

## Exams

### One of these is not like the other

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## Science

### Shrinking sheep



# felix

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# ICU branded “right-wing insurgents”

## Most productive NUS conference sees Respect confronting “right-wing unions” and realism triumphing over idealism

**Andy Sykes**  
Editor-in-chief

By all accounts, Imperial’s presence at the NUS conference at the end of last month was not a waste of time. It appears that this year’s conference was somewhat revolutionary.

In previous years, NUS Conference has been somewhat of a farce, being hampered by the efforts of the fringe left factions to push through motions that call for, for example, solidarity with striking workers in other countries, and other such things that are of little relevance to

students of the member unions.

This year, however, things had changed. Imperial, newly joined, found itself labelled as the “extreme right” along with other delegations from Sheffield, Kings College, and Bristol by the leftist factions present at Conference. Respect in particular referred to our own card-carrying Labour Party member, Alex Guite, as a “right-wing insurgent”. At times, the Conference descended into “Respect vs the rest”. Conference old hands attributed this to a general distaste for Respect’s methods of stalling and amendments to motions, and

a desire for change within the NUS as a whole.

Division was not the whole story of the Conference. Many motions were passed unopposed, showing some level of common ground between the two warring factions; a resolution calling for overseas medical students to be allowed to complete their training was passed, for example.

Other notable defeats for the far left included a failure to pass any motions calling for a costly and probably ineffective national demonstration every year; instead, the NUS is calling for a smarter approach to fees campaigning, accepting that some level of top-up fees will be a reality for the foreseeable future. ICU delegate Edmund Hunt gave a speech explaining the need for intelligent lobbying on the subject, arguing that students must explain to the Government why our education is valuable.

The cost of affiliating to the NUS will rise to £35,000 in the next few years, and so it is vital ICU gets value for money from the organisation. Many pro-NUS campaigners argued that ICU would be able to reform the NUS from the inside; indeed a paper was passed calling for a full governance review of the union. Only time will tell if this new, more realistic NUS will prove more effective.



Your democratic diligent delegates and their trusty Union wheels

## Hot dog, jumping frog, Albuquerque



Wondering what this is all about? See inside page for details.



# What you (didn't) miss, part 94

A round-up of all the news over the Easter break; library objections, hot dogs, Union catering, and more

## Sneaky Bifter

It's been a busy month for those of us staying on campus during the Easter break. Here's the highlights of the last four weeks of news.

## Library objections continue

Those of you currently suffering the pain of having to revise in the library will have notice how unbearably hot the building has become as the weather has warmed up. In fact, temperatures in the upper floors have reached more than 30°C in the last week; European regulations stipulate working temperatures no higher than 24°C.

The problems stem from a rejection in March by local residents of plans to place a new cooling plant on the top of the library and provide solar shading for the windows. The objections come from people living in the nearby Alexandria Court, which backs onto the Library, who claim that the solar shading will be "too dense", whatever that means. College plan to resubmit the planning application, minus the solar shading proposal, but it appears the residents of the £2000-a-week

flats are still unsatisfied.

Key to the plans are the construction of a new service tower and cooling plant, both of which have been deemed unsightly by residents. It appears students will have to suffer for a while longer before anything can be done.

## Hot dogs in the Union?

The sandwich bar at lunchtime in dBs has been closed due to poor sales; staff had concocted a plan to turn it into a fast-food style outlet, possibly to compete against the JCR, but the Union Executive rejected the plan. Members of Exec cited concerns over the condition of dBs, which has fallen somewhat into disrepair in recent months, arguing it was too risky to invest in new catering facilities without some major changes to the ambience in room. It received a repainting during the summer, but recent foam parties have played havoc with the wooden floor.

The fast-food outlet would have sold burgers, hotdogs, and Ben & Jerry's icecream between 10am and 3pm every day; however, the same offers are to be put in place

next door in Da Vinci's.

Union catering has suffered since the new JCR facilities opened, with both dBs and Da Vinci's being nowhere near as full as they used to be at lunchtimes. The scary-looking mascot outside may not help to draw in more customers.

## Bar staff under threat

Student staff who work behind the bar will no longer be offered any further shifts if they take part in any Union committees, following recent events.

The ban appears to have arisen from recent friction between staff and the Executive Committee, who voted to shut down dBs at lunchtime after it became clear it was making a substantial loss, and vetoed the rescue plan (see above). Any student who attends Council or Exec, even if they are not a member of either, risks not being offered any more shifts.

Bar staff count as 'casual staff', and as such have little legal recourse to being effectively 'fired'.

Union President John Collins has promised to investigate the matter, commenting: "Speaking generally, I would regard any proposal to limit the rights of student staff to attend open union meetings to be unacceptable and against the democratic principles of our Union." Other senior Union sources have called the action "disgraceful" and "appalling".

The reasoning behind the move appears to be a distaste by staff for students setting policy that may affect their jobs.

## Police examine Union's licence

The authority responsible for policing licences to sell alcohol have visited the Union bars and Holland Club, citing concerns over who is being served in the bars. After the shake-up of licensing laws two years ago, the police force are now responsible for checking up on licensed premises.

Ostensibly the Union is a mem-

PHOTO BY EMERSON VIGOUREUX



The tent, which covers almost the entirety of the lawn

bers' club, meaning it should only serve drinks to its members. This includes every student at the College who hasn't opted out of Union membership. However, until recently the police had adopted a 'softly-softly' approach to this rule, allowing regular drinkers from the local area, including staff at the Natural History Museum, the Science Museum, and residents, to drink there freely.

It appears that this period of grace may be ending. After the police visit, the bars now sport signs (on the advice of the Union's solicitors) reminding patrons that alcohol is only to be served to members and their guests, as well as members of affiliated unions. The solicitors have also argued that if a person looks of student age and appearance, that there is no reason to assume they are not a student.

The reason for the change of approach to the Union's licenced premises is not entirely clear. One Union official who wished not to be named suggested a reason: that the huge backlog of cases relating to the change in licencing laws several years ago has now been

cleared, and the departments set up to deal with this now have "nothing better to do".

The risk is that police will not accept the signage and arguments of the Union's solicitors about due diligence, and will force the bar staff to request student ID from every customer, irritating students and increasing waiting times at the bar. For the moment, however, the police seem satisfied with the changes made.

## Queen's Lawn unusable?

*Felix* has heard from various sources that the enormous tent on Queen's Lawn is to remain a permanent fixture until at least October. This means staff and students will be unable to use the lawn during the sunny months to come.

With the controversy last year over plans to place portacabins on the lawn, it is somewhat shocking that no consultation was carried out with staff or students.

Queen's Lawn is one of the few remaining green spaces on South Kensington campus, and it is indeed odd that this should be covered up during Imperial's Centenary year. More on this next week.

PHOTO BY LIVE!



Hotter than most holiday destinations

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## Downstairs mix-up

"When the latter twin was examined further, it turned out it was what's known as a true hermaphrodite – it had ovotestes, gonads containing both testicular and ovarian tissue."

PAGES 4 & 5

## Exams are a-coming

"Ladies and gentlemen of the class '07. If I could offer you one tip for the future, it would be this: do some damn work. The long term benefits of doing some work have been proved by scientists, whereas the rest of my advice has no basis more than my own meandering experience."

PAGES 6 & 7

## Games on trial

"Did the latest American high school shooter have contact with



CENTRE PAGES

videogames? None were found in his apartment, but that didn't stop the Washington Post from linking Cho Seung Hi to the popular online FPS CounterStrike."

PAGES 12 & 13

## Welfare support

"Once down we headed to a truckers café to warm up and provoke a few of the locals

(Coming out of the Café we quickly removed the word 'Poofs' from the back of the mini-bus, but we did leave 'English' for our memory)."

PAGE 14

## Cricket debauchery

"Some of the squad then enjoyed a local massage, all sticking to (mostly) innocent activities. In the evening we enjoyed the delights of Patong: pizza and some 'speciality dancing.'"

PAGES 18 & 19

## End of highlights

"I'm sorry, all of the staff are doing exams at the moment, so that's it for highlights. And now, here's a song: do-do-do-da-da-da-dooo-do-da-da-dooooo."



A child with his head stuck in the railings in Kensington Gardens; it took firefighters almost an hour to free the unhappy kid, to the great amusement of the crowd that gathered to watch.



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# Double trouble - twins in the news

Felix brings you a brief overview of recent research involving human, marmoset and antelope twins

Edmund Henley  
Science Editor

## I've got you under my skin

If you were paying attention to the science news over the holidays, you may have noticed Human Genetics recently published a report of a new type of human twin, mid-way between fraternal and identical twins.

Rather unexpectedly, these twins resulted not from IVF treatment, but from a natural conception – the only reason this case came to light was because although one of the twins was an apparently normal male, the other had ambiguous genitalia. When the latter twin was examined further, it turned out it was what's known as a true hermaphrodite – it had ovaries, gonads containing both testicular and ovarian tissue. This is unusual enough that the researchers also performed DNA analysis on both twins, and discovered they are both chimæras – they contain more than two sets of genetic material. In layman's terms, each twin contains a bit of

the other twin, making the question of who's who rather tricky.

Usually, humans contain two sets of genetic material (or alleles), a set from the mother in the egg, and a set from the father in the sperm. Fraternal twins are the result of two eggs being fertilised by two sperm cells. As the set of alleles in one egg or sperm differs from that in the other (only half the alleles are expected to be shared), the two sets in each twin are different, meaning fraternal twins are as genetically alike as normal siblings; the only difference being they just happen to be born at the same time.

Identical twins, by contrast, are genetically identical, as they result from one egg and one sperm, which has split into two later, so both twins are composed of the same two sets. These twins are chimæric because though they share alleles from the mother's side (indicating they came from one egg, like identical twins), they each contain cells originating from two different sperm, and so have only half their alleles from the father in common (like fraternal twins). Meaning each twin is made up of three sets of genetic material

in total, making them chimæras.

