

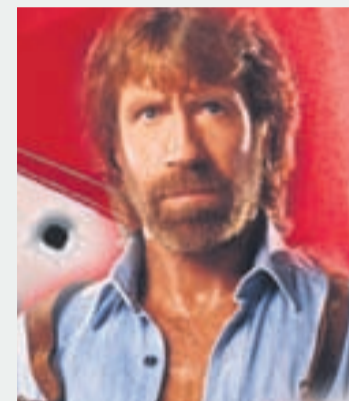


graduate tax is the way forward - £5,000? You must be joking - Uncapped  
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## Have your say

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#### Coffee Break returns



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#### Write for Phoenix later this term!



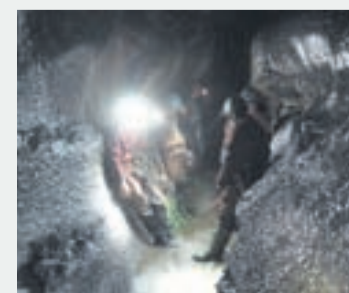
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#### Battle of the swanky phones



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#### Squeezing into rat holes



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Take the Union's Higher Education funding survey today.  
Turn to pages 4 and 5 to help inform your decisions



## News

News Editor – Andrew Somerville, News Goblin – Matty Hoban

news.felix@imperial.ac.uk

# Sabbatical nominations open on Monday

The quest to find the next Union President, three Deputy Presidents and a new Felix Editor begins next week

Tom Roberts  
Editor-in-Chief

This year's Sabbatical elections timetable was finalised at Union Council on Monday evening.

Imperial students who fancy themselves as the next Union President, one of three Deputy Presidents or as the Felix Editor will be able to put themselves forward for nomination on Monday 28th January. There are also two positions available on the recently formed Trustee Board and eight NUS Annual Conference delegate positions up for grabs.

Any Imperial student can stand in the elections. All they need to do is log on to the Union's website at [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/vote](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/vote) and put themselves forward. Nominees then require 20 "seconders", in other words, 20 other Imperial students or friends who must log on to the website and recommend you as a worthy candidate.

The nominations period lasts for two weeks so students have plenty of time to decide whether they want to stand or not. In next week's issue, Felix will be interviewing and grilling the current Sabbatical Officers about their experiences so far, hopefully to give the rest of the student body an idea of what it is like to be in such a position of responsibility.

Students who successfully manage to cajole 20 people into seconding them will subsequently embark on a month-long election campaign. Nominees will have to come up with an election manifesto by Friday 15th February, which will be published on the Union's website, in Felix and on Live! ([live.cgu.net](http://live.cgu.net)).

During February there will also be two Hustings, where nominees will have to give short speeches about what changes (if any) they intend to bring to

The student newspaper of Imperial College  
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## Election results at last

Farce, free sweets and late results; this year's elections are finally over, and here are your new sabbaticals

**Andy Sykes**  
Editor-in-Chief

Results were finally announced for the Presidential election on Thursday lunchtime, completing an election period that has been characterised by Felix's favourite five letter word: farce.

The next Union President will be the well-known anti-NUS figurehead at IC and Felix Comment Editor, Stephen Brown, who beat the current Deputy President (Finance & Services), Jon Matthews, to take the position. Mr Brown received 705 votes (after the transfer of preference votes for the other candidates) while Mr Matthews received 595 votes. Mr Brown and Mr Matthews both received several hundred more votes than the 'outsider' candidates: Diego Gerades (who held a sign up over Mr Matthews' head at hustings reading "WTF?") lead the loser's field, picking up 179 votes, presumably from people with a sense of humour. Sophie Spillard, one of only two female candidates standing for a sabbatical position, collected 143 votes, while the "not-really-from-Southwell Slate" candidate Julian Giannuzzi picked up only 96 votes.

The position of Felix Editor was contested by two Felix veterans, Tom Roberts and Emily Martin, and a new face, Ben Sinclair. Mr Sinclair, who had his name changed on the ballot to 'Felix' as this is apparently his nickname, picked up 367 votes, only 100 votes less than Miss Lines and Mr Roberts received. In the first round of voting, the two well-known Felix names were separated by only 19 votes.

Mr Sinclair, Mr Roberts was elected with 625 votes, having picked up more second preference votes than Miss Lines (who received 576 votes).

Deputy President (Clubs & Societies) was contested by a 'club veteran', Alistair Cott, and a member of the Slate, Alexander Balkhine. The experienced Mr Cott won with 687 votes compared to Mr Balkhine's 300, despite Mr Cott's lack of campaigning.

