

RCSU protest outside

College Estates go back on a decision to give the RCSU a new office on the walkway instead of their "broom cupboard"

Andy Sykes
Editor-in-chief

The Royal College of Science Union (RCSU), which represents students at Imperial College on natural science degrees, has found itself without a suitable office after College Estates decided to go back on a decision to award them space on the walkway.

Students walking across Dalby Court on Tuesday morning were greeted with the sight of the entire RCSU executive, plus hangers-on, camped outside the Faculty Building with a sofa, desk, computer, and fax machine. Also present in an official capacity were John Collins (Union President), Jon Matthews (Deputy President, Finance & Services), and Ben Harris (Deputy President, Education & Welfare).

The current RCSU 'office' is located in the Blacklett Lab entrance, in the seating area. The RCSU President, Jad Marrouche, has referred to it as "a cupboard". They also have some space in the Sir Alexander Fleming building. The other two faculty unions (CGCU, representing engineers, and ICSMSU,

representing medics) both have sizable offices close to the students they are representing.

Before the Christmas break, the RCSU were shown two locations as possible new offices to replace the space they currently have. The first was the old print shop on the walkway, which has recently been vacated.

The second was in Princes Gate, on the other side of Exhibition Road. The room is currently being used as "temporary storage for cleaners", possibly College-speak for a broom cupboard.

Naturally, the RCSU executive preferred the room on the walkway, which is close to their students, and sizable. The proposed space in Princes Gate is reported to be in bad condition, as is the access route. Additionally, the office is far out of the way.

It seemed that an agreement had been reached that the RCSU could have the space on the walkway, with Estates staff sending an email reading: "This space was used by commercial tenants and I shall inform you when the legal issues for the transfer of the space are final-

ised so that you can start moving your equipment."

However, it appears Estates had second thoughts. At a meeting of the esoterically named "Space Executive", College decided to allocate the basement space in Princes Gate to the RCSU, and to give the walkway room to ICT, who manage the computer systems for the College.

The protest was organised after pleas for the decision to be reversed fell on deaf ears. Though the Rector, Sir Richard Sykes, was not present as he is out of the country, a number of key College officials came to the windows of the Blue Cube to wave at the protesters below. These included Tony Mitcheson (College Secretary), Martin Knight (Faculty of Natural Science Principal), and Chris Towler (who chaired the meeting where the decision was made). Mr Towler came down later to talk to the protesters.

The Deputy Rector, Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, stopped to chat amicably with the assembled students on his way to lunch, though he stopped short of signing the paper petition.

Staff upset at new Ethos pricing



Swimmers in the Ethos swimming pool, swimming

College staff have expressed concerns about the pricing of access to the new Ethos sports centre.

Initially, the sports centre was available for use by everyone, staff and students, for free - this was thanks to money 'left over' from the construction, obtained from various funding bodies including the National Lottery. Staff, however, are finding the new Ethos pricing scheme unwieldy. In order to use the building, they must pay an annual cost of £216 which is taken from their salaries on a monthly basis. This suits staff who use the centre frequently, but has upset a number of staff that use the sports centre on a more casual basis. Without paying the annual fee, there is no way they can use the facilities, as no 'pay as you go' system exists.

Members of staff that contacted Felix have used the example of departmental football games. These are often organised on a purely casual basis, with a fee being paid for the hire of one of the courts to play on. However, with the new system, any member of staff who wishes to play, even if they only play once a year, must pay the full £216 fee. This also means that the staff will pay Ethos twice; once for the hire of the room, and once more for the right to use the facilities.

One member of staff who spoke to Felix commented: "We have always anticipated having to pay for use of the sports centre once the free period was over." He went on to question the logic of forcing any staff member who wants to use the facility, even if only on a casual basis, to pay £216, saying: "If I only swim a few times a year, it is an awful lot."

There are also concerns how this will impact members of College staff who are on minimum wage.

Felix contacted Neil Mosley, Head of Sport Imperial, for comment. "When we looked at a suitable charging policy for the new Centre one of our major objectives was to provide value to money to staff by minimizing the administrative costs of collecting any fees.

I am sure you will agree that £18 per month for unlimited use of a very modern gym and pool for a keep fit enthusiast represents terrific value and over 400 staff have now signed up as members of Club Imperial. Having said that I recognise that the one group that have been affected are occasional swimmers." He added: "we will be looking at pool use and seeing if we can incorporate a scheme for occasional use. If we are able to make such a move we will ensure that it is widely publicised."



The assembled throng, complete with office furniture, couches, and semi-functional computer

felix 1,369
Friday 19.1.07

More angry people

"Obviously the little twat is fucking happy to do this because he doesn't suffer. Of course not, the cheeky fucker ponces around and flounces his fat arse about at the taxpayers expense so blatantly he's not going to complain".

PAGE 6

Stinking television

"The New Year's TV schedules wasted no time in reviving our seasonal obsession with obesity and health, capitalising as ever on the guilt associated with the traditional festive excess."

PAGE 10

Menswear history

"Menswear catwalks have never had much credibility compared to their female counterparts."

PAGE 11



Word Association
CENTRE PAGES

Indie gaming devs

"One of the contributors to the group was Introversion, the self-titled 'last of the bedroom coders', and acclaimed breakthrough coders of *Uplink*, *Darwinia* and *DEFCON*."

PAGE 16

New clubs and socs

"As 2007 begins, there's a whole host of brand spanking new societies for you to join. Those listed were not available to join at the beginning of the academic year since each was merely a foetus in the clubs and societies' womb."

PAGE 18

Page twenty-fore!

"Recently, a small group of members attempted a trip south of the river to a golf club in Surrey."

PAGE 24



INVISIBLE SANDWICH

Imperial College London

Be sure
to enter the
Launch Day Draw!

Centenary Launch Day Tuesday 30 January

2007 marks the Centenary of Imperial College London. During our *100 years of living science* we have made a significant impact on the world. In 2007 we'll celebrate our achievements, and reflect on what we've done, and where we're going.

Come and enjoy the launch of our celebration.

► **Free Centenary Cake
During the Day**

Cake will be served at all campuses — for locations visit the Centenary website.

► **Centenary Launch
Day Prize Draw**

Prizes include: • video iPod containing Imperial vodcasts • £100 travel vouchers • £100 book tokens • £100 off membership or activities at *Ethos* • 100 chocolate bars • 100 free cups of coffee at catering outlets • 10 bottles of Imperial College Centenary wine • Centenary USB memory sticks.

To enter email your name to:

Centenary@imperial.ac.uk

Please submit all prize draw entries by **16.00 on Friday 2 February 2007.**

► **Guided Tours of Queen's Tower**

Tours of the tower will take place throughout the day. Being one of the tallest towers west of London, the Queen's Tower enjoys an uninterrupted view in all directions. Don't miss this rare opportunity to visit the viewing gallery.

► **Centenary
Launch Lecture**

Sir Richard Sykes will launch the Centenary with the first prestigious lecture of 2007. There will be live jazz music from Imperial musicians before the lecture.

Time: 18.00 • The Great Hall, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

For free tickets, please email **events@imperial.ac.uk**

Not able to attend the lecture? It will be streamed live on the Centenary website.

► **Stay Informed**

If you would like details of Imperial College London's events delivered directly to your inbox every fortnight, please email **events@imperial.ac.uk**

www.imperial.ac.uk/Centenary

100 years of living science

100

Thailand's time of turmoil

Li-Teck Lau

Over a century ago, the Siam regime based in Bangkok annexed the southern provinces of what is known today as Thailand. It has since been under their administration, but violence still erupts amidst the jungle, palm trees and sandy beaches, as unhappy Islamic insurgents battle for independence from the predominately Buddhist state.

In the last three years, the conflict has claimed the lives of 1,800 people, and has blanketed the region in a thick fog of fear. There have been several instances when a villager's head was removed and placed in clear public view, warning anyone else foolish enough to open shop on a Friday that they faced a similar fate. Of course the government intervened and told people not to fear; to open their shops on that sacred Islamic day, and to not be terrorised by such acts of terrorism.

But the situation, deaths, carnage and all, in Thailand's problematic south, triggered a greater political upheaval in the nation's capital. The metaphorical scalp of billionaire Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was taken whilst holidaying in sunny England in the form of a bloodless coup. Evidentially the demos of the country had had enough of promises to wrap up the issue in a colourful bow tie and send it off into the history books, but instead provoking greater troubles and letting prisoners roast to death on the backs of transport lorries. Thaksin Shinawatra was obviously to blame, and by September 19 2006, he was removed in favour of a king-backed military commander.



Former Thailand President Thaksin Shinawatra who was overthrown in a bloodless coup in 2006

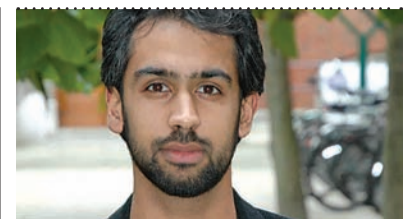
That is a significant issue as the king of Thailand is much loved and admired, and what he says, generally goes. Shinawatra on the other hand, has been described as slimy and incumbent; he faced much of the same ridicule as Tony Blair and Sven Goran Eriksson did here in Britain. That they promised much - 'Education, education, education' and footballing glory, but all have failed dramatically. Ex education secretary Ruth Kelly cannot even bare to send her children to a state school.

The weekend saw another couple of people die in southern Thailand.

Two beheadings and one motorcycle shooting. And the discussion on the New Year's Eve bombing in Bangkok itself, which also killed 3 and injured 38, over whether or not the deposed leader had a hand in the event, continues. Some say it was an effort to discredit his successors. What is clear is that Thaksin denies it, and that PM Surayud says it was the doing of 'those who had lost power'. As yet, the insurgents have kept their activity within the region that they demand independence for, barring the aforementioned city strike.

Thailand's image as a safe and

friendly tourist destination is under threat from such unwelcome publicity. 6% of the country's GDP arises from the sector. There were no significant cancellations or drop in visitor numbers after the military take over, but the future is again uncertain with continuing attacks, and violence moving into the city. In general however, it's probably best to stay clear of the south. The rest of the nation; Phuket, Krabi, Chang Mai, James Bond Island and, heck, even Bangkok, is as safe as houses, so long as national telecoms selling billionaire ex Prime Ministers stay in Beijing.



Omar Hashmi
Politics Editor

Good morning everybody. It is time once again to relax, grab that soothing tea or coffee, put your feet up and phase out into the world of international news, disasters, wars, espionage and (hopefully some) politics. Whoever said that you couldn't think about the world and actually know what's going on? (Well, at least think that you do)

I tried so hard not to start with THAT man, but being at the helm of the most mighty military machine in Humanity's history, you just can't miss him. I know that this "mighty organ" tries, but Felix can't stand up to an entire state (even Americans - oh just let the hatred pass).

President George W has certainly been busy, and after a big jolt from his mates Baker and Hamilton we got: "The Bush Administration has recently announced plans to increase U.S. forces in Iraq by 20,000 troops". So much for a radical change of action - surely isn't that just going to make it worse? Cooperation with Iraq and Syria? - Na, thanks though. The New Vietnam will continue until Iraq is secure and regionally placid to US Will.

One wonders what would happen if there were moves from the Iraqi government to ally with Iran, or if there was a "democratically elected" government, i.e. in free and fair elections, whose views the US government despised. Would the international community and its leading states recognise this state? Perhaps not.

The recent demise in Somalia of the Union of Islamic Courts is an example where the War on Terror has been used to frame foreign policies with no regard except to national interests and away from the perceived "Islamist Threat". Ethiopian troops have virtually no credence with the people in Somalia. Yet, security and just governance do not matter where state policies are deemed unfit, even if it means that western states help and fund the brutal war-lords that are now in charge of Somalia.

I am just sick of domestic politics. I mean really, for how long has the Home office been broken? I'm sure that the problem is systemic, and the frequency of new problems in reporting crime, tracking offenders and the immigrant population of Britain has been increasing for as long as I can remember. Any beast as big as the NHS or Home Office has a multitude of problems. I don't want any scapegoats any more. If you have the job, just do what you want for two years. Go on - get some kahootspa and just dictatorially change whatever you want. If each an every politician feels that he is going to be unpopular if he does ANYTHING meaningful, then for God's sake is anything going to change?

Of course, giving away that much power does undermine every tenant of democracy that there probably is. I'd like to see a better way if they know one, and in all honesty, they clearly don't.

Migrant contributions to Britain

Alexander Guite outlines the latest conundrums in the immigration debate

Only three weeks into the new year and already 2007 is proving to be a confusing time to be an immigrant in Britain. Romanians and Bulgarians were welcomed into the European Union on New Year's Day by the Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett who stressed the benefits their accession will bring to Britain. But before the celebrations in Bucharest and Sofia could be cleaned up, the Home Secretary John Reid was restricting the right of the new EU citizens to work in the UK, amid fears of "mass migration".

Within a few days there were more mixed messages when the Government claim that immigrants add four billion pounds a year to the economy was challenged by Migration Watch UK. The anti-immigration think-tank analysed Government data to produce a report which concluded with the mouthful that "immigrants only contribute four pence per person per week to economic growth", or as they put it more succinctly in their press release, a benefit "equivalent to a Mars bar a month".

They contended that previous efforts to assess the value of migration had failed to consider population increase alongside the measured economic expansion. With this taken into account, their analysis claimed that the benefit



The Home Office building at 2 Marsham Street, London

per head is then only marginal.

For migrants, the roller coast ride continued. Two days after Migration Watch asserted they were of little value to anyone in Britain, came a Bank of England report which claimed that immigration has bought substantial economic benefits to Britain. David Blanchflower, from the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee, argued that by producing less than they consume migrants have kept inflation in check. Moreover, he noted that there is "little evidence" of immi-

grants contributing to unemployment amongst Britons. Indeed, by taking jobs that many Britons are reluctant to do, migrants have reduced the rate of joblessness, in turn allowing interest rates to stay down.