It's unclear whether these twins are the result of an egg splitting before each half was fertilised by two sperm; or, less likely, because the egg was fertilised simultaneously by two sperm, but in either case the subsequent pair of fertilised eggs intermixed before becoming two distinct individuals. Resulting in this previously undiscovered type of human twin, who are more similar than fraternal twins, but less so than identical twins, and presumably extremely rare.

## My brother's keeper

In marmosets however, chimæric twins are very common; indeed a report published in PNAS a couple of weeks ago, looking at Wied's black tufted-ear marmosets (which typically produce twins), discovered 72% of the twin litters contained chimæras. To be precise, this means at least one twin contained chimæric tissue. The reason this is so common in marmosets is because of the way the twins develop in the uterus – from an early stage their placentas fuse, allowing stem cells (and hence alleles) from one twin to enter into the other (and vice-versa, in just under half the cases observed). One important consequence of this is that the stem cells which then go on to create one twin's reproductive system could come from the other twin. So a female marmoset, when breeding, could be providing not her own genetic material but her twin brother's for example – and so might be able to pass on a Y chromosome, a role usually restricted to males. Where this study got even more intriguing was in its examination of the behavioural effect of this "horizontal" dissemination of genes, from one twin to the other's offspring. It turns out that marmosets are highly social, with many group members providing care for the infants. The researchers monitored the behaviour of small groups within a colony of marmosets at the University of Nebraska; groups comprising only parents and offspring, where only one twin was chimæric, and had chimæric skin tissue – the type of tissue most likely to show some indication of lineage to the parents. By counting how often each parent picked up the chimæric and non-chimæric twin during their first two weeks of life, the researchers were able to determine that the males carried chimæric offspring significantly more than non-chimæric, the trend being reversed for the mother.

One possibility the authors advance to explain the father's preference is that the chimæric offspring might be more recognizable as his offspring (as it might match more of his genes involved in creating individual traits), thus reducing the risk he's been cuckolded and is looking after another marmoset's offspring. They also note the horizontal sharing might also explain the greater investment in the young by apparently unrelated group members (when the groups are of a normal size) – if one twin might be the genetic father of the other's offspring, it creates an evolutionary imperative to support his twin's offspring, to propagate those genes. This would naturally create a more cohesive group.



Top: Marmoset – can sire their twin's children, as they're chimæras  
Bottom: Saiga – an endangered antelope found in Kazakhstan



Classics. Top: hermaphrodite, with rather unambiguous genitalia  
Bottom: Bellerophon slaying the (classical) chimæra

## Sibling rivalry

But though marmosets seem to find having a twin rather useful, it's not necessarily advantageous for all species. Last month also saw the publication of a study into saiga antelope, a critically endangered species which lives on the Eurasian steppe, and which frequently gives birth to twins. A team headed by Imperial scientist Aline Kühl has cooperated with Kazakh rangers to monitor saiga herds each May over three years, weighing calves born in the week-long birth season. They discovered that when the mother is pregnant with mixed-sex twins, the male foetus undergoes much less growth than he would if he had

a twin brother instead, and so is significantly underweight at birth. It's not clear why the male twins in saiga are disadvantaged – in cows for example, it's usually the female twins in mixed-sex litters who suffer. However, the researchers expect that underweight male twins will be at a distinct reproductive disadvantage – at breeding time there is stiff competition with other males, and so being lighter is likely to be highly detrimental to reproductive fitness. Future studies will verify this, looking at the long-term effect of sibling sex on reproductive success.

[Many thanks to Barbara Portella, for structure and content ideas]



# “Baa / ribbit – what a scorcher!”

The incredible case of the dying frogs and the shrinking sheep. Whodunnit – climate change you say?

Barbara Axt Portella

As many of you are no doubt aware, the climate is changing, the world is getting hotter, and our cheap holiday flights are just as much to blame as all those polluting industries. The most recent IPCC report tells us these climate changes could lead to the extinction of up to 30% of all plants and animals. An appalling projection, no doubt, but even if the world is not stripped of one third of its biodiversity, several less dramatic changes are certainly in store. Even if they're gradual enough that we don't notice them, over time they will probably have a serious influence on the lives of the remaining species.

Dr Tim Coulson, from Imperial's Division of Biology, says that global warming is leaving an evolutionary signature in the planet's species: “We are probably changing patterns of selection and this could

well result in small-scale evolutionary change”. Some of these changes are described in a paper he published in the journal *Science*, together with researchers from the Universities of Cambridge, Edinburgh and Stanford. They studied a population of Soay sheep in the Outer Hebrides, and found evidence that temperature influences the size of the animals.

In a warmer environment, it seems there is less of an advantage to being a large sheep – it doesn't matter so much if the animal is smaller. After several generations, the result is a general reduction in body size. With this paper, scientists were able to prove that climate change can alter genetic characteristics.

Some animals' behaviour is also modified, explains Dr Coulson. “On the island of Rum, we have seen red deer giving birth to their calves earlier in the year. There are probably many other such changes, but in



Amphibians are at risk from the Chytrid fungus, which affects their skin's ability to absorb water. As climate change raises temperatures, the fungus' spread may threaten many species with extinction



A Soay sheep. Baa. Warmer climates mean larger sheep don't enjoy an especial evolutionary advantage, so average sheep size diminishes.

order to pick them up you need detailed individual-based data – and such data are rare.” While all living beings do their best to adapt to the new conditions, in some cases they don't have anywhere to run. Quite literally. “While animals and plants have adapted to past climate shifts by moving to more suitable habitats, their options are now much more limited because of the conversion of so many ecosystems to uses such as cities and intensive agriculture” says Ahmed Djoghla, head of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in a column on the BBC website.

But shrinking mammals and altered mating schedules won't be the only consequence of climate change. There's also a fungal disease, deadly to amphibians, which will thrive in the hot weather. According to Dr Matthew Fisher, from Imperial's department of Epidemi-

ology, contamination by the fungus *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* (Bd) is nothing less than one of the most potent threats to biodiversity yet discovered.

Last year, researchers from Imperial College and two Madrid Institutions proved that the increase in temperatures is responsible for the virtual extinction of the midwife toad in a mountain region of Spain. They showed that 26 years of increasing temperatures led to the emergence of the chytrid fungus Bd in the area. The disease affects the ability of amphibian skin to absorb water and is causing a huge number of deaths among frogs, toads, salamanders and newts worldwide.

“This is a wake-up call that we are losing biodiversity fast,” said Dr. Fisher. “Climate change appears to be changing patterns of disease and previously resistant species are be-

coming highly infected – even, in a number of cases, becoming extinct.” The Global Amphibian Assessment has warned that a third of the world's amphibian species are in danger of extinction, many because of the chytrid fungus.

We are already changing diseases and evolutionary patterns, and nobody knows exactly what the results will be, but it's likely the effects will be more widespread than we can imagine. “As the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment pointed out in 2005, reduction of biodiversity implies a threat to services as basic as the provision of food, fibre, medicines and fresh water, the pollination of crops and protection from flooding,” warns Ahmed Djoghla. It will be a very different world – here's hoping we're one of the species which are able to adapt, to witness what we've unleashed..

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# Revision getting you down? Exams

Don't panic! Listen to us elderly folks down *Felix* way, and we'll show you how to survive the coming weeks



## Thee Olde Tymer

"If I could offer you one tip for the future, it would be this: do some damn work."

Ladies and gentlemen of the class '07. If I could offer you one tip for the future, it would be this: do some damn work. The long term benefits of doing some work have been proved by scientists, whereas the rest of my advice has no basis more than my own meandering experience.

Organise your notes, but don't organise your day. Sleep well. Go to the library, but leave before it makes you dehydrated; go to the pub, but leave before you get drunk. Floss. Be kind to your brain; you'll miss it when it's gone. Don't waste your time on panicking; sometimes you're ahead of schedule, and sometimes you're behind. Get plenty of water. Keep hold of the few precious revision buddies you have, and always remember that notes are for sharing. Work hard, but remember to play harder once it's all over. Don't forget that it will all be over at some point.

Shower. Regularly. And I do mean it. Remember the equations you learn, but forget the deriva-

tions. Worry about the big things, not the little things. Eat well. Get to know your lecturers; they can give you valuable hints about what might be on the paper. Past papers are your friends; look at as many of them as you can.

Accept certain inalienable truths; your notes will be unintelligible, what you've learned the most will not be on the exam, and you can't always answer every question. Be happy. Respect the upper years; they know more than you.

Maybe you'll pass, maybe you won't. Don't be afraid of failure; hope for success. Don't worry about the exam; or, if you must worry, remember that worrying is about as effective as trying to solve an equation by chewing gum.

Advice is a form of nostalgia, dispensing it is a way of fishing the past from the disposal, wiping it off, painting over the ugly parts and recycling it for more than it's worth. But trust me on the doing of work.

(With apologies to Baz Luhrmann & Mary Schlich)

## Library do's and don'ts

**DO**  
Shower before you go. It's bloody hard to concentrate when the person sat next to you smells like a hot day in a farmyard.

**DON'T**  
Initiate games of keepy-uppy with balls of screwed-up paper. Yes, yes, we're all very impressed with your display of masculine talent, but it won't get you any play. Do some work.

**DO**  
Get there early. According to my research, if you're not in before 8am, you've got about as much chance as finding a free space to work as you have of finding £300 in your coat pocket.

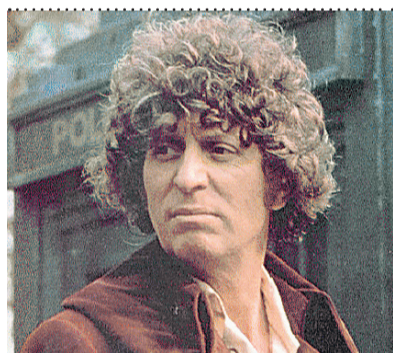
**DON'T**  
Leave your crap lying around so

others can't take your space. I mean, come on, you insensitive bastard. Other people have to work, you know.