Four candidates stood for Deputy President (Finance & Services), including a Slate member, an ex-NUS President, and a relative outsider, Anthony Calder, dogged by accusations that an event that led to his resignation was President led while he was President (let alone that it was not his fault), still into last place with 140 votes. Slate candidate, Andrew H picked up only 166 votes, while Crossword Editor Hugh MacLarvin, previously ISM Treasurer who was elected with 573 votes, Deputy President (Education Welfare) was a somewhat palatable contest, with the heavily campaigning and all-round hat Kirsty Patterson being elected with 718 votes, compared to Narayanan's 219 votes.

DPCS-elect, Alistair Cott  
DPPS-elect, Chris Larvin

### Last year's winners and this year's Sabbatical Officers

the Union and justify why they are up to the task of taking over their respective mantles. The second half of each Hustings involves questions from the floor.

Eventually voting opens on Friday 22nd February and lasts until Tuesday 26th February. During this time, nominees will be out and about around campus canvassing students for their votes.

Nominees should pencil in the Tuesday 27th February as the Final Candi-

dates meeting where the results will be announced. However, judging by previous Sabbatical elections which have spiralled into theatrical farce due to complaints of foul play between competitors, this date is liable to shift into March.

**If you want to stand, put yourself up for nomination by visiting [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/vote](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/vote) from Monday onwards. Good luck to all participants**

## Five Science Challenge questions revealed



Sir Richard Sykes – Imperial College Rector

How would knowledge of my genetic makeup affect my lifestyle?

Dr Philip Campbell – Nature Editor-in-Chief

Should healthy people take drugs to enhance their cognitive abilities?



Sir Brian Hoskins – Director of the Imperial College Grantham Institute for Climate Change

To what extent is geoeengineering the solution to the climate change problem?

Dr Paul Snaith – Vice President Shell Global Solutions

Satisfying the world's spiralling energy demands whilst reducing greenhouse gas emissions presents today's scientists with a seemingly impossible task. Discuss.



Professor Lord Robert Winston – Legend

Ever since early humans invented the handaxe, technology has increased the potential to destroy mankind. Are we sowing the seeds of our own destruction?

**On Tuesday evening, over 150 students filled Mech Eng room 220 in anticipation of launch of the RCSU Science Challenge. The five questions were unveiled covering biology, climate change, genetics and advancements in technology, each with a smattering of philosophy. Over 120 schools watched the event live over the internet. The first prize for IC students is £2,500. Entrants must write an 800-word essay answering one or more of the questions above. For more info, visit: [www.rcsu.org.uk/sciencechallenge](http://www.rcsu.org.uk/sciencechallenge)**

# felix 1,393

Friday 25/01/08



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Thanks to Alex McDroplet

LOLEATS  
LOLEATS



OF THE WEEK

# Ethos' swim and gym to remain free

Two years after opening, Felix went along to Ethos sports centre to say "Happy Birthday", to see how things have been going and to investigate whether students will have to pay for the pool and gym in the future

Andrew Turley

This Wednesday, Ethos will celebrate its 2nd birthday, having seen over the past 12 months more students, more activities and more revenue, than before.

New initiatives planned for the coming year focus on strengthening links with the university's sports teams, encouraging new sports into the centre and getting out onto campus to talk to students about sport and health.

The centre has also confirmed that, at present, there are no plans to alter any of the current student benefits, such as free pool and gym.

At present, Ethos compares favourably with sports facilities at the capital's other large HE institutions. The Kinetic gym at the King's College Waterloo campus, for example, charges students £199 for a 12 month pass. Similarly, a swim in the pool at Energybase, the University of London's sports complex, requires day membership, costing £4.50.

Imperial remains the only university in the country with a sports centre offering free pool and gym to all students.

Some students, however, have voiced concerns over whether the centre might become more commercial in the future.

Situated in the heart of Kensington, one of the wealthiest regions of London, Ethos could generate considerable revenue from external membership, but would risk marginalising student interests in doing so.

In response, the centre assured Felix that there were no plans to alter student access to the pool and gym and restated its commitment to student needs.

This year, total membership rose to over 1400, of which 73% is made up of students, 22% of staff and the remaining 5% of external members, who are restricted to off-peak hours to prevent



Left: The Ethos sports centre facade. Right: Ethos swimming pool will remain free to IC students along with the gym



a build-up of visitors during lunch hours and early evening.

Lesser concerns have also arisen regarding registration. Some new students experienced long waits of up to a month for gym inductions when they joined in October. Ethos says this is unavoidable due to high demand at the start of the academic year, stating that a proper induction is essential for Health and Safety compliance, and this necessitates small groups for extended periods of time.

To ease the October congestion this

year, it became possible to register for the centre online, preventing the recurrence of the long queues experienced in the first year.