Just as it looked like the murky waters of the immigration debate were clearing, the consultancy firm Capital Economics threw in a new report and some extra handfuls of mud. They published estimates that immigration is far higher than Government figures show. In

2005 for instance, the consultancy claimed that 780,000 people emigrated to Britain, against the official figure of 564,000. Accounting for their estimate of how many people left, they arrive at an estimate of 400,000 for net immigration, against only 156,000 according to Government figures. If you don't know the number immigrants, how can you even begin to assess their economic impact?

Amongst all these competing claims about whether immigrants' financial score card falls out in the black or the red, the wider social debates about assimilation and integration haven't stopped either.

Indeed, 2007 is unlikely to see a consensus emerge on immigration. European and London Assembly elections will provide platforms for anti-immigration parties such as UKIP and the far right BNP to make their voices heard. The threat of the BNP actually gaining a seat in the London Assembly is very real: under proportional representation they need little over five percent of the vote to be elected.

So more confusing times for migrants ahead and with little consensus about their contribution to Britain, it seems there will be only one certainty in this debate this year: that immigration will remain as politically controversial as ever.

Comment & Opinion

An ode to Ken Livingstone

In the past few years the Mayor of London has stood accused of making racist remarks, and is a polarising figure in London politics. **Kat Fu** vents her spleen on the subject of transport, politics, and traffic wardens



Kat Fu

"It needs to be homed into your head why this man is such a tool"

Let me share with you the truth about Ken Livingstone (Mayor of London) because to be fair, not enough people know why this man is such a cunt and deserves such absolute hatred. I'm going to focus mainly on the bastard that is Ken purely because I feel that by now most people know Tony Blair is a downright fool but some ignoramuses have mixed opinions on Ken whereby some think he's a legend, and it needs to be homed into your heads why this man is such a tool.

Ken has no fucking clue what he is doing...first of all, his sense of identity is totally fucked up and lacking (like his hair and good looks) He claims he is "moderate" (in my opinion he is more of an extreme socialist bordering on communist) but he does the stupid thing of coyly raising the price of public transport to such an extent that sometimes you think he is trying to screw the last shred of money out of all those poor souls who are far from well off. What the fuck is he doing? Seriously, £4 for a single journey is ridiculous. Is he having a laugh?

Obviously the little twat is fucking happy to do this because he doesn't suffer. Of course not, the cheeky fucker ponces around and flounces his fat arse about at the taxpayers

expense so blatantly he's not going to complain. I'd love to see the day he gets a normal oyster card, tops it up with £20 (which to some of us, namely students, unwealthy people, stingy rich people, is a LOT of money) and see it get used up within a few days. Yes I'd love to see his face if that day ever came, his tiny slitty eyes screwing up and becoming even smaller than they already are if that is even possible? I'm imagining it to myself now (it's not a pretty sight so actually, I'd rather not see his face). I'd rather he just do everyone a big favour and lower the fucking prices of public transport which I feel can't really be deemed public anymore because there are fuck loads of citizens who find themselves unable to pay for the extreme and extortionate cost.

Totally going off on one here, but if you have a sneaky little peak at pictures of Ken, you can see that he has progressively gone from skinny to a little chubby to now full on lardy. In my opinion this is due not only to the fact that he is so fucking smug that he can pass any law and get away with it, but also his incredible ability to sponge off all the free food and alcohol that he gets during meetings. Labour is so fucking sly. They claim to be all eco friendly but how seriously can we take all this

sanctimonious eco-waffle from the government with John "2-Jags" Prescott belching out CO2 in addition to all the methane emitted by that overfed fat prick of a Mayor we have?

"What the fuck is he doing? Seriously, £4 for a single journey is ridiculous. Is he having a laugh?"

Another beast of an issue that needs to be raised is the topic of how to get rid of the cunts that are otherwise known as clampers/traffic wardens/cretins/saps/twats/pussys/morosophs/buffoons/muggers/clowns/bozos/flibbertigibbets. Lets take the necessary urgent action against these simpletons by eliminating them one by one. Let's bugger the fuck out of them! Lets face it they deserve it! They've fucked so many people over including me (many a time). I quote from

a little something I wrote once upon a time: "can that fucker Ken maybe think about employing traffic wardens and clampers that can actually READ? My car was clamped on a Sunday when the sign next to it clearly said the restrictions were for Monday to Saturday? Sunday was not mentioned at all." Due to such troglodyte, knuckle-dragging incompetence from these so-called "public servants" I offer the postulate that these people are less evolved than the rest of us.

I am fed up with this government. What is the point of throwing money at the NHS when they cause me and so many others to get angry and develop a variety of health defects that will require expensive treatments we wouldn't have otherwise needed?

Coronary heart disease, severe hypertension, rapid heart palpitations, shooting crushing chest pains, early dementia, parkinsons (due to all the irrationality that is going on in this nation), strokes, all caused by the cuntin' Labour party. Seriously now, what the fuck? Give us a break guys. Our faces already go fucking red with alcohol, give us a chance of looking normal at other sober times! Especially you Ken, fucker! Get on the treadmill you fat turd.

Is nationality still a relevant concept today?



Valerio Chang

"Where you were born shouldn't matter, we are all part of one big world"

In this society of multiculturalism and globalization, what will become the meaning of nationality, what is the importance? And to what extent does it define us and your life?

These questions arose to me when I was browsing through the news from websites back home. As most of you probably don't know, the mayoral elections are taking place in Taiwan, and as all of you know, as all elections go, that is a time for political opponents to diss each other by any conceivable means. Despite the increase in constructive policy debates, and city plans, candidates in this new democracy still find it irresistible to reveal other candidates' dirty laundry.

I've seen them all. And I am glad that tactics such as medical records, unfulfilled military obligation of candidate's children, tax avoidance to mistresses, don't effect the public decision anymore; a good indication of the development of the public resistance to stupid attacks (a mayor with cancer can still govern well, you know!) However, a recent development has truly shocked me: the nationality of not the candidate, but the child and grandchild of the candidate.

I find it stupid that people are concerned whether the mayor's daughter renounces her American nationality, I find it disgusting that pressure is placed upon the Presi-

dent's daughter in law to give birth on Taiwanese soil (she's studying in the US at the moment), and I don't understand why the previous Premier had to recall his son from a foreign country, resulting in him abandoning his lifestyle and perhaps career or education, to win the support of the public.

And I ask, why do people care? Does the fact that I'm living in London, make my father a less capable person to run for office? Or the fact that our President is a grandpa of an American makes him less reliable? I am truly baffled at this. Can't people see that Sonia Gandhi, albeit being Italian to the bone, is participating in India's National Congress? Don't these people see that the Dutch welcomed that fact that they will have an Argentinean Queen? Or that the British Royal Family is partly German?

I ask myself whether it's the fact Asia isn't as international as Europe? Or are the Asians more nationalistic and resist the acceptance of an international community? As an Asian person brought up in a Western World, I am paradoxically unable to answer this question, as my father puts it "you don't understand the public sentiment of the people in Taiwan" (basically "My son, you're not Taiwanese")

One month after writing the previous part, I visited the Tate Modern on the penultimate day of the year.

There was an installation entitled Pacific by a Yukinori Yanagi.

Normally I'm not a modern artist sort of guy, I confessed I don't get and can't appreciate most of the art in Tate Modern; however this installation really struck a cord with me.

It was 49 glass panes with coloured sand trapped in it, the coloured sand formed the flags of 49 nations; all the flags were connected with the glass adjacent to it with a glass straw. We are told that the artist, having prepared this, released thousands of ants into the installation. The ants went

in and carved and nibbled through the sand as if one was observing a elementary school ant farm. The description went on to explain that the ants represented the population, and the flags representing the idea of nation state, and how the interlinking - movement of people of different countries is slowly challenging and disintegrating the solid notion of a homogenous/solitary nation.

I really identified with what the artist wished to express, at the core where your born shouldn't matter, and that we are all part of one big world.

Want to get something off your chest?

Write to:

felix@imperial.ac.uk

Give RCSU their office!



Stephen Brown
Comment Editor

I've always considered protesting as erm... something for the French. When French students go on strike (students striking is an oxy-moron but that is another story) they go and throw bricks at parliament. When we go on strike, the only reason you notice is because the pubs are busier. ICU managed to get about 12 people to attend the top-up fees march last term, hardly a sign of student activism being a major feature in our lives and probably not a sufficient number for the authorities to invoke the modern day equivalent of the Riot Act.

But wait a minute. What's that on the front page? Well, some of us staged a protest, a protest that *Felix* will continue until RCSU get their desired office. The "meeja" (sic) support the scientists in their fight for a decent office. As you may know, the Engineers and Medics have thriving Faculty Union offices in prominent, easily accessible parts of campus whilst RCSU (currently operating out of a broom cupboard) were offered a dingy basement in Princes Gardens, hardly the beating heart of College.

Our friends at the RCSU are naturally not best pleased at this. *Felix* believes that College are not only needlessly inconveniencing students but they are also shooting themselves in the foot as RCSU have done a lot in the few months they have been in existence which has had a huge positive impact on the atmosphere of the College. Have a look at their website. They've organised a freshers ball, several bar nights and a football tournament. On the less frivolous side they also hold regular welfare surgeries whose potential is hamstrung by the aforementioned broom cupboard they are currently soldiering on with. Surely College should be encouraging volunteers who give up their time to enhance the non-academic side of student life for everyone? This demotion is a slap in the face to a group of individuals who, according to the Colleges own website, are giving up their time to run tours of the Queens Tower when the centenary celebrations launch at the beginning of February.

In recognition of the contribution made by the RCSU to College life and their tireless support for both the centenary celebrations and outreach programmes *Felix* are asking that College re-instate their original offer of the room by the Walkway. As far as demands go, its hardly the biggest one that you will ever hear and not the most difficult one to accommodate. It has been commented that the room in Princes Gardens was so far out of the way that you might as well have offered them a room out at Wye! By re-instating the original offer you'll make a lot of people very happy, the same people who you are relying on to contribute towards the success of the centenary launch. Go on, you know you want to! If only in appreciation of the comical value of our makeshift office in Upper Dalby Court staffed by a Union Sabbatical looking out of place wearing some rather snazzy golf gear.

felix

Editor-in-chief Andy Sykes | **Managing Editor** Alex Antonov | **Deputy Editor** Tomo Roberts | **Politics Editor** Omar Hashmi | **Business Editor** Michael Olymbios | **Music Editors** Matthew Hoban, Jenny Gibson, Tom Whitson | **Film Editor** Andrew Somerville | **Arts Editor** Emily Lines | **Fashion Editor** Sarah Skeete | **Comment Editor** Stephen Brown | **Environment Editor** João Vitor Serra | **Clubs & Societies Editor** Kirsty Patterson | **Grammar Nazis** Edmund Henley, Jesse Garman, Besart Robo | **Beardie-in-chief** Hugh Stickley-Mansfield

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 1,369, Friday 19 January 2007. Registered newspaper ISSN 1040-0711. Copyright © Felix 2007.

Resolutions for 2007



Diogo Geraldes

It is pretty standard for people from most cultures to make new year resolutions. It's like a shedding skin for a snake, except that for human beings it doesn't really work! It looks like as if we, like the snake, had an infinite amount of similar layers. Let me explain.

A perfectly common new year's resolution is to lose weight. Even your fellow writer (a.k.a. FatFlaps 3000) that is presenting you this masterpiece of contemporary literature did it! And that's why the gyms are always full of giant pieces of bacon running the shit out of themselves on treadmills or dislocating their shoulder while trying to bench 5kgs. But don't worry fellow vain and brainless buffers: your lovely Ethos will soon be back to normal and you will be able to walk around showing your guns or new 8-pack to all the three girls in the world that actually care.

People also usually try to convince themselves that "Yeah! This year I'll start going to the library and do at least half an hour of work everyday!". This would be perfect and actually work if it wasn't for the small problem that everyone with half the normal amount of sexual hormones needs to go out and hunt for the opposite sex. And this implies, for most people, drinking in moderation, and drinking in moderation implies sex. What a theory! If life was this simple I would have 10 kids right now and made love (notice that I'm not insensible enough to write fuck the shit out of) to as many virgins as there are waiting for suicide bombers in heaven. But unluckily for me and for the fellow-reader-who's-

penis-is-about-to-fall-off-due-to-excessive-self-loving-at-night-while-watching-Rachel's-perfect-boobs-in-Friends life isn't that simple, specially if you come from countries where girls are actually fit. The theory then changes to going out implies drinking, then walking around the club trying to find someone good enough to deflower, drink, walk, drink, drink, drink, walk, drink, cab ride to fuckland, fat girl on top of you (or fat guy), then bang, congratulations! You're a dad! Did you revise that day's lectures at all? No! And you'll probably feel like shit after you wake up missing Mr. Kidney in a bathtub full of ice the next day and won't feel like it either.

Another quite popular resolution is to quit smoking! I have actually witnessed people quitting at midnight and never touch a cigarette again until 10 minutes later I see them smoking like as if their lungs committed crimes against mankind and deserved to be punished! And if they do quit they have to stuff themselves with chocolate and other sweet things like 13 year old teenage

girls who didn't make it in to the cheer-leading squad! Why did most people start smoking? Not because they liked, but definitely because when they were young it was cool to do it. I'm sorry if it isn't anymore, but guess what: you are stuck with a vicious habit that will probably take both your lungs and your right testicle away from you! So don't fight it, just enjoy it while you can!

There are more new year resolutions that I could talk about till your ass feels numb from seating on the toilet for so long, but I think I made my point. They are useless but we still make them anyway! Do we make them to actually try to change our lives and become new people? I do personally think that it is only to make us feel better, newborn, capable of everything, even if for 3 or 4 days.

But I have to stop with this mind ramblings since I have more important things to do: I have my second personal training session after revising today's lectures! Oh, but first I need to stop by the chemist to buy some nicotine patches!