**DO**  
Think about other places to work. Here's a quick list of lesser-known revision spots: Chemistry common rooms (2nd floor), Physics labs on level 3 (open and nearly always empty), back half of the SAF (nice cushions on the benches), The Builders Arms (known to be friendly to revising students), and the British Library (long way to go, but plenty of space).

**DON'T**  
Even think about bringing food upstairs. It stinks, we're all hungry, and you're just making a mess. Go eat in the Haldane Collection if you really must.

## The three Ws: Work, Work, and... uhm, Work



## The Doctor (is in)

As a doctor, I am often asked: "Doctor, my palms are sweating profusely, my stomach is rotating rapidly despite not eating anything since that chicken'n'bacon yesterday, and I have a tense, nervous headache like that one in the adverts. What's wrong with me?" Fear not, my less-well-educated chum; you do not have cancer (or even herpes, though you might want to get those weird spots checked out). No, indeed, you have a classic case of exam stress, commonly known as ohshitiamfuckeditis. Now, due to my colossal knowledge acquired as an undergraduate (inbetween drinking myself into a stupor in the Reynolds Bar), I can suggest to you a number of possible treatment options. Listen closely, ignoramus.

"Sweaty palms, churning stomach, deep-seated feelings of dread, and a tense, nervous headache? You're just experiencing exam-o-phobia."



**RELAX.**  
Not in the 'Frankie Goes To Hollywood' sense (incidentally, did you know that song is about orgasms?), but in the 'be calm' sense. It's easy to get into a mad panic because



Don't sleep in the library, you filthy bugger. Go home!

you don't know equation 11.4 from lecture 87 of your structural fluid mechanics with quantum misdirection course and lose sight of the fact that (hopefully) you know plenty of other stuff about said subject. If you find yourself getting panicked, try calmly reminding yourself how much work you've already done. Take a break, go for a walk in the park, phone your mum. Then come back to your books refreshed and ready to go.

**PLAN.**  
I can't stress this one enough. Even if you aren't one of nature's planners, try it. Write out a list of what needs to be learnt, and how long you think it'll take you to do it (plus a chunky fudge factor, since work always expands to fill the available time). That way you'll have a nice mental picture of how much you've got to do.

**EAT.**  
Yes, I know it seems redundant. It's easy to forget to eat properly because skipping out for lunch would mean stepping away from those never-ending reams of notes, but you can't function on snacks from

the library vending machines for a month. Trust me on this one. See the opposite page for some things to try. Remember, crisps, Coke, Snickers and coffee do not constitute food groups.

**SLEEP.**  
Staying up all night doesn't help, and may in fact hamper your ability to work. Try to get to bed at a regular time, and rise at roughly the same time every day. If you're feeling adventurous (and have no lectures to go to) you can try something called polyphasic sleep. Basically, you adjust so that you sleep for 20-25 minutes every four hours, giving you six naps through the day and night. Theoretically, this should give you more time to work, and most tiredness should dissipate after about ten days. I managed it once for a week before crumbling.

**SEX.**  
Sex fills your brain full of dopamine, and makes you feel generally awesome – just what you need. However, this is Imperial, so we won't assume you'll be with a partner. Just remember to wash your hands afterwards.

## Revision killers

### Facebook

As addictive as crack-laced heroin rolled into a cigarette. Studies have shown it will eat up roughly 75% of your revision time; writing inanities on your friends' walls can be very time-consuming. Just say no.

### Xbox/Wii/DS/Gameboy/PS2

Since this is a pretty geeky place, it's likely you own one of the above. However tempting it may be to try and finish New Super Mario Bros (finding all the secrets), resist. You'll find your day vanishes faster than you can say "oh fuck I've done no work at all".

### Alcohol

Don't spend all day building up neural connections only to burn them all away with a six-hour cider binge that ends with you losing your notes (and your shoes) in the park (true story).

### Denial

Not just a river in Egypt (snare roll). Thanks, I'll be here all week. The biggest revision killer by far. There's nothing like pretending that really unpleasant course taught by the lecturer with the impenetrable accent will be a piece of piss.



# looming? Let us help you stay alive

## Eat for success: our guide to work-friendly food

One of the main things that can affect how well we concentrate is our diet and the kinds of foods we eat. It is very easy to snack on sugary foods and drinks to make us feel better during times of revision, but this can actually have a negative effect on our ability to take in information. So we've put together a list of ten foods and drinks that will help your mind, as well as body.

### 1. Porridge

Start your day the right way with a bowl of porridge. Oats have a high content of complex carbohydrates and fibre which encourage slow digestion and stable blood-glucose levels, so you will have a steady stream of energy throughout the morning.

Oats are also high in beta-glucan, which has been linked to the prevention of heart disease.



Delicious porridge, yesterday.

### 2. Free range eggs

These are an excellent source of protein which we need for energy, growth and to produce essential enzymes. Poached or boiled eggs are a healthier choice than fried eggs, because you don't need to add fat during cooking.

Always try and go for organic free range eggs as they are higher in essential fatty acids (EFAs), which have been linked to good brain health. Columbus Omega 3 eggs are one of the best buys as they are from birds specifically fed on a high Omega 3 diet.

### 3. Natural yoghurt

This contains active and living bacterial cultures which help to boost the immune system. It is especially important to look after your immune system during revision and exams as stress can make you more vulnerable to illnesses. By helping to maintain the balance of bacteria

in your bowel and prevent the overgrowth of candida yeast you will also be helping your mind, as too much of this yeast has been linked to emotional symptoms and poor mental state.

### 4. Use xylitol in place of sugar

Xylitol is a 100% natural substance found in fruits and plants, which has far fewer calories and carbohydrates than sugar, and releases its energy much slower (it has a GI value of just 7, about ten times lower than sugar). A slow release of energy means you will have more constant blood sugar levels, which stops the peaks and troughs of mood and energy that you get with high sugar

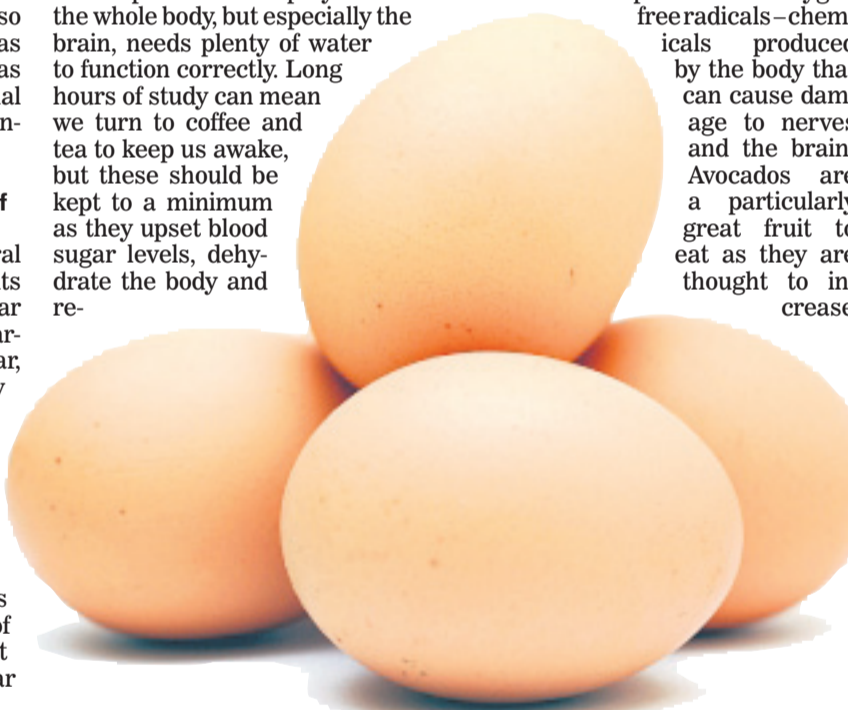
foods, meaning you can stay concentrating for longer. Xylitol is available from supermarkets and health food stores under the brand name Perfect Sweet.

### 5. Wholegrains

A small change, like changing from white to brown bread, can have a surprising effect on our concentration levels. The carbohydrates in refined and processed foods are quickly released into the body and so make us feel great, but only in the short term, after which our mood drops. The complex carbohydrates found in natural and unprocessed foods work like time release capsules and so keep the brain fueled for longer. However you should still limit yourself to 3 fist sized servings of complex carbs a day as too much carbohydrates (even from wholegrains) can upset sugar balance and effect mood and energy levels.

### 6. Drink plenty of water

It is important to keep hydrated as the whole body, but especially the brain, needs plenty of water to function correctly. Long hours of study can mean we turn to coffee and tea to keep us awake, but these should be kept to a minimum as they upset blood sugar levels, dehydrate the body and re-



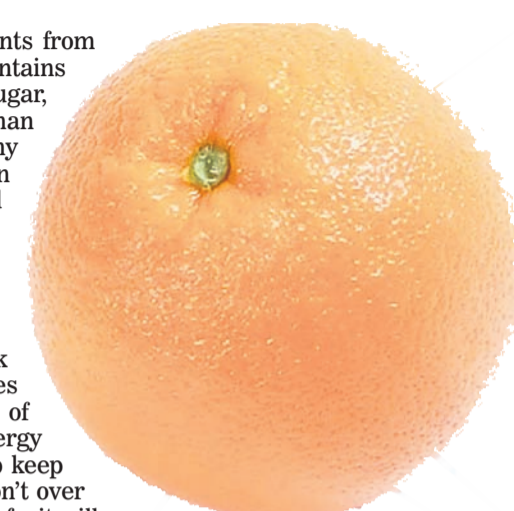
duce absorption of nutrients from foods. A can of coke contains about 8 teaspoons of sugar, which is 4 times more than should be in the blood at any one time. This will result in massive sugar slump and loss of concentration when insulin takes the sugar out of the blood.

### 7. Dried fruit and nuts

These are great to snack on in place of chocolates and sweets. Packed full of vitamins, minerals and energy respectively they will help keep you working. However don't over indulge as too much dried fruit will lead to the sugar hit that you would get from chocolate; a small handful now and then is recommended, not a whole bag!

