaviest man in the squad (after Jov) was brought on in the centres for Fletcher. He made an immediate impact both in the tackle and contact area. Luke Taylor replaced Owen in the front row and gave the scrum some much needed stability. With slightly better platform, and the Bucks heavies starting to tire, the team started to play some better rugby. Fresher Joseph my balls-are-more-golden-than-Fletcher's Brown made a fantastic charge down in the Bucks 22, only to be blinded by his own hair covering his eyes. The look of surprise on his face, as he somehow caught the ball and attempted to scramble for the line, was only matched

by Nathan's look of disgust as Joe delayed the off load until he had managed to trip himself up. Luckily Nathan managed to hold onto the pass and crash over the line; for his troubles some Bucks players felt it compulsory to jump on him. With minutes to go Imperial typically took our collective feet off the gas, conceding territory to Bucks and finding ourselves yet again fighting at our try line. With Bucks needing a converted try, a lineout wasn't an option, so after gaining a penalty opted for the scrummage. Finally the pack turned up and a good shove gave Luke Taylor the opportunity to cheekily kick the ball out the scrum, the scrappy play that proceeded resulted in a knock on by Bucks. The ref saw this a suitable moment to end the game. Imperial, just the victors at 17-11, have a lot of work to do if we expect to hold our position in the league. Andjit was the only player to work hard in all areas, thoroughly deserved his second man of the match this season.

King's Medicals enjoy a good bashing from IC

Men's Football



GKT Men's 2nd 1
IC Men's 5th 3

Sam Styles

With four games of the season gone, IC's favourite football team stood at a cross-road. Played four; won 2, lost 2. The result of this match would determine whether 5ths had won 3 and lost 2 or vice versa, which meant that it was literally a quite important game. The opposition before us - GKT 2's - had demolished IC's 4th team 8-1 the previous week, and even though we all know that the fourth team aren't really up to much (3-0, 3-2 - James Skeen, Paul Notshark, Mike Pursey: your boys took one hell of a beating; twice) it was with a degree of trepidation that we approached this game.

The first 20 minutes went as pre-

dicted - GKT's classy team ripping the 5th's apart. I think goalkeeper GAAARRRRYYY put it best when he said "er, lads, they're having too many shots..." Desperate defending seemed to be the order of the day, as GAAARRRRYYY kept us in the game with a string of fine saves - including a full length dive to tip a free kick around the post.

With the score (somehow) still at 0-0 after half an hour; captain Gui made a surprise tactical change worthy of Claudio Ranieri himself. Removing the very impressive Sam and Chris from a narrow midfield and bringing on himself and Umut, and switching from a 4-1-3-2 formation to a traditional 4-4-2 had an immediate impact as Gui scored with his first touch after a great through ball by "Classy" Matty Smith.

It was completely against the run of play but never mind - IC were in front!

An ordinary football team might have attempted to cling on until

half time; but IC 5th's are no ordinary football team. Allowing GKT to pressurise us further; we again hit them on the break as the ball broke to Matty in the area and he won a strong 50-50 challenge with the keeper before rolling the ball into an unguarded net - 2-0 IC at half-time.

IC's inspirational half time team talk from QPR's "Robbo" helped to bring GKT back into the game as literally seconds after the interval the otherwise flawless GAAARRRRYYY's hesitation turned a seemingly innocuous long ball into a pin point pass to leave the GKT striker to roll the ball into an empty net.

Game on. At this point the game could really have got away from IC; but luckily James "Long" ran onto a "long" ball almost immediately after the GKT goal, and made no mistake to slot the ball past the keeper with a quite "long" shot. After this (metaphorical) hammer blow, GKT



Imperial footballers employing disgusting diversionary tactics

began to lose their shape and discipline and IC looked the most likely scorers for the remainder of the game.

A combination of Scott "The self-proclaimed Animal" Mackenzie's incredible sliding challenge, "Citizen Snipps" Ed Lobb's amazing goal line clearance and excellent

linesmanship from Sam "no nickname" Styles ensured that IC held on for a famous 3-1 win.

An excellent display all round, but special praise goes to the back 5; GAAARRRRYYY, Scott, Toby, Snipps and Graham who coped excellently with a quick and skilful GKT side.

Hockey girls strike like lightning

RSM Ladies Hockey

RSM 1st XI	1
Royal Holloway 3rd XI	0

Charlotte Atteck

The RSM Ladies turned out for their first match of the season on Saturday at home against Royal Holloway 3rds.

Although the opposition tried their hardest to intimidate us with their 20 minute warm up session, we casually looked on from the side lines with a bottle of White Lightning to keep us warm, in true RSM fashion.

From the start it was clear who the dominant side were, as we kept possession in their half for the first 15 minutes of the game. There were several great runs for goal by the newly recruited Miss Willy, "Ka'ie frm Lu'on" and Dasha, who all worked beautifully upfront throughout the game.

Encouraging words such as "Who's got the fucking post?" and "Who's covering this bitch?" could be heard throughout the match from MJ Spammy, in goal, who was awarded champagne moment for her stunning acrobatic skills in goal, including a split save in the second half that would have made the crudest of you blush.

Towards the end of the first half the lung burn had set in for most. The tables may have turned had it not been for the amazing efforts of The Crowther, in defence, who easily regained and dispersed any balls that came our way with the skill and power that we mortals can simply dream about.

The score at half time was still nil-nil, which did not reflect the effort the entire team was making but was more a reflection of the bias umpiring (Mikey and Pikey - tut tut!) that took place through out the game (was that 20 short corners?).



Something is deeply, deeply, wrong with this picture. Can you spot what it is? If you are, you're sharper than a number of the Felix team

After a brief tactical meeting at half time we were back on the pitch, coming on strong and looking to get our goal. It came soon after half time; a stunning hit from The Crowther to Els Bells in midfield, who passed it onto the Willy, who spanked it to Ka'ie on the post, who brought home the goal!

With 20 minutes to go and a slowly

dying team, we could have struggled, but for the defensive efforts of Dawn, Kate, Alice C, Elly and Ally who repeatedly kept Holloway at bay. Special mention to Alice R who ran out every short corner (yes, all 20 of them!) making sure they weren't successful.

All in all a fantastic start to the season; special thanks to the boys who

stuck around to cheer us on, and to Pikey and Mikey for umpiring.

Man of the Match was a close call between Sara and Welshy but Willy got the last vote which secured her the dirrrrrty pint. I'd like to thank everyone for turning up and putting in such an amazing effort. There wasn't a single slacker on the team (apart from me) which is great go-

ing, and we can't wait until the next match!

A note from Alice Rowlands, Sports Editor: Charlotte was not "slacking"; she was working bloody hard throughout the whole match, hence the rather red face she was sporting following the match! (See above)

AdLib

by Tevong You