Does the New Year signal the end of smoking biftas for you? Nah, no chance

FRESH

HAIR SALON



CUT & BLOW DRY

ONLY BY EXPERIENCED STYLISTS

£26 LADIES

£20 MEN

Normal Price £48

**NOW 10%
DISCOUNT
ON ALL
COLOURING
SERVICES**

CASH ONLY

**'Still the best student offer in
South Kensington!'**

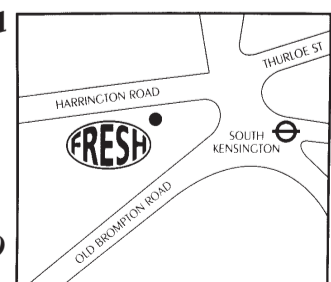
15a Harrington Road

South Kensington

London SW7 3ES

(1 Minute walk from

South Kensington Tube)



Telephone 020 7823 8968
www.freshhairdressers.co.uk

Campaigns, Centenary and Chips

Campaigns

Unsurprisingly perhaps, most students seem to see the Union as the provider of clubs and bars, but we do much more than that. The Union regularly campaigns on students' behalf behind the scenes, both within the College and outside. Some of these campaigns, such as last week's RCSU Office protest, are high profile but many are less visible.

One of the things the Sabbatical team are trying to do this year is raise the profile and effectiveness of campaigns in general. We hope to do this by making sure these campaigns are well resourced, well co-ordinated and well supported.

This term will see the launch of several high profile campaigns including "Green Week", "Fairtrade Fortnight" and an LGBT Awareness week, however, we would like to see more campaigns on more issues in the future. This is why we are working towards creating new dedicated campaign roles within the Union and we are looking for enthusiastic volunteers to take on these roles.

If you are interested in getting involved in campaigning and perhaps even leading a campaign, then please get in touch with Ben Harris, the Union's

Deputy President for Education and Welfare (dpew@imperial.ac.uk). This year we hope to run campaigns on the following issues:

- Anti-Racism: campaigning for better race relations at Imperial.
- Disabled students: working with the College to make it more accommodating for students with disabilities.
- Environmental: campaigning for a greener Imperial, focussing on Green Week this term.
- Ethical: raising awareness of ethical issues amongst Imperial students, focussing on Fairtrade Fortnight this term.
- LGBT: campaigning on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender issues.
- Womens': organising events to encourage women to pursue a career in science, engineering and technology.

However, if you want to propose your own campaign, then please write to Ben or myself. ICU has a reasonable budget for campaigns this year and we are able to provide professional support and advice.

Centenary

Next week the Centenary will really get going with

the build-up to a massive launch on Tuesday 30th January. On that day we will also launch a new Union Centenary website that will advertise every centenary event we plan to hold throughout the rest of the year. If your club or society is planning to hold a centenary event that we don't know about then please contact Shiv Chopra (medic.president@imperial.ac.uk) as soon as possible.

Chips

And finally, an announcement that is long overdue. When I stood for President last year I deliberately didn't promise to introduce chips to the Union simply because I was under the impression that this would be logistically too difficult to do and recent Presidents had made this promise and failed to deliver it. Thanks to hard work by our staff over the Christmas, we are now able to offer chips in the evenings! You can buy a small portion of chips from £1 and potato wedges from £2 any evening from 4:30pm.



John Collins
President

president@imperial.ac.uk

then please contact Shiv Chopra (medic.president@imperial.ac.uk) as soon as possible.

Spent Too Much on Eggnog?

At this time of year many people don't feel themselves. There have been many parties over the festive period, you have probably all been back to your hometown, met up with old friends and seen some of your family for the first time in ages.

Christmas can be a strange time of year, many of you have probably had to buy presents for your family or perhaps some of you may have just had a good time catching up with old friends; either of these cases can be expensive.

As a student it can often be hard to budget for these things after all you have rent to pay, fees, books for education and of course need money to spend on your leisure time, with all this in mind there is always a temptation to borrow money at Christmas to fund your gift buying or your social life.

This money can be borrowed from a bank, personal loans, credit cards or sometimes from friends but there is always a temptation to spend over your limit at the festive time of year we call Christmas. Often after the last mince pie has been eaten and the eggnog has finished, the first credit card bill arrives or your bank is on at you because you are over your overdraft.

The Information and Advice Centre may be able to help if you have over spent your budget at Christmas and now find yourself in a bad financial situation. If you are having problems with credit card companies or your bank, we can work out your income and outgoings and write to these companies

on your behalf to negotiate a payment plan that you can actually afford; we can advocate for you in this situation.

It is also important that you prioritise your money in this situation, something like a credit card debt is not essentially a priority debt. It is best that you look to pay things such as your rent, amenity bills and fees before looking at other debts, this is because if you don't pay these things you will essentially lose something. For example if you don't pay your rent you will be evicted, don't pay gas bill, you will be cut off and if you don't pay your fees you may be asked to leave college.

We can also help if you find you can't afford your fees or rent to the college. We write to the college on behalf of many students and try to explain why you can't afford these debts and also sometimes make offers to them to negotiate a payment plan.

If you find yourself in heavy debt, it is important to tell people what is happening and not bury your head in the sand. Most companies are willing to help if you find you cannot afford to pay them back the money you owe them.

Of course debt isn't just about the money, it can bring on other issues such as stress and worry. These of course, can lead to you not being focused on your academic work. It is important to talk to someone if you feel that the stress of debt is affecting your work.

Your first port of call should be your personal tutor. If you find that they are not helpful or you don't feel comfortable talking to them, then the Information and Advice Centre can talk to your department for you and explain what is happening. We can try to negotiate more time for you to do your projects or at least let them know how you are feeling leading up to an exam.

The college offers financial help in the form of the access to learning fund. This is administered by the student finance office and is for students who have exhausted all other areas of income, not all students will be eligible for this. The Student Support Officer, Phillipa Worley, administers this; you can contact her on : student.support@imperial.ac.uk. The Information and Advice Centre also has some application forms for this fund.

The Information and Advice Centre also gives general budgeting advice to students with regard to how to manage your money more effectively. We can look at your expenditure and advise you on the areas you need to improve spending on.

If you feel you would like to contact the Information and Advice Centre on these issues or any other welfare issues, you can contact us on: 020 7594 8067 or advice@imperial.ac.uk.



Nigel Cooke

Student Adviser
advicet@imperial.ac.uk

A - BADGE-OF-FRIENDSHIP + KIDS WILL BE SKELETONS
.CO.UK

PRESENT ON SATURDAY JANUARY 27TH

RESTLESSLIST

SAMPLE-BASED HIP-HOP MEETS INDIE ROCK. FEATURING MEMBERS OF BRAKES
AND ELECTRIC SOFT PARADE - WWW.MYSPACE.COM/RESTLESSLIST
AND

DOBERMANN

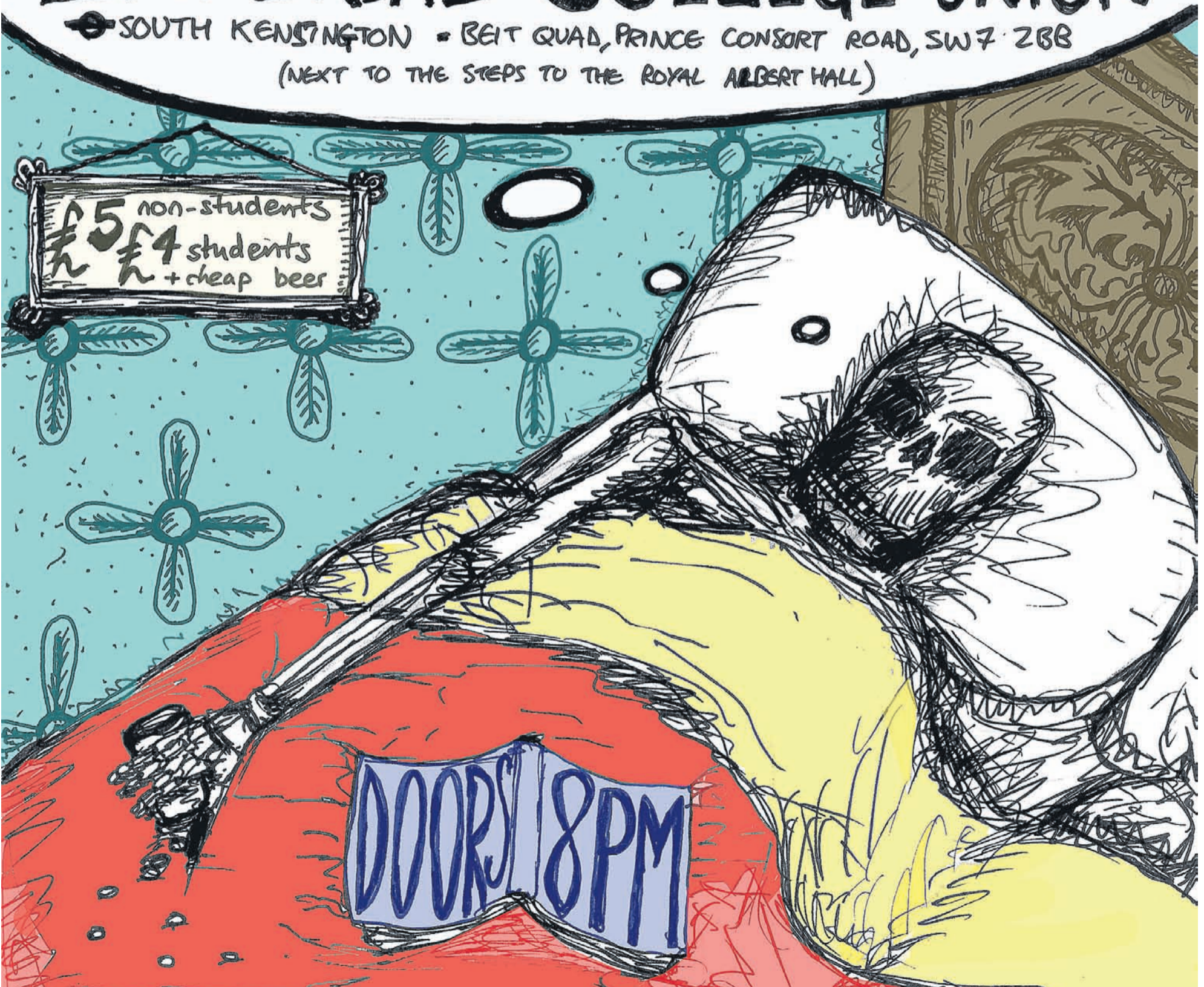
HEAVY RIFFS MIXED WITH EVEN
HARDER BEATS - MYSPACE.COM/THEDOBERMANNBAND

+ GREEN AS A PRIMARY

BEATS, GUITARS, HARMONIES,
ELECTRONICA AND MORE BEATS
- MYSPACE.COM/GREENASAPRIMARY

AT
IMPERIAL COLLEGE UNION

• SOUTH KENSINGTON • BEIT QUAD, PRINCE CONSORT ROAD, SW7 2BB
(NEXT TO THE STEPS TO THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL)



There's a load of crap on TV again

Felix TV comes out of hibernation ready to gorge, but which television celebrity offers the best advice?

Eddie Wawrzynczak

The New Year's TV schedules wasted no time in reviving our seasonal obsession with obesity and health, capitalising as ever on the guilt associated with the traditional festive excess.

ITV served up *Drastic Gastric Surgery* in the wake of the decision to offer stomach surgery on the NHS for the first time to severely overweight children who carry a high likelihood of developing cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Presented by Ricky Grover, the 'huge and hirsute' writer and comedian, the programme looked at the risks and benefits of weight-loss surgery.

Surgery is very much the last chance saloon for clinically obese individuals who fail to control their weight through conventional dieting, exercise or medication. The various approaches are all designed to make the stomach smaller so that less food is needed to fill it. The feeling of fullness is what makes us satisfied and stops us craving more. With a lessened appetite and a reduced calorie intake, a substantial and life-saving loss of fat becomes feasible.

The BBC3 documentary *Fat Boy To Slim* covered the same topic through the eyes and words of a morbidly obese teenager, Jack Glassett, as he first tried unsuccessfully to lose weight, and then weighed up his options with family, doctors and

former patients. The programme showed the long process of preparing for surgery, the operation itself, and the necessary post-operative procedures. The good news is that Jack lost weight and survived the temptation of his first Christmas dinner.

Watching these programmes, one was left in no doubt that extreme obesity is no joke and that surgery is by no means a straightforward solution to the problem. Leaving to one side the potential complications, the full benefits of weight-loss surgery can only be realised if the patient is careful to avoid high calorie food and drink. In effect, the operation can only be life-changing if the person's life does actually change.

Lifestyle change was also the theme of the third dish on offer. Channel 4's contribution is a new series of *You Are What You Eat*, featuring the infamous Gillian McKeith and ominously subtitled *Gillian Moves In* (Tuesdays, 8pm). The format involves the self-styled holistic nutritionist scouring 'the fat of the land' to identify 'supersize slob' with 'thick hides' and diets like 'porky pigs'. She traps two unwary subjects in her TV home and then subjects them to a draconian diet and exercise regime.

In the first programme, Ian and Sharon were confronted with a food-laden table showing the full horror of their weekly intake of salt, saturated fat, and monosodium



Gillian McKeith demonstrates the perfect type 4 stool in *You Are What You Eat* - *Gillian Moves In*

glutamate. This gave McKeith the opportunity to swipe the stodge petulantly onto the floor and stamp all over it. Following further humiliations, the pair was sent home with 'recipes, rules and reassurance,' only to be visited again so that the evil diet witch could trash the kids' crisps as well.