### 8. Fresh fruit

Fresh fruit is packed with vitamins and anti-oxidants. Anti-oxidants help combat oxygen free radicals - chemicals produced by the body that can cause damage to nerves and the brain! Avocados are a particularly great fruit to eat as they are thought to increase



blood flow to the brain and thus help it function better.

### 9. Protein rich foods e.g. fish

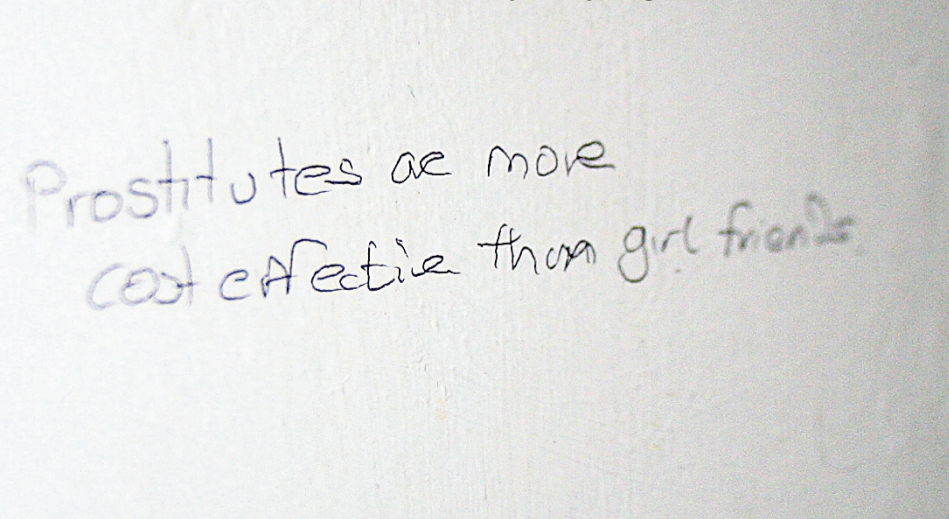
Certain foods are also rich in amino acids which are important to neurotransmitters - chemicals crucial to the passage of nerve impulses in the brain. Many protein-rich foods such as fish contain the amino acid tryptophan, which plays a key role in the manufacture of serotonin, which affects mood and alertness. Dopamine levels are also increased - the brain chemical responsible for the feeling of alertness. The brain also requires substantial amounts of fatty acids, such as Omega-3, found in oily fish, which are used to maintain the health of brain cells. They enhance the receptors of serotonin which makes the brain better able to receive the message to feel good, relax and be calm.

### 10. Seeds

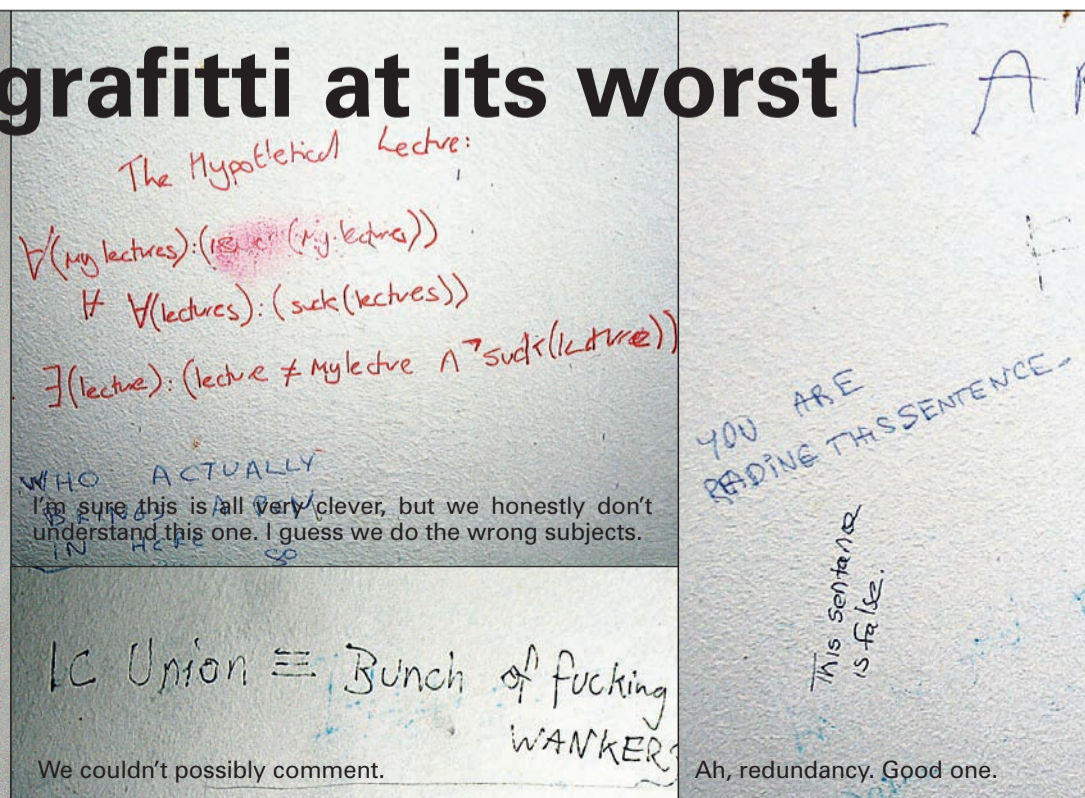
Seeds such as pumpkin, sunflower, sesame and linseeds are all good sources of protein, essential fatty acids and zinc. Zinc is thought to be particularly important to brain health and plays a significant role in activating certain areas of the brain.

## A lighter side: toilet grafitti at its worst

These are taken from the toilets in the library. Add your grafitti there.



Toilet grafitti in the library around exam time tends to reveal some startling truths about students under stress. Alongside nerdy jokes (normally painstakingly drawn), we have pithy little truths like the one above.



We couldn't possibly comment.

Ah, redundancy. Good one.



## Welcome Back!

I hope you all enjoyed a relaxing Easter break. Those of us who stayed in London were treated to almost unbroken sunshine in a month that is famous for its showers; there seems little doubt that summer has arrived early this year.

### Lawns and Libraries

The early return of summer weather is good news for those who love sipping cold drinks in the quadrangle on those long summer evenings, and this is an experience that will be even more pleasant this year thanks to the brand new lawn we lovingly prepared for you over the break.

However, for many of you the heat will be a nuisance that gets in the way of productive revision. Those who prefer to revise in the Central Library will know this more than most, which is why we are working with the college estates team to try and persuade our grumpy neighbours that solar shading is desperately needed to bring room temperatures down in the main South Kensington library.

Whilst we will applying pressure from our angle, if you are a Westminster City resident then you can help as well. We are encouraging all students who care about the temperature of

the Central Library to write to their local councillor in support of the College's plans to bring the temperatures down. For more details on how to do this and to download a model letter to send to your councillor, please visit our website.

### Centenary Ball: tickets are selling fast!

Just because we are entering the traditionally more relaxed academic term doesn't mean the student union completely closes down until next autumn. This term we are holding our traditional summer carnival, a new trading forum (see bottom right) and, of course, our Centenary Ball.

There is an unprecedented level of interest in this event and several hundred tickets have already been sold. We have nearly sold twice as many dinner tickets than we managed to sell last year and the remaining tickets are selling fast. Our line up includes many great acts including Radio 1 and TV's Vernon Kay, plus some of the biggest DJ names in the industry. The number of entertainments venues will be double the number provided last year.

The price is just £30 for an entertainments ticket, and £55 for

a dinner ticket, and £75 for a VIP ticket. Details and payment can all be accessed from [imperialcollegeunion.org/ball](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/ball).

Make sure you buy your tickets before May 15th as the prices will go up, so buy now to avoid disappointment. By definition, centenary balls only happen every 100 years, so make sure you don't miss out on what promises to be the most spectacular event Imperial College has ever seen!



**John Collins**

President

[president@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:president@imperial.ac.uk)

### Congratulations Ben!

Finally, I would like to lend my voice in support of Ben Ryall's great efforts in last week's London Marathon. Thanks to Ben, our student opportunities fund is £22,000 better off. Look out for future fund raising events later on this term.

Why are you still reading this? Go and buy your ball ticket before we sell out!

## Mission accomplished for College's 'Marathon Man'

By Sophie Corcoran  
Office of Alumni and Development

After weeks of rigorous training, Sunday 22 April saw our 'Marathon Man', Ben Ryall, pounding pavements from Blackheath to Buckingham Palace as he conquered the world famous Flora London Marathon in just 2 hours 53 minutes.

Ben took his position at 09.45 in Greenwich Park, joined by an eclectic mix of 36,396 charity fun-runners, professional athletes and celebrities. The gruelling 26.2 mile course stretched from Greenwich to The Mall, taking in some of London's most famous sights and landmarks along the way. Thousands of lively spectators filled the streets to support the competitors and cheer them along to the finish line. Amongst them were members of Imperial staff and students along with some of Ben's family and friends.

The final few miles of the course took Ben past the Tower of London, along the River Thames and past Nelson's Column. The end was well and truly in sight as our runner passed under the shadow of his namesake 'Big Ben', into Birdcage Walk and finally, along The Mall.

Sweltering heat made this year's London Marathon an even greater test of endurance. Temperatures had soared to around 21 degrees by midday, making it the hottest event since 1996. Despite the punishing conditions however, Ben managed to clock an extraordinary finishing time of 2 hours 53 minutes. Speaking at the finisher's enclosure in St James' Park he said: "This has been both a challenging

and rewarding exercise for me. It's a tough 26 miles, but the crowd really helps you along and encourages you to get to the finish line. I'm so pleased that I have had the opportunity to run the Marathon for Imperial College and I only hope that by doing so, I have provided opportunity for many more future students."

Ben was chosen from a line-up of hopefuls to represent the College after penning a compelling personal statement and taking part in a fitness challenge event at Ethos back in January. His progress has been closely tracked through a training diary on the College's website where visitors have also been able to sponsor Ben online.

Representation in this illustrious event has added even more significance to Imperial's Centenary celebrations. Staff, students, alumni and friends have given generously to support Ben's efforts which will benefit the College's Student Opportunities Fund. The College-wide scholarship fund provides entry scholarships for undergraduate and postgraduate students who might otherwise be unable to study at Imperial College because of financial need. Since it was established in 2003, the fund has awarded 60 scholarships to talented and deserving students, with a further 37 due to enrol in September. Ben comments: "The Student Opportunities Fund does some truly fantastic work. Those who have sponsored me have really made a donation to the College's future and invested in the lives of tomorrow's students."

It's not too late to pledge your support for Ben. Sponsor his efforts online by visiting [www.imperial.ac.uk/alumni/marathon2007](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/alumni/marathon2007)



## Nominate your Friends for a Union Award

Union Colours are awarded to members of the Union in recognition of their service, contribution and dedication to the Union.

There are 5 types of awards in ascending order of recognition: Half Colours, Full Colours, Outstanding Service Awards, Imperial College Union Fellowships and the Imperial College Union Distinguished Fellowship. Half and Full Colours are awarded to individuals who have made a positive contribution to the general life of the Union in an extraordinary fashion over the course of the year.

Recipients of the Outstanding Service Award will have displayed continuous outstanding achievement across a broad spectrum of Union activities. Fellowships are only awarded to those Full Members who have served the Union in a selfless and dedicated manner which is both exceptional and beyond reproach over the time they are at Imperial.

If you think someone in the Union deserves recognition for their service then nominate them for the above awards. More information can be found at [imperialcollegeunion.org/colours](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/colours).

## Trading Forum meet the people who make the decisions

Do you have an opinion on how we run our trading outlets? Well we are holding a forum to gauge your thoughts on a wide range of trading issues. All students are welcome to attend.

**Thursday 3rd May, 15:00 in dB's**





# Sub-Warden Position

## Beit Hall

A sub-warden position is available in **Beit Hall**.

The responsibilities include pastoral care of 310 undergraduate students, and organising the social life of Beit Hall, within a team of 8 Wardening staff. The position will involve significant commitment of time, energy and responsibility during evenings and weekends. No payment is available, but rent-free accommodation is provided within the Hall. The post would best match a PG student but all members of College with more than 15 months remaining full-time student registration or employment contract are eligible. The position is available from August 2007.

To apply you must complete an application form. Application forms and further information can be downloaded from [www.union.ic.ac.uk/halls/beit/](http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/halls/beit/)

Informal enquiries are welcome – please contact Dr Tamer Zaki on [t.zaki@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:t.zaki@imperial.ac.uk).

Deadline for receipt of applications:  
**18:00 on Friday 1st June 2007.**



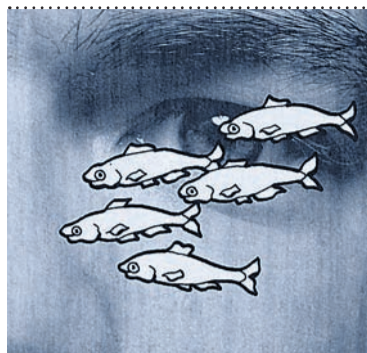
Tillmann Mitzow, German maths exchange student  
and Leonardo A. Ramirez, Aeronautics  
Got what it takes to pose here?  
page3.felix@imperial.ac.uk



Photo by Emerson Vigoureux



## I, Gamer



Michael Cook  
Games Editor

I'm not a big fan of water in games. Not because they're badly done or anything – although that's usually true, too. Simply because they terrify me. It's the lack of control, the murky darkness, and the cutscene that *every single game has to have* where you get shown the evil fishlike hellspawn that's waiting in there to eat you.

This week, though, I'm feeling slightly anti-water in the real world. In fact, Felix Games comes to you this week in exile, an editorial forced out of its natural surroundings by a burst radiator pipe. Ceiling leaking, cupboards soaked, computer barely saved. We lost a lot of good men back there.

Thankfully, being a little worn around the edges doesn't do much harm, and so we've managed to get you something to look at despite the more damp surroundings. In fact, this term we're all about being worn around the edges, as we delve into charity shops, eBay and our own misspent youth to uncover the great games of yesteryear that really deserve a second go.

We're hoping to have a run down of a host of great emulation and mod remakes, a chance to win yourself some of the best-loved classics, and our personal experiences of those huge gaming monoliths. As well as our retro theme, we'll be covering Imperial's third Games and Media Event, hosted by the Department of Computing in May, and hopefully beginning a new regular for this term, as we explore the greatest MMOs out there – with fresh eyes.

And, as always, we're looking for new submissions, new ideas, and interesting gamers out there at Imperial who have something to share. Competitive? Creative? Do you loathe everything that adorns these pages? We don't care where you want us to shove our Wii-motes, just let us know.

For now, though, I'm trying to locate my Oblivion disc so I can have a mid-exams break in Tamriel. Bear with us as the writers, editors and whatnot go through that tricky period of flagellation and prayer known as examinations, and remember to take fifteen-minute breaks for each hour of revision. Or a fifteen-minute break of revision from every hour of gaming.  
Hell, something like that.

# This Week in Videogames

Killings in America, J. Thompson, and GTA – but the BBFC defends UK gamers

Of all the demographic groups you could've pinned into a political situation, gamers seem to be the least obvious candidates. When Rock or Punk had their turn in the limelight of public disapproval, they were ready for it. For gamers, many of them barely look up from World of Warcraft.

And yet, represented or not, there's a lot of discussion going on lately. Did the latest American high school shooter have contact with videogames? None were found in his apartment, but that didn't stop the Washington Post from linking Cho Seung Hi to the popular online FPS CounterStrike.

And that means Jack Thompson. So over the pond, they're left with court battles, wild claims, and solemn mourning. But back home, there's an entirely new attitude being taken towards games and gamers.

The British Board of Film Classification published the results of a large survey and collated research into the game playing habits of UK gamers. Whilst the BBFC only have to personally review 7% of games releases annually, due to European Union classification, they remain the definitive governing body on the country's media.

Their findings were unusual, to say the least, and hold a lot of credibility coming as they do from such a well-established official body. They range from the slightly obvious statements – “gamers play games because they enjoy it” is stated at one point – to the less expected. And whilst some of their phrasing raises a smirk, such as their attempt to reclassify the re-re-releases of The Sims series as “strategic life simulation”, a lot of their work will be fundamental in the ongoing media row over violence in videogames.

The area of the report focusing on violence discusses the matter with various groups of gamers, ranging from gaming parents through to



Jack Thompson, yesterday. But the Florida attorney's attempts to ban violent games are failing in the UK

non-gaming youngsters, and everything in between. Their conclusions are very different to reports previous, in particular those conducted by the BBC and the British School of Motoring. Gaming is a *less* immersive medium, according to the report, and as such gamers tend to keep a better grip on reality.

They also suggest that violence in games is often “symbolic” and usually necessary to make a game design flow properly. They highlight the stigma associated with such games, but say that their findings “make the incidence of violence in games more comprehensible”.

Whilst the teacup storms in the States are unlikely to spill over onto British soil, it's comforting to know that our own classification system

understands the gaming psyche properly, and has a more balanced view on events than many others.

Whether this research helps the view of gaming and gamers remains to be seen – we don't hold out much hope that it will – but as far as official conclusions go, gamers are more than happy to accept this one.

Most telling is what lies in the last pages, after a large section devoted to parental concerns on gaming, where violence is cited among other concerns. At the end of the report, it explains that many parents have a “defeatist” attitude to classification, and many suffer from “ignorance” that leads to inappropriate material being given to their children.

And it's this reason that the BBFC believes that some regulation may

be necessary – “because parents cannot be expected to play games themselves and come to their own judgements”. They quote one parent, saying, “We bought him GTA when he was almost 10”.

Whether that's a comment on the laziness of parents, or the impossibility of the situation, remains to be seen, but the BBFC suggest that one of the biggest issues remaining is that non-gamers simply don't “get” games.

“When Keith Vaz, for example, is talking about taste, nowhere in the guidelines that have been set by either PEGI or BBFC is taste mentioned”, says one industry professional, in a quote which closes the report. “What is taste? ... It is very difficult.”

“... gamers seem not to lose awareness that they are playing a game and do not mistake the game for real life.”

from the BBFC  
report, “Video Games”





# Re-Play : Command and Conquer

“You can get more with a kind word and a tank rush than you can with just a kind word.” Mike Cook

Everyone loved Command and Conquer. Much in the same way that everyone loves Bruce Forsyth, or the Andrex puppy. You might pretend to hate the bland sci-fi, or the shallow tactics, or the aged, backwards ideas about resource collection. You might just never play games. But deep down, in a long-forgotten neural region, encoded in some primitive genetic sequence, there's an instinct that's dedicated to the tank rush.

Why? Why is it so popular? And why, with the release of *Tiberium Wars* this April, is it still so popular? Because as a counterpoint to the above raving, even the biggest fan of the real-time strategy series generally accepts that the story is “so bad, it's good”. They understand that it has all the tactical nuances of dropping a Grand Piano on Wile E. Coyote. They accept that the game's insistence on the harvest-build-attack cycle is older than the hills.

But Jesus. The tank rushes.

And you know, it wasn't always tanks either. Memorably, I once stormed a NOD stronghold with over a hundred freedom-fighting, terrorist-shooting, press-upping machine gunners once. The Prodigy got it wrong – you need to be never outgunned, and never outnumbered. The feeling of safety in numbers, as well as the hive-mind power of pointy-pointy-click-click isometric control, is comforting. And powerful. You float high above the war, beyond it, clicking and watching shapes move, swiftly and righteously. You indicate the target of a nuclear weapon with a thoughtless press of a mouse. Apocalypse ensues.

Why does it still figure now? For sheer tactical depth, it's hard to beat the Total War series, and games like Supreme Commander and Company Of Heroes both do macro- and micro-destruction almost to perfection. So why should Command and Conquer still be a worthy series, even at this old age?