McKeith has been the target of heavy criticism for advocating diets that have little scientific support, but there were only fleeting signs of such barminess here. On the contrary, the little information and advice she offered seemed modest in its claims. And after eight weeks, both inmates had lost two stones in weight. Ian could now play football with his son for more than a minute and Sharon was out shopping for sexy lingerie again.

McKeith is also well known for her obsession with crap. Her goal is the perfect poo: smooth, soft and easy to pass. For aficionados, that's a type 4 stool - like a sausage or snake - according to the official Bristol Stool Form Chart. True to form, McKeith did not disappoint her fans as she duly inspected the captives' disappointing and disgusting turds.

Shit was also firmly on the menu in the first of a new series, *The Truth About Food*, going out on BBC2 (Thursdays, 9pm). The series aims to reveal the science behind the food we eat and what it does to our bodies. As the first of six well-known personalities slated to present the show, newsreader Fiona Bruce enthusiastically examined different aspects of food with the help of 'top scientists' and guinea pigs plucked from a willing public.

Amiable truckers Don and Wolfgang demonstrated the importance of dietary fibre as they drove across Europe. High fibre replaced their conventional fare of greasy-spoon fry-ups and tinned food straight out of the can. The new diet helped the truckers get their transit time - the time food takes to traverse the tunnel between mouth and anus - from one to two days down to about 12 hours, helping to clear potentially cancer-causing toxins from the

bowels.

The workings of the gut were further illustrated with the help of the 'pill cam', a neat piece of technology in the form of a large pill kitted out with its own lights, camera and video link. Swallow the pill and it goes with the flow, filming the sights on the way and showing

'Pill cam': it goes with the flow, showing us the delights within

us the delights within. There were also some helpful graphics to show the pill passing through the system. It was good science but as Don put it: "I can't stop the truck every two hours to take a shit."

The young ranchers working in Colorado, on the other hand, were more than happy to contribute their droppings as often as needed. One group dined on vegetables containing high levels of 'prebiotic' nutrients known to stimulate the proliferation of beneficial organisms in the gut. A second group ate 'probiotic' yoghurt containing live healthy bugs. Faecal analysis showed that the vegetables were better at increasing the good bacteria over the bad ones. The side effect of eating artichokes, leeks and onions was predictable.

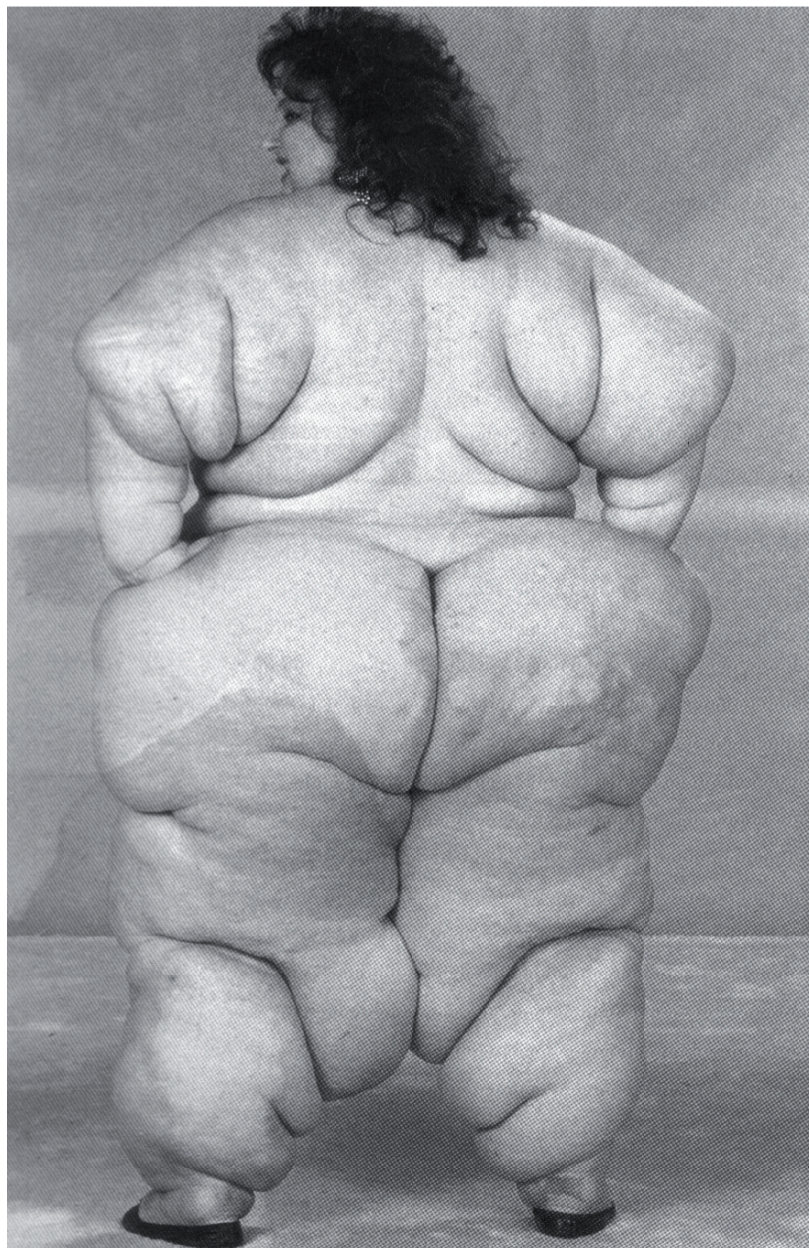
Much farting and latrine humour was also evident among volunteers living in a compound at Paignton Zoo and surviving on 5 kg of raw fruit and vegetables daily, a diet

similar to that enjoyed by apes in the wild and by our ancestors millions of years ago. Just 12 days of this unusual torture succeeded in reducing the participants' cholesterol levels by more than 20%, a good thing given the role of cholesterol in heart disease, and it also reduced weight and blood pressure.

The Truth About Food seems to have hit upon a formula combining the best of all worlds: the smiling celebrity presenter shown in a new light, the likeable man and woman in the street, easy-to-understand food trials, genuine scientific experts on camera, the use of clever graphics, and a range of bite-sized topics. With presenters like Vic Reeves, Jan Ravens and Colin Jackson, and topics like sex, sport and sunbathing yet to come, there is something for everyone in this series.

If all this were not enough, hypochondriacs may be interested in another new series to be screened by BBC2 on Tuesdays at 8pm. The cheerily titled *Don't Die Young* plans to demystify the inner workings of the body to help us better understand how lifestyle impacts on lifespan. Each programme will look at a particular organ and how to look after it, the first taking a look at kidney function with the help of a bare-backed volunteer and a paintbrush.

So, the start of 2007 offers the couch potato multiple opportunities to cosy up in front of the telly - home-delivery pizza, bottle of fizzy rot, and remote control to hand - to ponder our pre-occupation with bodily functions and to imagine how good it would be to escape our modern, unhealthy way of living.



"I like my mashed potato with lumps in!" - Hobag

Watch TV? Lots? Be productive with your viewing and write about it!

Email: tv.felix@imperial.ac.uk

The history of menswear

From puritanism to dandyism – a commentary on the culture behind men's fashion

Sarah Skeete
Fashion Editor

Menswear catwalks have never had much credibility, and have acted as a side note to their female equivalent.

However, recently menswear labels have been getting more media coverage, with more male fashion spreads and magazines dedicated to men's style. It's strange that womenswear has dominated the spotlight for a long time, when you think back to the early 18th century when dandyism was sweeping across the nation. When did the culture of menswear change so much that society deemed it effeminate to have an interest in fashion?

In the past, fashion was an important signal of a man's status in society. Military uniform was the biggest influence on menswear in the 17th century, and was used to assert authority, and also imply the virility of its wearer. Military wear, such as

doublets and trousers, moved from the battlefield to everyday wear for civilians. It was due to innovative sewing techniques developed for military wear that the art of tailoring arose.

During the late middle ages, sumptuary laws were established, restricting fashion according to social status. Sumptuary laws existed not only in England, but around the world, in countries such as Italy, Japan and France. In England it was stipulated that only certain individuals were allowed to wear specific colours and types of clothing. These laws were used by the nobility to oppress the growing bourgeoisie in medieval cities.

During the 18th century, the landscape of menswear was unequivocally altered by the enlightenment. Puritanism advocated plain wear, and no form of ostentatious or gaudy display. Perhaps it was only under this extreme cultural landscape that dandyism could emerge. Dandies placed enormous emphasis on physical appearance and clothing. Charles Baudelaire defined the dandy as one who elevates aesthetics to a living religion. "These beings have no other status, but that of cultivating the idea of beauty in their own persons, of satisfying their passions, of feeling and thinking ..."

Around this period fashion was also taken to the extreme with Macaroni – a name derived from young men who had picked up the vernacular of referring to anything fashionable as "very macaroni" after travelling to Italy for the Grand Tour. The Macaroni dressed in high fashion with stripes and tall, powdered wigs with a little hat on top. Macaronis were very exaggerated in terms of dress, their manner of speaking, and gambling excessively. They were also very effeminate, and were seen as being devoid of 'traditional' values of masculinity, and soon 'Macaroni' came to be used as an insult.

Whereas in the 18th century, dress was important to distinguish social rank, in the 19th century aristocratic leadership was breaking down, and egalitarianism was increasing. The suit became a symbolic social leveller; there was less distinction drawn between social ranks. It also marked a departure from the effeminate fashion-directed mode of dress the Macaronis embraced.



Clark Gable



Fred Astaire

As mass-media proliferated in the 20th century, menswear became more defined by popular culture. People aspired to the style of iconic stars like Humphrey Bogart, James Dean, and Fred Astaire. Now, advertising is spreading further into people's lives, and increasingly influencing men to be as body-conscious as women. This increase in advertising has some negative cultural effects: male cases of anorexia and muscle dysmorphia are on the increase. The spread of mass-media has also meant that people can now be inspired by global culture. This is the age of the individual in the West; style is formed by personal philosophies, and not so affected by cultural constraints. The increase in high-street stores catering to men mean that fashion is now just as accessible for men as it is for women.



Humphrey Bogart



James Dean



Dandies



Macaroni 'style'



Alexander McQueen



Victor & Rolf



J. Lindeberg



Etro

COOL

Sweater vests
Supercute on girls, but at the moment these are thin on the ground on the High Street. You can find a few at River Island and Miss Selfridge.



Ivy League
This look is hot this season, although note that Ivy League is not the same as preppy. Ivy league is striped shirts, striped ties, college sweatshirts, satchels (the Mulberry Barnaby satchel is perfection), plaid and check.



Glasses
Well, less Ugly Betty, more Italian/Japanese style of plastic frames; thin metal frames are not the look. Goes well with the Ivy League look to give geek-chic overtones.



Boots
Military style rather than goth, sci-fi geek boots. Wear with slim cut trousers/jeans to achieve a futuristic military style. It is winter, so this should be obvious, but don't wear this look with sunglasses unless you're aspiring to look like a total douche.

LAME



**Monica Booth,
aeronautics postgraduate**

Think you can get temperatures soaring?
Email us at page3.felix@imperial.ac.uk

Sports Ambassadors

Are you a keen sports person? Interested in obtaining a coaching qualification, enhancing your CV and passing on your sporting skills to children in local schools?

The Sports Ambassadors Scheme gives you the opportunity to do all of that whilst studying at Imperial, improving your overall student experience.

The Sports Ambassadors Scheme, run in conjunction with Aimhigher, is recruiting students interested in sports coaching or who have coaching qualifications in any sport, and who would like to deliver coaching sessions in the local community. The main aims of the project are to:

- Develop sport and improve sports performance of local children
- Promote Further and Higher Education through sport

If you are interested in becoming a Sports Ambassador whilst studying at Imperial contact:

Alissa Ayling
Sports Partnership Administrator
020 7594 3479
a.ayling@imperial.ac.uk

Or visit www.imperial.ac.uk/sports

“The Sports Ambassadors Scheme not only gives students the opportunity to gain a coaching qualification and put it into practice, but also to gain the added dimension of acting as mentors and role models to HE promoting themselves and the University to local schools, community and beyond.”

Ruth Morrison
Aimhigher Sports Partnership Project Manager

“Volunteering has benefitted both my rugby and also my character. I have benefitted from coaching young children rugby through the feeling of immense satisfaction of a job well done for people who wanted the coaching. As a result I am a more confident, patient, creative, understanding, disciplined, attentive and most importantly fun person to be around.”

John Sykes
Geology Graduate 2002-06
ICU Rugby Football Club Volunteer Coaching Secretary

I, Gamer



Michael Cook Games Editor

I'm certain now that a game can be made out of anything. Not because we're seeing kooky lawyer simulators or rhythm action games that wouldn't look out of place in the Tate Modern. It was actually a very simple game called Kudos, with a very curious objective.

I'd heard about Kudos a while ago, when it was celebrated as evidence that Indie-developed games were the future. Like many games, you play a man in his twenties, ready to fight for his future. Unlike other games, you play an underpaid waiter from Slough. And no, Slough doesn't turn out to be a base of operations for an international ring of robot-army-makers. Slough turns out to be full of low-paying jobs, and brown. Your aim? To rise in popularity as far as you can by the age of thirty.

Even though Kudos is a clever game, and a depressingly good simulation of how to live your life, right down to the way you gain popularity, the game's not always enjoyable. It's the kind of game you'd tell other people about rather than actually play yourself. As you can see.

But the media were right when they celebrated Kudos, because good game or not, Kudos *does* show why Independent games are needed. Sure they'll create the genius steps that birth new genres. And as we're told by Introversion this week, it's a tough fight. But more importantly than good games, Indie gaming gets us *talking* about games.

A trailer for the new exposé film on violence in videogames, "Moral Combat" (sic) shows almost nothing but the usual stereotypes – Lara Croft, cars crashing, and – okay, a little obscurely – Abe from the Oddworld series. The reason for all of this is that, no matter how interesting and diverse the shelves in Game look to us, to the mainstream media it still all condenses down to the same things – sex, violence, violent sex and sexual violence.