In some ways, it's a respect thing. In the same way we pretend to be good at football, because we believe



Kane, played by Joseph Kucan who also directs a lot of the video shown in the series, is one of PC gaming's best-known bad guys.

we invented it, maybe Command and Conquer's success is in part due to feeling sorry that the inventor of so many gaming standards has got long in the tooth.

But it's more likely because Command and Conquer refuses to be moved by trends in gaming. Instead, it sticks to its guns and fulfils the idea of revolution, rather than evolution.

From the original game - which is still just about playable today - the emphasis was on a certain style of play. But whereas some series change direction dramatically, Command and Conquer understood its strengths as well as its weaknesses, and preferred to streamline its run-

ning rather than add in strange new features. Even with its latest release, the hugely popular *Tiberium Wars*, there is much that harks back to the old days.

Its intentional, too. From the hammy video cutscenes that introduce each mission – with a proud history of Michael Ironside, James Earl Jones, Michael Ironside, and some bint from *Battlestar Galactica* – through to the use of some of the same sound effects from ten years ago, the game constantly pays respects to its history.

This comes through in the way you play. Because although the scale and beauty of a Supreme Commander endgame is undeni-

ably impressive, there's a feeling of pilgrimage every time you sit down to begin Command and Conquer's original GDI campaign from the beginning.

“Are you pickin' this up? Good.”

The guy looks like something out of *Toy Story*, and speaks in a similar way, yet you're transported instantly back to the time you saw him first. And when that map flickers up, and you see the hovercraft, the glittering seas, the tiny, blocky little turret that's putting away at your men.

Well, it is instinctive.

Maybe it's genuinely something true of any kind of “retro” gaming, but C&C feels stripped down, and pure. There's no rotatable camera, or day and night cycle. You don't need to consider terrain types, or the morale of your men. All you need to do is get a truckload of cash, and build as many of the biggest, metal-coated, fire-spewing things that you can.

And then you go to war.

But there's nothing like Command and Conquer's war, because it gave birth to the clichés that we now hate – there's a reason it feels repetitive and samey now, and that's because other games have made it so. When you first played the commando missions, quipping and walking your way through a carefully-designed maze, it was new. It was great fun. Once it featured in every fictional war between 1997 and now, it stopped being fun.

Because it worked so well. Because you didn't need to “get” anything in order to play it. It was at the level of simplicity that Pac-Man had, that Pong had. It taught you tactics as if it knew how big the genre would become in ten years time. It gave you a helping hand up so you wouldn't feel left behind when *Warcraft III* came along.

It's on a Micro Machines level of

simplicity, and that's why everyone loves it. That's why you pluck a nomadic group out of the Amazonian rainforest, put them in front of a 150MHz PC, and within two hours they'll be overrunning your base with engineers and flame tanks. It's because Command and Conquer doesn't care. It doesn't want you to play Rock-Paper-Scissors with heavy cavalry and bald guys with catapults. It just wants you to build things that explode and then make them do just that.

There's been a lot said about the strategy genre lately, about how *Medieval 2* and *Supreme Commander* are at the forefront of a new wave of PC Gaming, that they've made it a viable platform again and that it shows there's still innovation in the market. But I think many gamers buy and play these games out of co-operation. Out of duty. Like it's what's expected of them.

Most of them, though, know what *Hell's March* sounds like, they can make the noise an Ion Cannon makes before it immolates a Hum-Vee, and they believe they can do the Tanya laugh just as they remember it. That's not gamers moving on. That's not “innovation”. That's instinct.

Thinking of playing the golden RTS series again? Old C&C games are rare to find preowned, but on eBay you can pick up the original or the sequel, *Red Alert*, for around a fiver each.

However, what with it being a decade old this year, EA have re-released the entire series, from the original through to the contemporary *Generals*, and that can be picked up as a lot for about £19.99 - though the current release is somewhat shaky, and requires some patching.



Oh, the pixelly cliffs. The blobby men. The phallic structure design. The slight irritation at building silos



# Clubs & Societies



Fellwanders. I see the fells, but very little wandering appears to be occurring. In fact, it looks like hijinks of the first order. Fie, I say!

## Fellwanders wander up to Scotland and get called 'English poofs'

Climbing, swimming in icy rivers, and managing to avoid a sound beating at the hands of the locals

**Charlie Rogers**

This Easter twelve Fellwanderers embarked on a week long expedition to Wester Ross in Scotland 630 miles and 18 hours from London. As usual the committee members (myself included) were the last to arrive at Beit Quad to meet the rest of the group, but once the mini-bus was packed up with equipment and people we hit the road.

Despite intentions to stay awake and sing along to Nick's cheesy music most of the group fell asleep instantly, waking only for a quick cheer as we passed over the Scottish border and later for breakfast in Fort William and a quick visit to Loch Ness. At this point Alex and Dave stripped to their swim trunks and took a plunge while the rest of us laughed heartily at how cold they were. By 3pm Saturday we had survived the long journey from London and more importantly the terrifying 7 mile track to the Bothy that lead to some stiff competition between drivers for the rest of the week (13min10sec, rain and Meatloaf... most definitely the winner!). That night the boys built a fire on the beach, I prepared dinner, ale/whisky was consumed and everyone was generally satisfied and ready for the week ahead.

On Sunday we explored the hills and coastline around the Bothy

while Nathaniel, Nick and Dave headed back to Inverness to pick up Kathrin. Meanwhile those of us left in the hills watched the biologists, Joanna and Judith, get excited about various lichen, moss and frog porn!

Monday we were graced with no rain and sunshine (as we were for most of the week) – according to Chris this was due entirely to my early morning sun dances! With good weather we couldn't miss the opportunity to take on An Teallach the best ridge in Wester Ross.

An Teallach lived up to expectations and we all faced the Scrambling challenge to stand on Sail Liath (954m) and Bidean a' Ghlas Thuill (1062m) with Alex, Dave, Nathaniel and Richard adding on the more serious ridge to climb Sgurr Fiona (1060m). As it turns out those of us that skirted around Sgurr Fiona had a worse deal and would have been better off scrambling across the top.

On Tuesday we tackled Sgurr Mor in the Fanniachs, the tallest mountain in Wester Ross, with much the same fervour: Alex led the first part of the route straight up (literally) Meall a' Charasgaidh (934m) our toughest scramble of the week and first Munro of the day. We then traced the ridge to Sgurr Mor (1110m), Mairead surging ahead for the girls, and along to Beinn Liath

Mhor (954m) where the group split; six of us climbing to the summit and six heading straight to the bus. During this hike the more 'responsible' members of the group determined the quickest way off the mountain was to slide the snow fields!

Of course sliding on the rear is not quite so extreme and the sport was soon up-graded to sliding head first, lying on (dare I say it) survival bags. At this point I have to add that I hold the record for the most spectacular way to stop – imagine hurtling uncontrollably down a snow slide backwards, shooting onto the grass, falling backwards legs flying overhead and stopping with your face to the ground...according to the others 'My God you stopped with your teeth!!' – Thankfully no-one caught this on camera!

By Wednesday we needed an excuse to take a day off from scrambling and what better way than whisky. Becoming tourists we drove out to the Glenmorangie distillery for a tour and some sampling. The unfortunate thing about being in the company of Fellwanderers and good whisky is that you usually spend too much money and I believe most of the group bought something away with them – if only drunkenness (Nathaniel)!

That night I had everyone dress up in kilts, sporrans and Sgain Dudhs (created from towels/survival bags,

hats and various kitchen utensils), we read out Burns' 'Address to A Haggis' and shared a traditional Scots meal of Haggis, Neeps and Tatties. I even had everyone up for a wee Ceilidh... fantastic!

Thursday morning Richard left us to head South while the remaining eleven hikers headed on to Ben Wyvis (1046m) the most Easterly Munro of Wester Ross. This walk should have been the easiest of the week, but thankfully it was made more challenging by thick cloud and freezing wind. It kept us on our toes, allowed for some proper compass navigation and meant we almost lost a few people due to poor visibility.

Once down we headed to a truckers café to warm up and provoke a few of the locals (Coming out of the Café we quickly removed the word 'Poofs' from the back of the mini-bus, but we did leave 'English' for our memory). We then dropped Nick off at Garve Station for his epic journey south, leaving ten.

Excitement filled the Geologist Chris on Friday as he had us drive north of Ullapool to look at some 'sexy' ancient rocks (his words not mine)! Four of the boys took the high road, but due to cloud cover and lack of views the five girls and Hauke opted for the lower route around a spectacular loch. Hauke added some spice to our journey

leaving his camera half way round the loch and while he retrieved it we girls discovered the pure genius of power napping (for 1 hour).

Saturday we were graced with T-shirt weather and for our last hike we added another two Munros to the total, Sgurr Breac (999m) and A'Chailleach (997m). It was on the way down that I experienced my spectacular 'teeth stopping' moment.

If this wasn't enough I was then thrown in a loch as a Thank-you for organising such a successful trip in the best location in the UK. Too bad the trip had to come to an end... only Sunday left, most of which we spent driving back to London, via another Distillery, singing to 'the final countdown' across the border and sleeping! In summary I can say the trip was fantastic, the weather unbelievable and fun was had by all. Let's hope the summer tour to Switzerland is just as successful – Tim you have your work cut out!

.....  
**During term time Fellwanderers organise fortnightly weekend trips around the UK and Sunday walks around the neighbouring counties of London. If you are interested in joining Fellwanderers, please email the president Tim Scarbrough at [fellsoc@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:fellsoc@imperial.ac.uk)**







# Imperial College London Centenary Ball

Saturday June 16th 2007

[imperialcollegeunion.org/ball](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/ball)



To celebrate 100 years of Imperial College London, we are staging the largest formal dinner and party of the Centenary Year. Join over two thousand students, staff and alumni at the un-missable event of the last 100 years of Imperial. With big name acts and DJs all night, plus fun fair, casino, big wheel, dodgems, carousel, laser quest and giant table football!