Indie gaming rises above a lot of that. A quick skip through the internet will have you rescuing armadillos using a Mecano set, saving a friend's marriage and posing mannequins. If no-one's talking about these games, then guns, girls and garroting are all they have left to represent games by.

Still. Slough's pushing it a bit.

This week in videogaming

What do you call a jazz player on a rollercoaster? A Sixaxis. A sick... don't worry

First and foremost – if you haven't already been accosted by the lovely leaflet-givers out and about through Imperial, then you won't be aware that the Computer Games Club is hosting its first LAN event this Saturday (Jan 20). Admittance is free, and they're even sorting out the wired and wireless magic for you.

If you fancy some Warcraft III : Frozen Throne DotA or the ever-popular Counterstrike 1.6. then simply bring your laptop or desktop along to the Union Dining Hall between 10am and 4pm. Early admissions are promised drinks! Manlove optional, not guaranteed.

Surely even the most ardent Microsoft fanboys must at last feel sympathy for Sony, as this week they were forced to make yet more embarrassing announcements and apologies. As if cocking up almost every stage of the PS3's development cycle wasn't enough, this week say Sony apologising after reports of an Emmy win for the PS3's Sixaxis controller proved false.

It all seemed too good to be true. The Sixaxis had allegedly won an innovation award for its tilt-motion technology, despite the Wiimote have very similar – if not far better – capabilities. This sparked the predictable ranting on blogs and forums the internet over, until Sony admitted that someone had misunderstood – the Playstation 2 controller was receiving the award, and they'd reported it wrong. Oh, Sony.

Other than that it's been a week of smiles for the Industry, including Sony who reported that the Christmas big-seller was not in fact the Xbox 360, but their original Playstation2. Elsewhere, financial reports are showing healthy sales and growth during 2006 in almost every aspect of the gaming industry. America hit \$12.5billion, Japan saw ¥600billion (around \$5billion) – it all bodes well for a 2007 where consoles sales are only just beginning to pick up again.

Unless you're a Wii owner, of course. Nintendo's bank balance might be steadily soaring – this week



"All we're saying is, we think our client deserves a raise if he's going to continue to work with animals."

saw them add a few million more to their end-of-year sales forecast for the DS – but Wii-injuries continue come. The most disturbing so far involves the death of a woman from "water intoxication" after entering a contest on an American radio station entitled "Hold Your Wee For A Wii". It seems like puns *can* kill, after all.

And if there's one aspect of the industry feeling a financial squeeze at the moment, then it's probably the media. Sales certainly weren't up at the offices of Ziff Davis, leading to the sale of 1Up, the renowned gaming site, as well as the once-monolithic *Electronic Gaming Monthly*, a magazine that once commanded huge sales both in the US and abroad. The Official Playstation2 Magazine closes its doors this month earlier than was ex-

pected, and Future Publishing currently report *Cross Stitcher* to be a higher-selling publication than *PC Gamer* or *Edge*.

It doesn't look much happier for the future either, now that the next-generation of consoles are offering demo downloads straight to the machine, cutting off a lot of the appeal of high-street publishing.

After twenty years of nothing, the Guinness Book Of World Records is finally recognising people who are unhealthy good at games once again. Interviewing 'elite gamer' Greg Sakundiak, the holder of 7 arcade high scores, as well as the oldest competitive gamer, the latest edition of the record-breaking book will once again dedicate a page or two to videogames, showing the greatest achievements in gaming, including a table of arcade high

scores.

The release schedule couldn't look quieter this week, with only a yelp from Tennis Masters coming to the DS, possibly hoping to take advantage of an otherwise quiet week for gaming in general. Gamers seem to not mind very much, though, with Burning Crusade occupying the top slot in the game charts.

Lastly – if you haven't bought a DS yet, Japan thinks you're missing out. Famitsu's list of the 100 top-selling games of the year shows that fifteen of the top twenty games were on the Nintendo handheld, with Pokemon Diamond holding the top spot with over 4.3million units sold.

That said, the rumour mills have yet to be stopped talking about the next PSP. Assuming Sony's PR department get it right this time.

Percentage of the world's population subscribed to World Of Warcraft:



Would.You.Like.To.Make.A.Game?

Michael Cook asks if it's too late to break into indie game development and Introversion answer

I designed a game once. It was called "Warbug: Ants of Destiny", partly because subtitles were in fashion at the time, but mostly because I was nine and it sounded *right*. It was a sizzling blend of *Command and Conquer* and *SimAnt*, with a twist of primary school humour and the kind of plot that a straight-to-Disney-Channel movie would be proud of. One day, I promised myself, that game would get made.

A decade on, and I've still not had use for my promotional clock designs (with clockwork thorax action!). In fact, I'm beginning to wonder whether I ever will, not least because the market for insect-based isometric strategy games is smaller than I thought, but also because the games industry can seem pretty daunting for One Man and His Keyboard.

The picture does generally seem to be a dark one – production costs are soaring, and demand for complex graphical systems is huge. In short, you need to spend money to make money – and it's the kind of money that your average Indie developer doesn't have.

But hope hasn't been given up yet – in fact, it could be the best time yet to break into a fast-expanding industry. That's the message that's been given by a collection of supporters and success stories from the Indie scene, in a series of internet addresses under the title "So You Want To Be An Indie Developer?"

The posts ranged from the light-hearted to the serious, all of them offering tips and advice on breaking into a competitive, yet rewarding industry. One of the contributors

to the group was Introversion, the self-titled "last of the bedroom coders", and acclaimed breakthrough coders of *Uplink*, *Darwinia* and *DEFCON*.

"Publishers often have a cookie cutter approach to making game ... so no wonder we end up with hundreds of identical first-person shooters," explains Tom Arundel in a news post on their website, "That's where the independent steps in."

It's true that good design isn't something that money makes easier – and talent in that respect will always play well with gamers. "Keep it simple," Tom says, "Don't feel you have to compete with the bigger developers ... in photorealistic graphics and physics, you can't."

Introversion's latest work, *DEFCON*, is a testament to simple design, and it's this cut-down, atmospheric feel that won over the gaming world again. Tom spoke to Felix about Introversion's rise to fame, and the reality of the future of Indie development.

Towards the end of Tom's post in the "Indie Developer" news piece, he mentions the freedom given by independent development. But the last piece of advice is perhaps the most important – "the only way you'll ever be able to make the games milling around in your head, is by becoming an indie developer."

Whether you're optimistic about the future, or don't think you'd have a chance, the only way to find out is to get out there and start coding, and there's no time like the present. But don't think you can take Warbug away from me. We're going places.

Onwards to the interview:



Speaks for itself really, doesn't it?

The original team has been together for almost ten years now. What was the defining moment in the rise of Introversion?

I think without a doubt, winning three awards at this year's Independent Games Festival for *Darwinia* was the biggest highlight yet for Introversion. We had really struggled during the development of *Darwinia*, the project over-ran by over a year, so financially we weren't in great shape, and morale was also running pretty low in the company by this point. Those awards finally made all the blood, sweat and tears seem worth it and it's amazing how much that event has positively re-defined this year for us. We gained

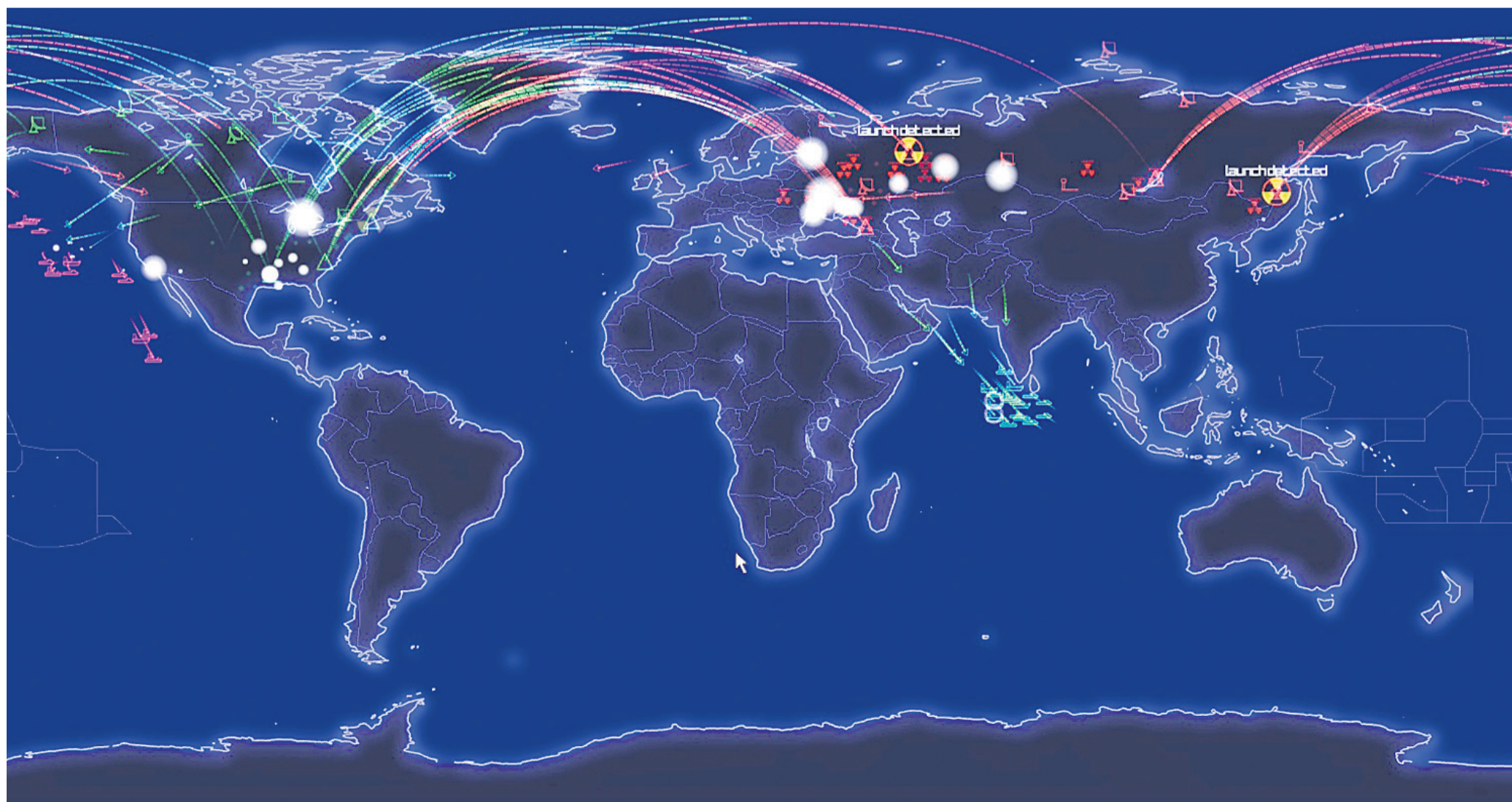
an enormous amount of exposure and credibility off the back of those awards and opportunities are popping up even now which I think are as a direct result of IGF.

Where did you find you struggled most? Did the biggest challenges lie with competing in terms of manpower or technology, or was the difficulty more in terms of getting noticed, getting seen?

To be honest, I think really a mixture of both. There are massive logistical issues to solve when you set up a computer games company in terms of financing and obtaining enough resources to get started. Generally speaking, one

of the biggest issues is you don't have the time or the manpower to attempt certain types of games. It also means we struggle to produce content; for example a number of reviews said that *Darwinia* was too short but it had taken us 3 years to produce a game with 10 levels!

The second major issue is that publishers aren't really interested – that's the bottom line and it can be a real struggle to get yourselves noticed and taken seriously. When *Darwinia* released, we were big enough to self publish in the UK, but the US market is around ten times larger and we just didn't have the staff. It took a success story like the *Darwinia* launch on Steam and winning at IGF for publishers to



Simplicity In Blue – Introversion's post-apocalyptic strategy game *DEFCON* is their third game and an example of their pure design philosophy. It's also unsettlingly foreboding

sit up and take notice, which also probably explains why we've had so much exposure and coverage with our latest game, DEFCON.

You recently gave a talk about independent games creation as a force for the future. Is this where innovation lies, in the hands of the developers? Or is it more in the hands of the publishers, and their willingness to take chances?

I think innovation relies on both sides of the industry, a desire amongst developers to create unique titles and a willingness on

the side of the publishers to take risks by taking them on. Independents are often seen as the mavericks of the game industry because they're usually braver when it comes to trying something new, especially if they self-publish and own their own IPs.

At Introversion we don't do any market research before we create a game; ideas just occur pretty randomly, inspired by something that interests us so it's a pretty haphazard process. The trouble with the industry today is that publishers have a cookie cutter approach to making games; they look at the

games already in the market, decide which ones seem to be selling particularly well and then get a developer to make another spin-off. In this scenario, the developer has very little creative control and games are made purely with profits in mind so no wonder we end up with hundreds of identical first-person shooters!

What made you decide to partner with Steam for the distribution of some of your games? Do you think this changed people's perception of Introversion?

Retail wasn't really working out so well for us - Darwinia was gaining great reviews but this wasn't really translating into particularly impressive sales. Part of that was perhaps due to the comparative inaccessibility of Darwinia when we first released it; it was incredibly difficult to market because it was such a complicated game to explain.

We adapted it quite a lot after its first release to make it more user-friendly, changing the gesture control mechanism and making another demo which showed Darwinia off to its full potential. After these improvements were made, we managed to get a deal with Valve to launch on Steam and prospects became significantly brighter for the company after that.

We sold more copies of Darwinia in the first 3 weeks of selling via Steam than we'd managed in the

whole prior 6 month period selling via retail and our online store.

Would Steam only work for growing companies such as Introversion? Or do you see it as a platform for all levels of developers in the future? Could this be the sort of system that gives indie development a helping hand?

Digital distribution channels such as Steam are ideal for independents; not only do you get a higher return on your product but you're also much more likely to have your game accepted for digital distribution than for retail, especially if it's an off-the-wall concept because the financial risks of releasing digitally are significantly lower. Digital distribution is also ideally suited to the kind of smaller titles that independents release - DEFCON was only 60 Mb so, perfect for online download.

Do you still have hope for the future of the industry? Has it still got life and invention left in it?

I think the games industry has gone through a bit of a rough patch over the past few years but there does seem to have been a bit of a backlash, certainly in the press, against some of the endless sequels and franchises. I don't believe we would still be here doing what we do if there wasn't at least a market for the kind of games we make and a desire to try something new.

Focus on

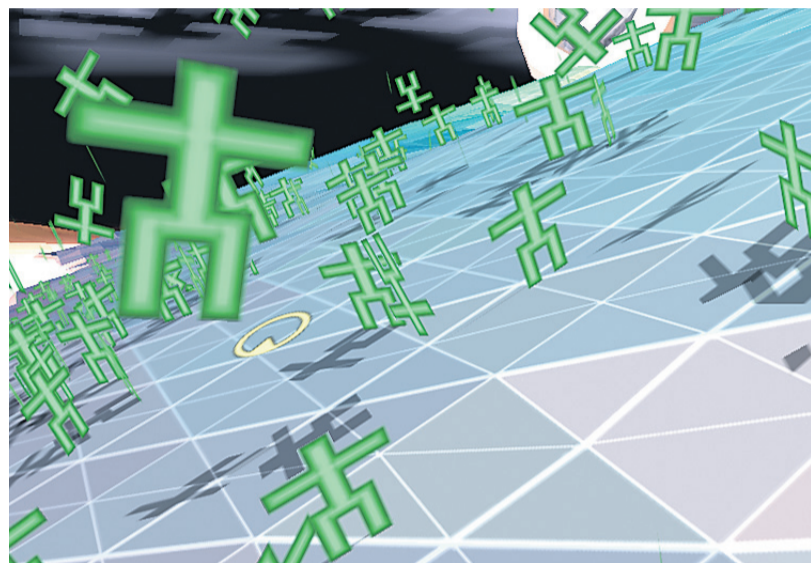


Tom Arundel is the Financial Director of Introversion Software, and one of the founders of the development house. Along with Mark Morris and Chris Delay, whom he met in his first year at Imperial College, London.

Navigating PR, the world of independent publishing, and what happens to the finances when projects overrun hasn't been easy, and Introversion's balance between financial gain and creative vision has allowed them to retain all of their IPs to this date.

"When we finally got to see Chris's game [Uplink] we realised it was good enough to sell; we gave up university beer for a couple of weeks, threw in £200 each and set up a store online."

A bitter sacrifice, but a good one.



"Post-Genre" game Darwinia. Post-Genre? Kill me now

What now? The next steps for Indie wannabes

Game designers don't need to be C++ing in their sleep to get going, even though future success almost always means long nights of programming. Getting started can be simple if you've got some ideas, and you're not expecting to emerge with the Next Big Thing straight away.

The best way to start is often with modding. **Source**, the technology that powers Half-Life 2 and many other games, has a downloadable Development Kit (<http://steam-powered.com>) that allows you to tinker with and build all manner of creations.

Half-Life 2 modifications are becoming easier and easier to make, and there are plenty of projects that you can help out with online to gain some experience. **GamesModding** (<http://gamesmodding.com>) wouldn't be a bad place to start looking.

If that all sounds a bit programming-heavy, **Flash** games can be easier to get to grips with. The software isn't free, but you can download a free trial of Flash MX from Apple's website (<http://www.adobe.com/products>). Flash games are everywhere on the internet thanks to their often bright visuals and portability.

They're also a good place to start if your art is stronger than your coding. Flash makes it easy to work with your graphics, and helps with coding interactions and movement. There's a wealth of help online, as well - Adobe's own website is just one of a host of development and tutorial hubs (<http://www.adobe.com/devnet>).

If you're a fan of point-and-click adventure games, then the best tool available is probably **Adventure Game Studio** (<http://tinyurl.com/y723jk>) which requires no programming knowledge at first, and

very little to do the more complicated things.

AGS has spawned some popular conversions of old games such as *King's Quest* as well as gems of its own, like *5 Days A Stranger*. With some weak MS Paint skills, we made a two-puzzle game in a couple of hours - with time and dedication, the results can be impressive.

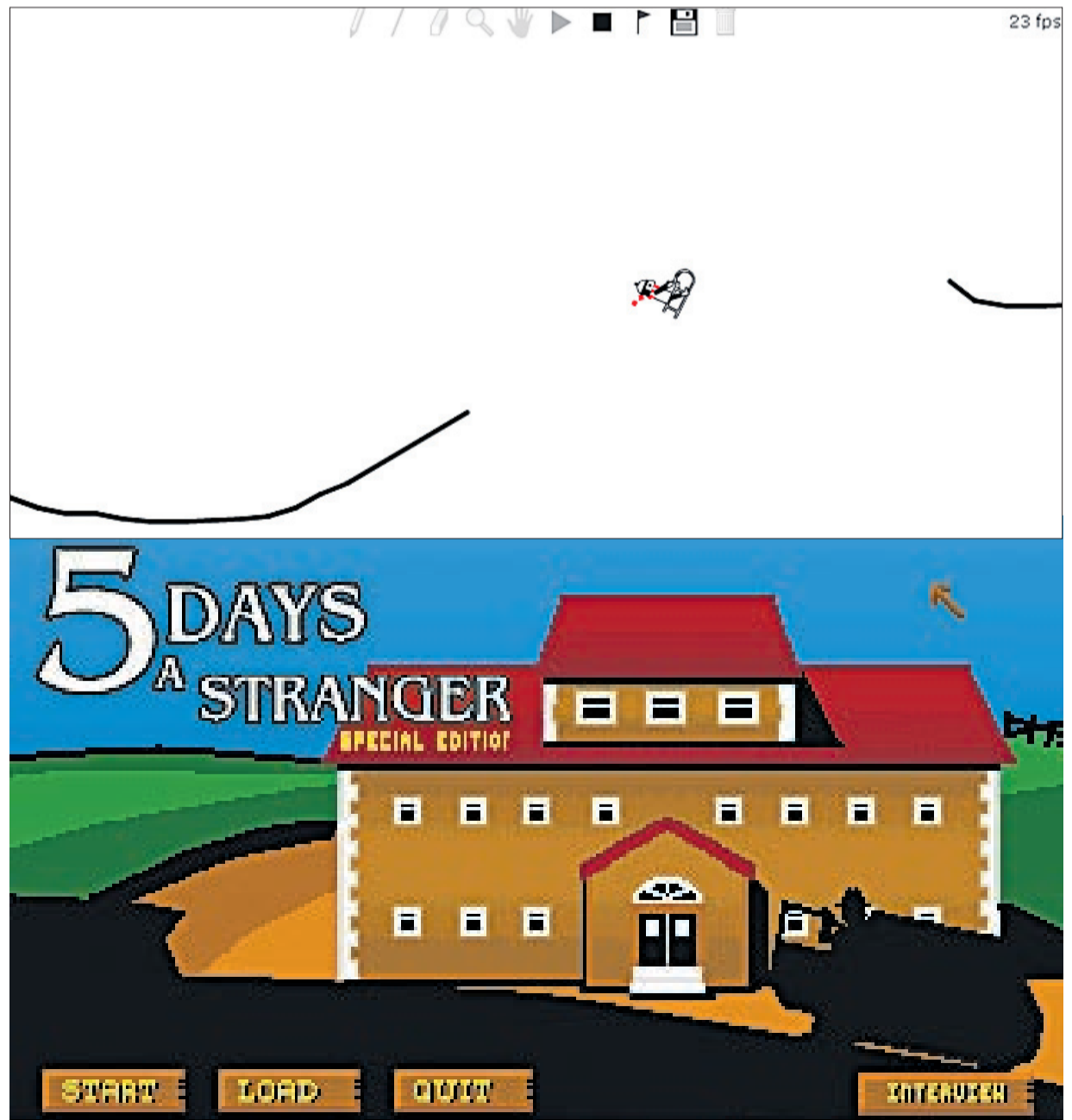
But it can get even easier. If you want to get a feel for designing a whole package, but aren't looking to churn out a CounterStrike beater just yet, **Klik and Play** (<http://tinyurl.com/y24rwz>) offers a friendly development platform - for free.

It's very low-tech, and you'll soon find yourself wanting something more powerful, but it's a fun package that quickly gives results back. It only takes an hour or so to bash out a platformer with the supplied libraries and tutorials.

Simpler still is making your own text-based adventure game. All that's required is a lot of time and some imagination - something that'll be needed anyway if you're going to get into development. There's a lot of kits to choose from, but **TextWorld** (<http://tinyurl.com/ujd4z>) is a good start, having the added bonus of being free of charge.

The important thing is to get out there and experiment. The first games you'll make probably won't be commercial quality, but getting your hands dirty is great experience, and once you've started off you'll find it easier to progress, to build teams, and to dedicate yourself to larger projects.

Introversion, and many others, have shown that it's possible, and most of the industry is looking at talented gamers for innovation in the next decade. That dream of designing might not be as far off as you think, if you give it a go...



Current Indie superstars: the classic *5 Days A Stranger*, bottom, and the addictive *Line Rider*, top

Clubs & Societies

Join the latest clubs and societies

As 2007 begins, there's a whole host of brand spanking new societies for you to join. Those listed below were not available to join at the beginning of the academic year since each was merely a foetus in the clubs and societies' womb. So, fix up, look sharp and send an email to whichever one takes your fancy. Enjoy



Celebrate being a woman with IC Belly Dancing

Club Name: Belly Dancing
Club Chair: Millie Dutt
Membership: £3
Contact: md902@ic.ac.uk
Course Price: £29

Why set up the Club?

One small step for Imperial College, London, an impressive shimmy for the Belly Dancing Club! Asha Ashokan and Millie Dutt (both fifth year medics) were keen to take up classes in the formally known 'Raqs Sharqi' or oriental dance, which is practised with many different styles in various parts of the Middle East; Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, and Morocco, to name but a few.

We were interested to learn this very special artform locally, with friends and staff from across the University, and at an affordable price, thus taking advantage of Imperial's encouragement for the set-up of diverse recreational clubs and societies.

Perhaps it was the spellbinding control and graceful elegance that dancers have while performing intricate hip movements and muscle isolations to music which mesmerised us, maybe it was pure fascination with the exotic glamour of the finely embroidered costumes, veils, zills (cymbals) and other accessories that, when worn, instantly bring about the urge to celebrate passion, creativity, and the small recognised beauty that is being a fine woman in our prestigious University that is heaving with male

students in a competitive, hard-working, and undeniably stressful environment! Together with the support and dedication of Nabigha Mohyud-Din (Secretary) and Kamaljeet Samra (Treasurer), they set up the now blossoming ICU Belly Dancing Club.

The background to bellydancing

Earliest forms of the dance may have had a spiritual or religious context although it is generally believed to have roots in Middle Eastern fertility ceremonies, a dance performed for women by women to strengthen the abdominal muscles for the act of childbirth and also a custom at many weddings. The art of belly dancing is still traditionally passed down from generation to generation in some families simply as rich female heritage.

The separate styles of the dance range from the highly skilled and refined Egyptian cabaret style, where dancers are trained to execute those wonderfully slight muscle movements which we most often associate with the term "belly dance," or dramatic Lebanese cabaret with its dramatic and ballet influences, to softly refined classical oriental dance which emerged from the courts of the early Ottoman Empire; from modestly dressed Baladi (or folkloric dance) of rural Egypt which also encompasses the male Tahtib martial arts dance, the gypsy style Ghawazee, to the Khaleeji of the Persian Gulf States and Saudi Arabia with its distinctive hair toss. And many more styles do exist, not forgetting Turkish style

cabaret with its flamboyant, earthy movements and, some may say, seductive overtones.

With its introduction into global media notably it is thought in the 19th century, the term 'belly dance' became inextricably linked with sexual glamour and took on alternative meanings which were slightly demeaning to the soulful beauty of the danceform.

However, having travelled afar and become a worldwide, constantly evolving phenomenon, the distinct cultural traditions of belly dancing and its joyful expression are still largely retained and respected; it continues to appeal to the human spirit, and it is also fun, excellent muscle-toning exercise, and a great way of making new friends!

It has recently gained much popularity amongst us younger generations via mainstream music videos such as those of Shakira or Beyonce, its image enduring for the most part as a positive testimony to beauty, strength, and grace, and all things feminine.

What we do

The ICU Belly Dancing Club aims to make this fantastically strong artform accessible to all Imperial College students (including our men, provided there is sufficient interest!), from every department, background, or level of dancing - and no experience is needed!

We already have superb, highly experienced teachers and performers for our club and a Beginners course is running successfully in the

Reynolds, Hammersmith, for which there has been the highest demand since our set-up in late November. Over the first couple of lessons we have already been covering isolated upper and lower body movements, arm movements, hip drops, a fluidly elegant move known as 'the camel', classic shimmies, back bends, and more, with our lovely dance teacher Saffron! This month on 25th January, ICU Belly Dancing will be starting brand new classes in Room 343, Huxley Building, South Kensington, to cater for the overwhelming demand for extra classes across the college.

We have been fortunate in securing a particularly well-known dancer these classes; Krystina (Chris Gould), who has trained impressively in all types of Egyptian style Belly Dance and has many years of teaching experience for which she has achieved distinctions with the prestigious Josephine Wise Academy of Arabic Dance. Her training in Cairo with first-class professional dancers and choreographers has culminated in her becoming a truly stunning dancer of our times, and she will no doubt be able to give our students an insight into the real essence of the dance.