**VERNON KAY**  
**ANDY ROURKE**  
**ETON ROAD BEN MILLS**  
**BLAKEY CHASE & STATUS**  
**JULIA HARRIS THE RAT PACK**  
**SCOUTING FOR GIRLS DJ ELLES**

buy your tickets online now from  
[imperialcollegeunion.org/ball](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/ball)

### Dinner & Entertainments Tickets



**£55**

£60 from  
15th May

Dinner & Ents Ticket



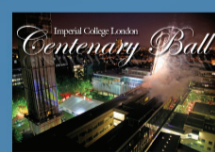
**£65**

£85 from  
15th May

Open to Staff  
& Alumni

VIP Dinner & Ents Ticket

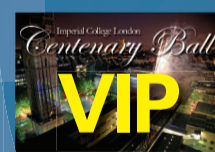
### Entertainments Only Tickets



**£30**

£35 from  
15th May

Entertainments Ticket



**£50**

£60 from  
15th May

Open to Staff  
& Alumni

VIP Ents Only Ticket

### Last Chance to Get Early Bird Discount

From 15th May all ticket prices are going up by £5 for student tickets and £10 for VIP staff and alumni tickets. So make sure you get yours now!

Buying online is fast, easy and secure at [imperialcollegeunion.org/ball](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/ball)

VIP tickets are open to staff and alumni and grant access to the VIP bar.

**WATCH OUT FOR THE FULL LINE UP LAUNCHED 4TH MAY IN FELIX**



The Imperial College London Centenary Ball is a fund raising event with all proceeds going to the Beit Masterplan which is one of the Imperial College London Centenary Projects.



100 years of living science





# Riding club gallop to, er, second and fourth

Trisna Tungadi

Last month busy for IC horse riders with two teams, A and B, competing in the BUSA Equestrian League. BUSA operate somewhat different rules compared to normal show jumping and dressage competitions. The main difference being that; at each competition, we have to ride a completely strange horse that we have never ridden before, with only around 5-7 minutes warm up in which to get to know our horse before a dressage test or show jumping course. The aim being to see who can get the best out of their horse in a short period of time. Each horse has their own personality, it is the rider's job to quickly recognise how a particular horse likes to be ridden.

This year, we had a good start of the competition season; the A team were placed 2nd in our home competition in Trent Park, with Naomi achieving 5th in individual rankings. Sadly we were not so lucky in the next few away competitions though we did get some good individual placings from Trisna and Naomi.

The championship league was won by UCL with our A team finishing 4th. Our B team was more successful this year, with Olivia as team captain, finishing 2nd in the trophy league. In their home competition, our chair and B team member, Kat Grey, was fifth and Sam eighth individually.

Generally this year's competing season had been an enjoyable time for all of us. With a few unexpected events, such as snow in one of our



Oh my god it's Black Beauty! - I'm sorry, I don't know anything else about horses

away competitions, resulting in the postponement of the competition and a shortage of qualified horses in another competition, where the solution was to use a huge, black, yet lovely cob, who had just started to learn how to jump. Both of our

home competitions, hosted at Trent Park Equestrian Centre, went rather smoothly this year. Though there were some exciting moments when our usually placid jumping horses decided to be play up during the warm up, scaring our rival teams.

Thanks to all the riding club members and committee this year who have been a huge help in running the competitions, also thanks to both of our team captains, Olivia and Trisna.

## Cricket continued

Continued from back page

Three days, two islands and one drunken night later, the time had come for the nuts and bolts of the tour; The RBSC International 6s Tournament, featuring 20 teams from across the globe, including two from Imperial. Imperial A were placed in by far the toughest group of the tournament including 2 international team, an Aussie side with an ex-Indian Test cricketer and several strong professional club sides. Despite this the boys did Imperial proud, showing guts and determination throughout. They scored at 2 runs a ball throughout the tournament and fought not only against some of the toughest opposition they would ever encounter but also against 40 degrees Celsius. After Maldives made light work of dismissing Imperial A, Bahrain were rather surprised by the strength of "the college side from England" but managed to steal a very narrow victory. Special mention should be made to Leon Loveridge the pick of the batsmen, who was well supported by Thilina Ambepitiya, Jibril Ahmed and Ali Ahmed. Nick Adams and Ali Ahmed were our most economical bowlers, though Ved Vyas was unlucky in his efforts.

Unfortunately not to qualify into the knock-out section, Imperial A continued on in the Wooden Spoon section of the competition, a series of two shortened matches in which the winner would be determined not by the number of runs they scored but on the number of boundaries. We had a close match with Bangkok University, but their local knowledge saw them clinch it in the last over. Our final game was against a junior Indian Cricket Academy, who were unable to handle the guile of Ved, Leon and Jibril as they failed to hit a single boundary in their innings.

In the meantime, Imperial B were enjoying more success as they got off to a flying start despite the shaky start courtesy of Abeetha Perera. Upon seeing a spinner take the ball for the opening over, Abeetha gleefully insisted on taking strike, only to be dismissed first ball! Al and Shiraz led the batting recovery while some excellent fielding work led Imperial B to a convincing victory. Imperial B continued to show great fighting spirit as they battled the Indian Indoor, Bahrain B and Sri Lankan Air Force teams to win a well earned spot in the next round.

Over the course of the tournament Abeetha showed great skill behind the wickets and made up for his early misdemeanour with an unbeaten 31 amongst other good performances with the bat. Shiraz Sabah showed the greatest resilience as he had the testing task of bowling the last over in every game. As usual Almaher was proficient with the bat and his tidy bowling was well supported with superb performances from Omair Tarq and Anand Subramanian.

A loss to Maldives led to Imperial B missing out on a spot in the cup competition, however, they did make it to the quarter finals of the plate competition where they would face Chittagong - a team of former Bangladesh players managed by Al's dad! The match was fiercely contested however Chittagong came out on top as their wealth of experience proved a little too much to handle for a very exhausted Imperial B. This was the end of the tournament for Imperial who were unfortunate to leave without any silverware; the lads deserved better.



IC student Christian Morsbach, a member of IC Gliding club, takes his first solo flight after having been sent solo by Shaun Murdoch. He took up Gliding because he always wanted to fly and the Gliding Club offered an affordable way to learn! Christian is probably the only German glider pilot who had to go to the UK to find out that gliding in Germany is huge. Christian took three excellent solo flights, including one where he soared with the birds. ICGC is active all year round, including the Summer, and can provide continuous flying training every weekend (with the same instructors), there's no cheaper or faster way to learn to fly on your own. For more info, or to join, contact shaun.murdoch02@imperial.ac.uk. Here's to more first solos soon!



# Cricket Club ventures to Thailand

Bangkok greets our cricketers, who enjoy the hospitality of the locals and receive some 'innocent massages'

Nick Adams &  
Jibrán Ahmed

On the evening of Thursday 22nd March most of the squad met at Ved, Subby and Jib's house for a pre-tour party until we began our journey out to Thailand at 5am. I spent the first part of the night working in the IC Library, which was still brimming with activity when I packed up just after 3am. Being Imperial this wasn't very surprising; however it was still amusing enough to take a few photos. After a couple of hours at Jib's we caught a couple of buses to Victoria, hopped to Gatwick and began the check-in process for Qatar Airways. Though inevitably stressful, being a London airport, it didn't take long and we all boarded our flight happily at 9am. Two long, 7 hour flights later, with a short stopover in Doha, we were approaching Bangkok over misty striped rural landscapes and villages. My sleep on the second flight: 4.5 hours.

Finally we arrived in Bangkok, early, to be greeted by hotel staff and transport. Our first road journey from the airport to the city centre was quite an experience, but something we would end up getting very used to. There is no concept of road safety in Thailand, and everything from seatbelts to any form of vehicle regulation seemed to be lacking. Our accommodation was 5 star and from my 31st floor room there were beautiful views of central Bangkok. After our early arrival we were fed thanks to the kindness of Ved's Mother and Brother, who live locally. We spent the remainder of the day soaking up the sights and smells of our area: our clothes did most of the soaking, as our predominantly UK bred bodies weren't very accustomed to 38°C humid heat! The open air pool was much enjoyed; it was on the 11th floor, that's the same height as the EE building - if only we had a pool up there too!

That evening I went in the wrong direction on the SkyTrain, a fast and clean method of transport built on 15 metre concrete plinths above the main streets. Eventually finding my way to Siam Paragon (Siam is a common name in Thailand, as it was the country's former name), a large western style shopping mall

and cinema, we enjoyed a game of bowling and tasty (and extremely cheap) Thai food before calling it a day. My sleep that night: 6.5 hours.

On Sunday we had an early start to play our first match. It was to be our first day of cricket and was to be a one-day friendly game against the Royal Bangkok Sports Club (RBSC). I got up at 6:30am to have a wander and take a few photos before it started to get too hot. The streets were brimming with life even that early in the morning - it seems the city doesn't sleep, or maybe it doesn't work so hard during the day! The beauty of the RBSC ground was simply breathtaking; skyscrapers lined the boundaries and a horse racing track circled the field. This would be a memorable day for all, but particularly for fresher's Ali and Omair who made their Imperial debuts. We enjoyed a good 35 over game, though playing in 39°C was an experience some of us coped with better than others! I was particularly impressed by Shiraz who kept wicket for 3 hours and then went straight in to open the batting. However, Almaher and Ved were the stars of the show with a 5 wicket haul and 36 runs respectively.

After being stranded in a Sri Lankan airport for 26 hours, Abeetha finally joined us and we chilled at the hotel; a few of us went for a swim, and some of the less tired members of the squad ate out locally. Food and drink in Thailand is very cheap, costing less than £2 for a very good meal. My sleep that night: 5 hours.