She has performed with the fabulous dance company Massriat at several shows, which those interested in the danceform may well have seen performing, she holds regular classes, workshops and also has her very own dance company that perform with her at public events, including the superb Fantasia events in London. With her unique blend of experience and traditional

dancing style, this course is going to be very special and unmissable for all Imperial students and a particular delight for those with an interest in future performance and choreography!

How to get involved

One course of 12 lessons, taking us up to early May, will be available at the unbeatable price of £29.00 only for club members, which can be found nowhere else in London, while membership costs the standard Imperial College Union rate of £3 for this year 2006-7. With such an amazing offer and great talent to take advantage of, early application is definitely recommended as places run out rapidly, and anyone can apply very simply by e-mailing their request to md902@ic.ac.uk.

Other activities

The club will also be holding numerous events throughout the year to look forward to for dance enthusiasts and those with pure interest in the danceform.

In particular, some fantastic one-day choreography workshops for beginners/improvers will be held throughout the year to quench our students' thirst for performance and creativity! We will always aim to bring you the best talent with our professional dancers, and always at highly competitive prices for the student who's strapped for cash. So what are you waiting for? Try something new this year.

Belly dancing is rich, it's vibrant, and it's here for you!

ICU Fairtrade society

Club Name: Fairtrade
Club Chair: Kirsty Patterson
Membership: £3
Contact: kmp05@ic.ac.uk

FairtradeSoc is an award winning student campaigning society. In 2006 Imperial Fairtrade won the ULU Student Campaign Group of the Year Award. To celebrate this success we decided to launch 2007 by becoming an official college society. With over 200 signatures supporting our application and many more people signing up to the mailing list, 2007 looks to be an exciting year.

The main aims of the society are to promote the purchase of Fairtrade Certified products and to campaign for Fairtrade University Status. Our activities will include organising Fairtrade Fortnight, attending Fairtrade conferences,

organising debates and speakers at Imperial and the opportunity to sample numerous and varied Fairtrade products.

Fairtrade Fortnight is the 26th February to the 9th March. This is a national campaign endorsed by the Fairtrade foundation. This year we are looking to repeat last years popular and very successful 'Wine tasting Evening' but on a much larger scale.

Additionally we will be running sampling sessions at lunchtimes across campus and a 'Beat the Goalie' competition. There will be raffle prizes to be won, competitions to enter and lots of Fairtrade products on display. We are even looking to pilot the first annual Fairtrade Bakeoff.

Other opportunities to get involved in FairtradeSoc this year include the Annual Fairtrade Universities Conference in Leeds on 9th February and the Ethical Careers

Exhibition on the 21st February.

Membership of FairtradeSoc is only £3pa and can be bought online at www.imperialcollegeunion.org. Your £3 will get you a free enamel pin badge to wear with pride, discounts or free entry to our events, free tea coffee and chocolate at our meetings and a chance to join the committee.

We are currently looking for two or three extra committee members to help with publicity, web design and event planning.

With Imperial entering it's centenary year, and college announcing it supports the application for Imperial to become a Fairtrade institution, FairtradeSoc provides an excellent opportunity to be involved in the process which is making change happen at Imperial College. For more information about events and how to get involved contact FairtradeSoc chair, Kirsty Patterson at kirsty.patterson@ic.ac.uk.



Drift along to Synchronised Swimming club

Club Name: Synchronised Swimming
Club Chair: Danai Balfoussia
Contact: dtb04@ic.ac.uk

IC Synchro is one of the latest clubs to be created at Imperial. Since we are new, we are looking for Imperial students to join.

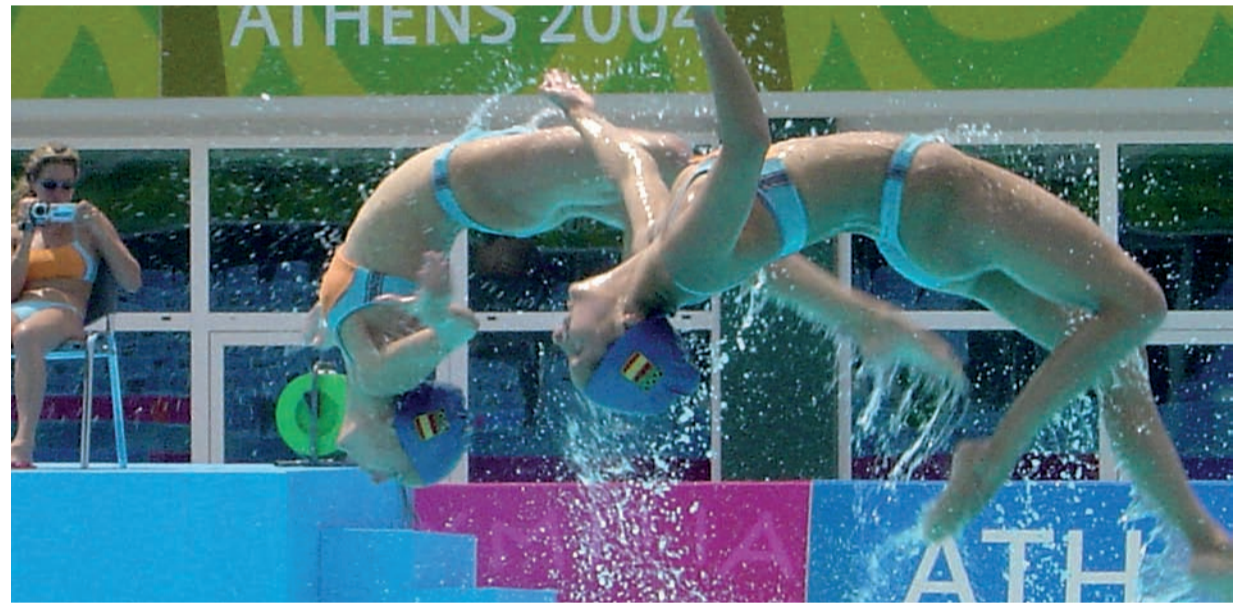
Why start synchronised swimming?

Well, for starters, it is an excellent form of exercise. Also, it is a water sport so it is low impact on the joints. Furthermore, we are a brand new team, which means that there are no expectations to live up to. Just come, have a good time and try to learn synchronised swimming! For

those that think it is really hard and that they could never do it, that is far from true. All one needs to be able to do is float! (btw, fat floats!) Flexibility, experience with water sports are just little extras.

Synchronised swimming is hard but no harder than any other sport. It is just because it is so unconventional that the difficulty becomes more apparent. But it is also this aspect of it that makes it so amazing, different and fascinating! I hope at least a few of you are convinced to join or to at least come to a few sessions.

So, if you find yourself in the middle of the year and you just want to start a new activity, why not start with synchronised swimming? If you have any questions please feel free to send an email to dtb04@ic.ac.uk.



Friends of MSF

Club Name: Friends of Medecins Sans Frontieres
Club Co-chair: Tim Wang
Membership: £5
Contact: friendsofmsf@ic.ac.uk

Médecins Sans Frontières MSF (Doctors Without Borders) is an international humanitarian aid organisation that provides emergency medical assistance to populations in danger in more than 80 countries.

The Imperial Friends of MSF is a support group of MSF and the society welcomes medical students as well as students from other faculties. Our main aim is to fundraise and raise awareness of MSF and its activities.

No matter if you are an engineering, mathematics, or physics student, you can still become actively involved in one of our five projects/teams; Collection, Merchandise, Small events, MSF Talent Show and MSF Walk. You will not be a

mere observer; instead, this is a chance to be an integrate part of a specific team and be able to actively contribute. You will have responsibilities within each team and your actions will directly impact on the success of each fundraising activity and the success of our society as a whole.

We also hope to encourage students to consider MSF or likeminded NGOs as a possible career post graduation. Despite qualified doctors, MSF also needs logisticians, accountants, public health experts, and epidemiologists etc. to carry on the work they do so well. Thus we will invite individuals who have worked in the field to come and share their experience.

Whether you like to take action and get involved or simply meet others from other courses, this is something for you!

You can contact us at friendsofmsf@gmail.com for more information. Membership fee is five pounds and can be bought online at www.imperialcollegeunion.org.

Proclaiming the Gospel

Club Name: Gospel Choir
Club Chair: Onyi Duru
Membership: £5
Contact: onyinyechi.duru@ic.ac.uk

The name of the club is pretty much self explanatory. We hope to be singing exciting Christian Gospel Music but it is not exclusive to just Christians.

If people are looking to be in a vibrant, energetic and dynamic atmosphere and just want to belt out a note then they are more than welcome. All singing abilities are welcome too!

We plan to have our first rehearsal on the 25th of January. The venue for rehearsals is Solo Room 6 in the Blythe Centre on the fifth floor of the Sherfield building. If interest is huge then we will move into an ensemble room. In the meantime, look out for the publicity around the college or don't hesitate to get in touch!



Get fit and socialise with Pilates

Club Name: Pilates
Club Chair: Rebecca Llewellyn
Sessions: £2/3 each
Contact: ravneet.sirha@ic.ac.uk

Pilates is more than just exercise! It is a sport that increases the strength of your inner core muscles and helps balance and stability. It also helps with easing some of those aches and pains caused by under or over-use of muscles. If Pilates is practised regularly a number of benefits can be found in the body including increased lung capacity and circulation, strength and flexibility, particularly the abdomen and back muscles, and muscular/mental coordination. Bone density and the health of bones can also improve, and many experience positive body awareness for the first time. Pilates teaches balance and control of the body, and that capacity spills over into other areas of one's life.

Why was ICMSU Pilates set up?

Pilates has become increasingly popular over the years as many

sports-professionals and recreational enthusiasts reap the rewards from practising pilates regularly. Due to the popularity, pilates is becoming increasingly expensive to attend sessions. Therefore, we wanted to set up cheap pilates sessions with a qualified Pilates instructor and to have the classes in the evenings, so it is more beneficial for students who are not on campus during the lunchtimes or are on different campuses. ICMSU pilates welcomes all Imperial students to attend!

Committee members

The society was set up by Rebecca Llewellyn. Deputy-President is Ravneet Sirha, Secretary - Luxme Nadarajah and Treasurer is Nishanth Ranganathan. (All 5th year Medics).

Time and Venue

Music Room in the Reynolds every Wednesday at 6.45pm. If there is more demand for pilates, a 2nd class will be organised so please get in contact!

How to join Pilates

You first need to get onto the mailing list! Email the Deputy President ravneet.sirha@ic.ac.uk and you will be added!. Attendance to classes will be as follows AND you can either:

1. Respond to the weekly email of attendance, and if you are the 1st 16 who reply you will be able to attend. Once confirmed, attendance is mandatory as you will be taking someone else's place
2. Buy attendance tickets in advance via www.union.ic.ac.uk in the pilates section. You will be given a place straight away and do not need to respond to the weekly email.

Costs

1. Membership is £5 per annum,
2. Sessions are £2 each for members,
3. Sessions are £3 for non-members

Equipment

All equipment is provided for and all you need to wear is comfortable clothing.



Paintballing and pancakes

Club Name: Canadian Society
Club Chair: Jonathan Corns
Membership: £2
Contact: jonathan.corns@ic.ac.uk

Our club is designed to bring both Canadians and non-Canadians together to experience Canadian culture. Events include paintballing, pancake breakfasts and bar nights watching ice hockey! We will also form a network of Imperial Canadians to provide help and advice on travelling to Canada, so if you're thinking of travelling there, don't miss this opportunity to find out about places to go to in Canada!



BackgammonSoc

Club Name: Backgammon
Club Chair: Christopher Hong
Membership: £1
Contact: christopher.hong@ic.ac.uk

The Backgammon Society is for those who play the game or just wanting to find out more about the game. The club shall be acquiring a few sets of backgammon and we should ideally be holding bi-weekly, if not weekly meetings for people to have a few games and have a bit of banter etc.

Backgammon is a great game of probability, strategy and skills. It has very simple rules that anyone

can learn within 5 minutes and also offer a chance for them to beat an experienced player in a one off game as the game depends partly on the roll of the dice. It is particularly suitable for the largely numerically competent students of Imperial College.

The main aim for the rest of the year is to find a core set of members and perhaps someone who is willing to take it on for next year.

People can sign up through the union website for a nominal fee of £1. If you're interesting send your queries to christopher.hong@imperial.ac.uk since we haven't got our fancy backgammon@ic address yet! I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Come, we'll game together

Club Name: Computer Games
Club Chair: Nimalen Balasingham
Contact: nb604@ic.ac.uk

Fed up of playing computer games alone? Tired of thrashing n00bs online? Then come join REAL gamers in IC's Computer Games Club!

We will be organising weekly gaming sessions, or LAN parties, whereby members can gather for competitive gaming or just to have fun. We will also be holding a gaming competition within this term.

Besides that, a forum would be set up for IC's gaming community as well as a Xfire account for online gaming. In the long run, we hope to be able to get games at discounted rates for our members, as well as getting sponsorship for our events.



Our main focus would be LAN events (where everyone brings their computers to a designated room for gaming fun!) to start of with. Our first event would be this Saturday, the 20th of January 2006, so if you would like to participate, just bring your computer/laptop down to the Union Dining Hall between 10am

and 4pm. We will be playing Counter Strike 1.6 and Warcraft III Frozen Throne's DotA.

Look out for posters, e-mails and Felix articles for more information. If you would like to join the Computer Games Club, make suggestions or just to check things out, email me at nb604@imperial.ac.uk.

Haute culture

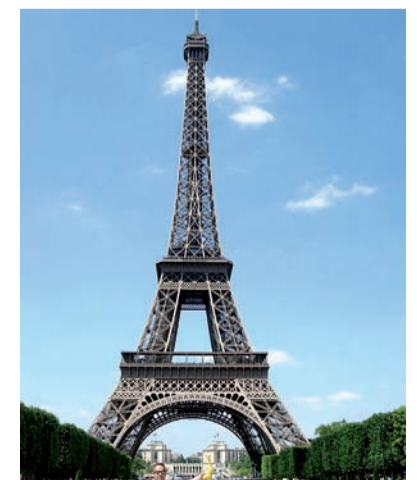
Club Name: French Society
Club Chair: Sarah Dutta
Contact: mvz06@ic.ac.uk

Bonjour!

Anyone who has any interest in the French culture is welcome to join and help revitalize this new society. Doesn't matter if you only know how to say "Je t'aime" and "Voulez-vous coucher avec moi?"

This new group can either help you practice this beautiful language or simply expand your group of friends. Doesn't matter if you've never seen "Amelie Poulain", the society is here to give you the chance to have access easily to all the wonders of the French culture.

We will organise get togethers around typical French movies, food (wine and cheese degustations), and many other events. Our main



goal this year is to get things together to be able to organise bigger events next year. Interested? Contact mvz06@ic.ac.uk.

Au revoir!

Campaigns, Centenary and Chips

Campaigns

Unsurprisingly perhaps, most students seem to see the Union as the provider of clubs and bars, but we do much more than that. The Union regularly campaigns on students' behalf behind the scenes, both within the College and outside. Some of these campaigns, such as last week's RCSU Office protest, are high profile but many are less visible.

One of the things the Sabbatical team are trying to do this year is raise the profile and effectiveness of campaigns in general. We hope to do this by making sure these campaigns are well resourced, well co-ordinated and well supported.

This term will see the launch of several high profile campaigns including "Green Week", "Fairtrade Fortnight" and an LGBT Awareness week, however, we would like to see more campaigns on more issues in the future. This is why we are working towards creating new dedicated campaign roles within the Union and we are looking for enthusiastic volunteers to take on these roles.

If you are interested in getting involved in campaigning and perhaps even leading a campaign, then please get in touch with Ben Harris, the Union's

Deputy President for Education and Welfare (dpew@imperial.ac.uk). This year we hope to run campaigns on the following issues:

- Anti-Racism: campaigning for better race relations at Imperial.
- Disabled students: working with the College to make it more accommodating for students with disabilities.
- Environmental: campaigning for a greener Imperial, focussing on Green Week this term.
- Ethical: raising awareness of ethical issues amongst Imperial students, focussing on Fairtrade Fortnight this term.
- LGBT: campaigning on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender issues.
- Womens': organising events to encourage women to pursue a career in science, engineering and technology.

However, if you want to propose your own campaign, then please write to Ben or myself. ICU has a reasonable budget for campaigns this year and we are able to provide professional support and advice.

Centenary

Next week the Centenary will really get going with

the build-up to a massive launch on Tuesday 30th January. On that day we will also launch a new Union Centenary website that will advertise every centenary event we plan to hold throughout the rest of the year. If your club or society is planning to hold a centenary event that we don't know about then please contact Shiv Chopra (medic.president@imperial.ac.uk) as soon as possible.

Chips

And finally, an announcement that is long overdue. When I stood for President last year I deliberately didn't promise to introduce chips to the Union simply because I was under the impression that this would be logistically too difficult to do and recent Presidents had made this promise and failed to deliver it. Thanks to hard work by our staff over the Christmas, we are now able to offer chips in the evenings! You can buy a small portion of chips from £1 and potato wedges from £2 any evening from 4:30pm.



John Collins
President

president@imperial.ac.uk

medic.president@imperial.ac.uk

Spent Too Much on Eggnog?

At this time of year many people don't feel themselves. There have been many parties over the festive period, you have probably all been back to your hometown, met up with old friends and seen some of your family for the first time in ages.

Christmas can be a strange time of year, many of you have probably had to buy presents for your family or perhaps some of you may have just had a good time catching up with old friends; either of these cases can be expensive.

As a student it can often be hard to budget for these things after all you have rent to pay, fees, books for education and of course need money to spend on your leisure time, with all this in mind there is always a temptation to borrow money at Christmas to fund your gift buying or your social life.

This money can be borrowed from a bank, personal loans, credit cards or sometimes from friends but there is always a temptation to spend over your limit at the festive time of year we call Christmas. Often after the last mince pie has been eaten and the eggnog has finished, the first credit card bill arrives or your bank is on at you because you are over your overdraft.

The Information and Advice Centre may be able to help if you have over spent your budget at Christmas and now find yourself in a bad financial situation. If you are having problems with credit card companies or your bank, we can work out your income and outgoings and write to these companies

on your behalf to negotiate a payment plan that you can actually afford; we can advocate for you in this situation.

It is also important that you prioritise your money in this situation, something like a credit card debt is not essentially a priority debt. It is best that you look to pay things such as your rent, amenity bills and fees before looking at other debts, this is because if you don't pay these things you will essentially lose something. For example if you don't pay your rent you will be evicted, don't pay gas bill, you will be cut off and if you don't pay your fees you may be asked to leave college.

We can also help if you find you can't afford your fees or rent to the college. We write to the college on behalf of many students and try to explain why you can't afford these debts and also sometimes make offers to them to negotiate a payment plan.

If you find yourself in heavy debt, it is important to tell people what is happening and not bury your head in the sand. Most companies are willing to help if you find you cannot afford to pay them back the money you owe them.

Of course debt isn't just about the money, it can bring on other issues such as stress and worry. These of course, can lead to you not being focused on your academic work. It is important to talk to someone if you feel that the stress of debt is affecting your work.

Your first port of call should be your personal tutor. If you find that they are not helpful or you don't feel comfortable talking to them, then the Information and Advice Centre can talk to your department for you and explain what is happening. We can try to negotiate more time for you to do your projects or at least let them know how you are feeling leading up to an exam.

The college offers financial help in the form of the access to learning fund. This is administered by the student finance office and is for students who have exhausted all other areas of income, not all students will be eligible for this. The Student Support Officer, Phillipa Worley, administers this; you can contact her on : student.support@imperial.ac.uk. The Information and Advice Centre also has some application forms for this fund.

The Information and Advice Centre also gives general budgeting advice to students with regard to how to manage your money more effectively. We can look at your expenditure and advise you on the areas you need to improve spending on.

If you feel you would like to contact the Information and Advice Centre on these issues or any other welfare issues, you can contact us on: 020 7594 8067 or advice@imperial.ac.uk.



Nigel Cooke

Student Adviser
advicet@imperial.ac.uk

Hyper mega bonus puzzle fun time

Here's even more puzzles for especially boring lectures because you just can't get enough of these, can you?

Extra sudoku!

		6	4				5	
2				3				6
		9		7		1		
7		5	3			6		
	1						7	
		8			7	2		5
		1		9		8		
9			6	1				2
					5	9		

The only one this week

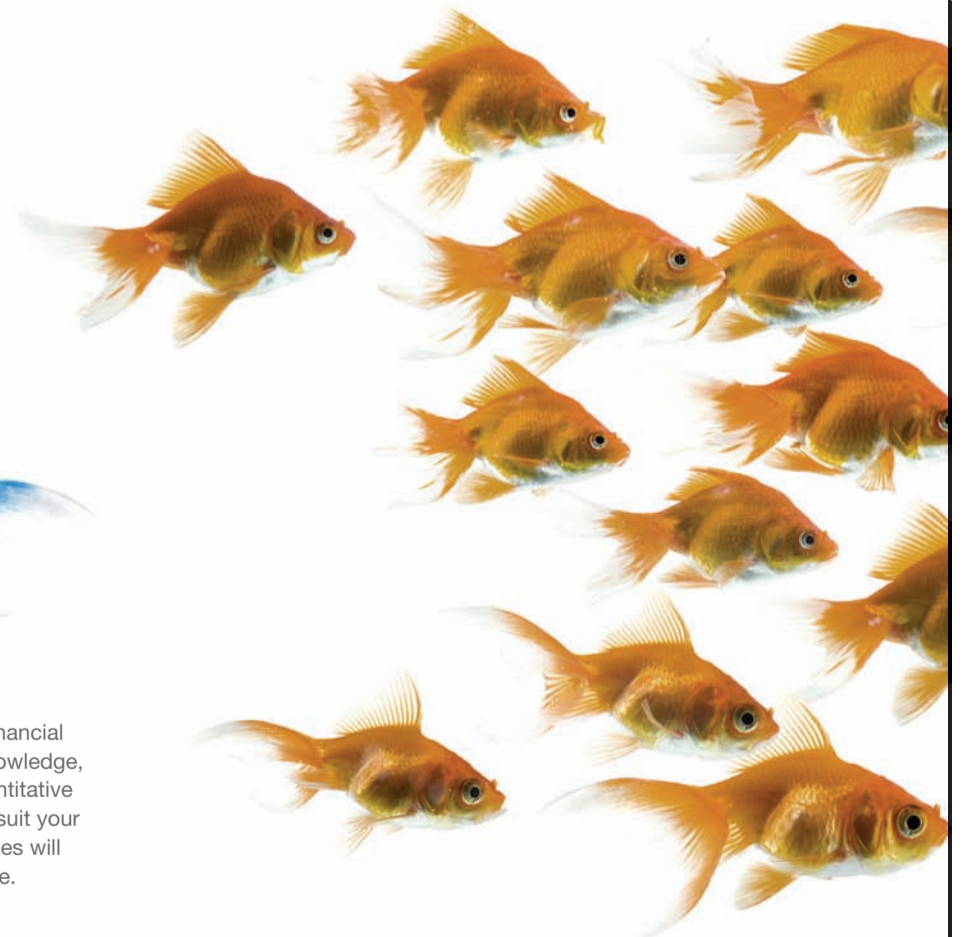
Kakuro – round 2

	5	27						
9			30	14	14			
25								
	22							
	9			9				
	11							
23								
22								

The numbers indicate the sum of the digits in the row or column indicated. For example, the square with 7 and 11 in it means “the numbers you write in the row below must add up to 7, and the numbers in the row across must add up to 11”. You may use each number only once within a row of cells (called a ‘run’), like sudoku.

Any spare cells are available for advertising in future weeks.

A new school of thought



Cass is a first class business school in one of the world's leading commercial centres. Based in London's financial district, we have a host of MSc programmes that offer a variety of opportunities for you to increase your knowledge, broaden your commercial scope and further your potential. Whether you wish to specialise in Finance, Quantitative Finance, Real Estate, Actuarial Science, Management, Shipping, Energy or Logistics, we'll have an MSc to suit your needs. And thanks to our close ties with business and industry experts, you can be sure that our programmes will equip you to swim against the tide of competition and towards success through proven business knowledge.

For more information on one of our regular open evenings, the next is February 1 2007, visit www.cass.city.ac.uk/masters and click on 'visit us'. Alternatively call admissions on +44 (0) 20 7040 5122.

GolfSoc tee off in Surrey

Craig Lampert
Honorary Secretary, Golf Soc

What a way to spend your Sundays, but to escape the stresses of College for a relaxing day in the country dedicated to the splendid pastime that is golf.

Recently, a small group of members attempted a trip south of the river to a golf club in Surrey. Not knowing exactly where the club was, our designated driver (VC Simon) utilized his latest gadget, GPS, to guide us directly to the club. Problem is these devices are only as good as the idiot who programs them, and there are in fact 2 Meadow

Roads in Surrey one of which was a lot further away from where we wanted to be. Guess which one we went to?! So after nearly an hour sitting in traffic (much enjoyed by the boys in the back seat with three golf bags sitting on there laps) we had missed our tee-off time and decided to descend on the first golf club we found.

So more by luck than Judgment we found South Surrey Golf Course, and things got better when it turned out to be cheaper than the one we were heading for originally. After a warm up of walking to the first tee, the game began. Clearly everyone was still traumatized from the journey as not a single player hit the green on the first shot of the par three and Simon even lost his ball. The game pretty much developed into the disappearing ball game, with Danny losing his ball and then his temper on the second. Oli Managed to keep them pretty much between the trees unlike my consistent slicing which baffled everyone. The Longer holes proved opportunity enough for Simon to hit some smashing drives, if only he was as fast up the hill as his ball was. By the 7th hole Danny was proving the



I can't believe golf is on the back page. Also, this is not them, because they had no good photographs

Sally Gunnell technique (doesn't look good but runs a long way) to be very effective where as Oli was struggling with an Adolph (two in the bunker).

By this time, being a cloudy winter's day, it was becoming too dark to continue playing, and by the 12th hole we made a dash to the 18th where a putting competition decided who would buy the Refreshments (bad luck Danny!).

Golf Soc. is the new golfing society at Imperial College, offering a number of opportunities to those who join. For those members with little or no previous experience in

golf, there is an ambitious beginner's programme that will last for 8 weeks throughout the spring term. It will teach the basics, from holding the club correctly, right the way through to effective course management.

Golf Soc. isn't just for novices, but experienced golfers too. The Tiger Woods among you will have the opportunity to hone your skills on the driving range before attempting numerous courses in and around London.

There is a number of golf related social events, for example Pub Golf, which is always a popular amongst

non-golfers as well, Student alumni golf matches and the infamous 106th Bottle Match, which is due to go ahead in February. Golf Soc. is for anyone at Imperial with a keen interest in the game of golf. Your ability in this sport is not an excuse to shy away from joining! Who says golf is a good walk spoiled?

Interested? Come along to our introductory session on Wednesday 24th January to register contact society Captain, Daniel Hill, via email at: daniel.hill@imperial.ac.uk.

Sports results

Wed 10th January

Fencing:
Women's 1st 135
UCL 1st 96

Tennis:
Men's 1st 7
LSE 2nd 3

Saturday 13th January

Football:
Men's 2nd 4
LSE 2nd 0

Monday 15th January

Netball:
Women's 1st 31
KCL 2nd 17

Women's 2nd 16
Royal Vets 3rd 14

Help!

Now that you're suitably invigorated after the Christmas break, we want your sports reports.

sport.felix@imperial.ac.uk

PhDComics

www.phdcomics.com