Monday saw an early departure from the Hotel to catch our 7:30am flight to Phuket Island. We enjoyed the low cost 'Nok Airlines' with its beak nosed planes and falling-to-pieces seats. Towards the end of our 2 hour flight we began to descend and the clouds cleared we were treated to spectacular views of the peninsula and surrounding Islands. Jagged and steep mountains were shrouded in low cloud and mist and surrounded by dense jungle. The plane landed successfully to cheers from the squad, and cars drove the distance to our hotel in the touristy Patong resort. That afternoon we ate at a small Indian place that played some classic Bollywood tunes favoured by some of the lads. Some of the squad then enjoyed a local massage, all sticking to (mostly) innocent activities,



I wonder how many times these boys did the Bangkok joke before it got old and too painful.

before descending down to the beach to Jetski. In the evening we enjoyed the delights of Patong: pizza and some "speciality dancing". My sleep that night: 4.5 hours.

We had another early morning on Tuesday as we departed the hotel to catch a boat to the Phi Phi Islands. This beautiful collection of Islands about 30 miles off Phuket rise up out of the water vertically, like something out of a film set. In fact, they have hosted many film sets. Our boat tour was very touristy, but that didn't stop us enjoying the sights, including flying fish and monkeys. After a stopover at Phi Phi, we visited two snorkelling locations. The first one was close enough to one of the desert island beaches, with pesky monkeys prancing about in the sand. I swam straight to it, and after helping a monkey unscrew the top of a half full bottle of fresh water, watched it drink and dared to pet its head. A few moments later the boys arrived but all stood in a huddle a few metres off shore, saying they had been warned about the vicious monkeys! In all fairness though, a few minutes later the monkeys did get into a fight which made WrestleMania look like a children's puppet show. We were allowed to explore

the main island, Phi Phi, after lunch and played with a Nerf ball on one of the most beautiful beaches we'd ever seen. After returning to Patong we enjoyed some fiercely contested beach cricket in the setting sun. Un-sportsmanlike behaviour from Imperial B led to the early dismissal of captain, Thil; controversy arose and soon false allegations of match fixing were being hurled at club presidents Anura and Jibrán. A crowd of spectators began to gather as local residents wondered why a group of Englishmen kept hitting a ball out into the ocean and running like old ladies at an M&S sale. We made no effort to explain. After returning to the hotel, some of the squad went out for another massage and some drinks - hardcore stuff to follow up 4 near-sleepless nights! My sleep that night: 6.5 hours.

Wednesday was our day of departure from Phuket and Leon and I got up at 6am to go for a morning stroll. As soon as we found a local path into the hills it became a bit more than a morning stroll, and we ended up exploring many miles into the jungle. As we got deeper, the noise was deafening, some insects so loud they caused our ears to resonate! We saw many ant trails and

large flying insects, as well as some locals who lived up the hill. That afternoon some of the squad went paragliding, and then we made the trip back to the airport and then back to Bangkok thanks again to Nok-Air. Upon returning to the hotel we turned in for an early night, ready for the tournament the next day. Thil treated us to a team talk about what to expect of the 6-a-side tournament and some of the squad went out. My sleep that night: 6.5 hours.

On Thursday morning we had our first round of matches, three of which were before lunch. Our pitch this time was at another of the RBSC's picturesque grounds; this time sporting a jogging track and three luxury swimming pools. Imperial A were quickly taken aback by the quality of the opposition we were facing. Despite the international teams we were up against, we put up a good fight and narrowly missed out on a spot in the knockout stage of the tournament. In honesty we were outplayed by the better batting of the opposition. We could only watch in admiration as the batsmen of Bahrain, Maldives and Calcutta launched ball after ball beyond the boundary. After completing our





matches for the day we joined Imperial B at their ground to watch their final game; they had a little more success than us, and managed to progress through the group stage. After they'd finished their last match we all went back to the hotel to be greeted again by Ved's mum who bought more food for our enjoyment. In the evening we took taxis to the Bangkok Night Bazaar, a market and entertainment venue. The taxis in Bangkok started their meter at about 50p and took you a few miles for no more than another 50p. The friendly drivers also engaged in exciting conversation and will often advise you the best place for a "massage". Walking the streets of Bangkok proved a challenging task for the squad as we were frequently mobbed by young ladies offering various massage treatments. Somehow, everything in Bangkok costs 200 Baht. We had a few drinks and a wander round before heading back via a bar which was a little more innocent than the others. My sleep that night: 7 hours.

Friday saw both teams have a break from cricket so we saw some sights in and around Bangkok. Our private tour bus took us first to one of the large temples, which was fairly quiet and free from tourists in the early morning. 90% of Thai people are practising Buddhists, and I was fascinated to discover a good proportion of men become monks for a short while after turning 20. There were some orange clad monks worshipping in front of a giant statue of Buddha with a string attached to it being held by the monks. We then visited a park outside of Bangkok to have a picnic lunch, again courtesy of Ved's family. On our way back we visited an elephant and crocodile park, treating us to a show portraying how the elephant fit into Thailand's culture and history. We were also treated to elephants playing footy; aside from their lack of pace and "pooping" all over the pitch, they actually weren't half bad.

That night we hit the town and visited one of the more upmarket Thai clubs. This was a humongous, multi-room electronic extravaganza. People were friendly, drinks were cheap and more importantly there were plenty of women! We partied hard until closing at 2am then headed to a 'spicy' after-party in one of the city's after hours clubs. True to its name this was one of the spiciest parties we'd ever been to and was much enjoyed until 5am by the remaining clubbers, myself included. Luckily the next morning Imperial A didn't need to get up early. My sleep that night: 5 hours.

On Saturday Imperial B went off

to play their next round of matches while I slept. Ammar and Leon took a day trip out to see a ruined city and temple. I spent the afternoon in the hotel enjoying the delights of the pool and the relaxing heat. A lot of the guys had suits tailored for them in Bangkok and some of them went off to collect them in the afternoon. In the evening we headed out for the RBSC Tournament Dinner, to which we arrived very fashionably late, but were received well owing to our impeccable attire! Later that night Imperial B went clubbing while others, me included, went home to catch up on sleep. My sleep that night: 7 hours.

Sunday was our penultimate day and granted us another chance to enjoy the city centre. Some of us went out to a large mall with Ved to pick up some local merchandise, while others remained at home. The trip gave us another chance to ride the SkyTrain, which again impressed me with its efficiency and cleanliness. That evening we all took a trip to the Sky Hotel, the tallest building in Bangkok at 88 floors high. A speedy lift took us right up to the 77th floor observation deck where we enjoyed panoramic views of the city as though we were airborne. Afterwards we went back to the hotel to enjoy some incredible food on the 22nd floor Indian restaurant, reputed to be the best in Thailand. We ate and drank at leisure, enjoying fine Bollywood music, to which we were treated live. After leaving wholly satisfied, we headed out to the club again to enjoy a final night in Bangkok. Most of us were tired however, and we didn't stay out later than closing time. My sleep that night: 4 hours.

Monday was our final day and those of us with stamina got up at 7am to go to the famous floating market. The road journey was long but took us out of Bangkok and into more rural Thailand, which sported a higher degree of poverty and some subsistence farming. After an hour tour, we headed back through morning traffic to pack up and prepare to leave. In the afternoon a few of the crew did some last minute shopping and after a slightly unnecessarily stressful minibus journey to the airport we departed the land of smiles back to our own, quite different world. A world of exams and deadlines and a rush to complete work.

It was an unforgettable experience, in particular the hospitality adorned on us by Ved and his family, which gave the tour a unique and special air. I'll miss Thailand and hope to explore its unique culture in more depth in the not too distant future.





# Cricket Club takes on the world

Jibran Ahmed &  
Thilina Ambepitiya

During Easter 2007, Imperial Cricket embarked on what was probably one of the best cricket tours ever. The 13 strong squad went on a 10 day tour of Thailand where we competed in the Royal Bangkok Sports Club Sixes Tournament featuring international teams such as Bahrain and Maldives. Despite the stiff opposition and intense heat, one of Imperial's teams made it to the quarter finals of the Plate competition.

The tour began with a warm up match against the Royal Bangkok Sports Club - one of the best league teams in Thailand. Upon arrival at the ground, any tiredness was very quickly overcome by sentiment; the ground was easily one of the most beautiful any of us had ever played on. Lush green pitches were surrounded by palm trees with a backdrop of towering skyscrapers and cloudless blue skies. Simply put, the grounds were truly magnificent.

Under the roasting mid-day sun the match was soon underway. RBSC won the toss and elected to bat first. They got off to a flyer but Imperial soon gained control as Jibran Ahmed made good use of the new ball to take two quick wickets - despite his injured knee. Ali Ahmed made the perfect start to his Imperial debut with an early wicket while The pressure continued to build as Leon Loveridge claimed an early victim while skipper Thil set the standard with an incredible diving catch followed shortly by a run out.

Despite the early breakthrough, the runs kept flowing and the game was beginning to get away from us - that is until Almaher Shelley was handed the ball. Al bowled a selection of jaffers and wides leading to an impressive 5 wicket haul. RBSC strug-



What I don't understand is; why such nice boys are prancing around in the middle of the day dressed only in their pyjamas.

gled to cope with Al's potent mix of pace, swing and slower balls; one by one the sound of the ball striking the stumps sent the batsmen walking back to the pavilion. RBSC were bowled out in 34 overs leaving Imperial the daunting task of chasing 241 in just 35 overs.

After tucking into our fried rice at tea (some of us enjoying more than one serving i.e. Anura) we set off to

the crease but never managed to stamp our authority. Wickets tumbled and some dodgy calling from Al ensured he was no contender for man of the match as he intentionally ran-out the captain. The only real resistance came from Leon Loveridge and Ved Vyas who both batted with great responsibility to keep the opponents on their toes. In fact Ved clearly wasn't intending on batting very

long as he decided that boxers alone would suffice to keep his abdominal guard in place until he was out. This option proved painful as he dived into his crease avoiding a run-out. This was only the first of Ved's abdominal guard problems during the tour.

Imperial were all out for 143 as Nick claimed Leon was trapped "plumb" in front the wickets. Ved top scored with an impressive innings of 36 on

his home ground and Leon finished with a respectable 26. Although we were up against strong opposition, we put up a good fight and showed great resilience, however, we never managed to get a hold of the game and the opposition's suitability to the conditions took the match out of our hands.

Continued on inside page

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