By far the most popular section of the centre is the gym, with on average 600 visitors every day. The most popular sport in the main hall is badminton, closely followed by 5-a-side football, but the centre is keen to encourage less familiar sports as well, such as ultimate Frisbee and handball.

Ethos has several new initiatives in the pipeline. The centre is planning a

Healthy Campus week for some point during the spring, during which its staff will be present on the South Kensington site to talk to students and staff about their fitness, the facilities available at Imperial and offer guidance about healthy living.

It is also keen to strengthen existing bonds with the university sports teams. Last year, the centre organised pre-season training weeks for several teams, as well as sports massage programs, and this year it is investigating sports psychology training.

In addition, Ethos can produce, on request, training programs for any of the university sports societies, tailored to the demands of their specific activity, free of charge.

"It's been a great year for the centre," said Iain Reid, Ethos Centre Manager, "but we're always keen to keep improving in any way we can and welcome feedback from students and staff." He added that, further details regarding the running of Ethos and its future are published in the Sport Imperial Strategic Plan.

## Union Council descends into bickering



Jon Matthews, whose paper sparked the heated discussion

Monday evening's Council meeting took a turn for the childish as discussions about the legitimacy of the Union's Constitution boiled over.

Former Deputy President (Finance & Services) and former GSA Chair Jon Matthews presented a paper to Council highlighting flaws in last year's submission process of the Union's Constitution.

Any changes made to the Union's Constitution have to be presented to and approved by Union Council at two consecutive meetings of the committee. These changes are then taken to College Council which has a reading and makes the final approval.

Mr Matthews' report pointed out that changes were made to the Constitution in between the meetings of last year's Council. Effectively, Councillors had seen two different Constitutions. Moreover, further changes were made before the Constitution was presented to College Council.

Mr Matthews was supported by the Deputy President (Education & Wel-



Tense: the Union Sabbatical Officers at Monday evening's Council

fare, Kirsty Patterson, who wrote a supplementary note. The pair requested Council to repass the current, operating Constitution, in the hope that it would become legally sound.

However, both papers were met with opposition by members of Council, most notably the Union President who

believed the changes were unnecessary and could wait until the summer when work eases off.

The discussion quickly descended beyond farce and into bickering. Miss Patterson was clearly irate and Mr Brown even told her to "pipe down" at one point.

In the end Mr Matthews' paper was rejected by Council: 18-6, with 5 abstentions.

Union officials will be watching their tongues' from now on. With the upcoming Sabbatical Officer elections, they will be keen to give a good impression of politics within the Union.

# Education Proclamation

Today, the Union launched its Higher Education funding survey. If you want to influence the Union's policy and stance on HE funding, take it online now by heading to [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/hesurvey](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/hesurvey). Below is an overview of how we've arrived at this point and what could possibly happen in the future

## Why are we all talking about HE funding again?!

At the start of last term, Imperial College Union Council passed a policy to revise its stance on Higher Education funding, pending a consultation with the student body. The Union's old policy mandated it to campaign for free education. The President, Stephen Brown, and Deputy President (Education & Welfare), Kirsty Patterson, believed that "free education funded entirely by the taxpayer is unrealistic."

Rather than having Council determine what the new policy should be, the Union decided that it should listen to the entire student body to get a broader idea of the views it should be representing. The time has arrived for the consultation to begin; as of today you will be able to go online and complete a survey which asks you questions about your views on Higher Education funding. The answers will be used to form the Union's revised Higher Education funding policy.



Union Council back in October last term

## A brief history...



Tony Blair's Labour Government introduced tuition fees in 1998 and top-up fees later on in 2004

The most significant recent review of Higher Education funding was the Dearing Report in 1997. It was commissioned to find out how funding should develop over the following 20 years. Before 1997 universities were funded entirely by the government from taxpayers' money. University was free to attend, there were no tuition fees and there were grants for the poor to pay for living expenses.

Sir Ronald Dearing, the lead author of the 1997 inquiry made a number of recommendations to the government, most notably the introduction of £1,000 per year tuition fees. He also recommended the continuation of means tested grants and loans.

The Labour government came to power in 1997 and in 1998 Prime Minister Tony Blair introduced tuition fees. On top of this, Mr Blair introduced student loans which replaced maintenance grants too.

In 2003, Mr Blair announced it had made plans to introduce "top-up fees". Despite a narrow five vote victory (316-311), the 2004 Higher Education Bill was passed and top-up fees became a reality. Later that year maintenance grants were re-introduced for students from poorer backgrounds. This all leads us to the current funding model...

## What's the current funding model?

If you are starting University now you will be paying top-up fees. At present they are capped at £3,000 and most universities charge the full amount. Top-up fees, unlike tuition fees, are not payable up front. Rather, once you graduate, the fees get paid back automatically from your salary with the amount dependant on thresholds.

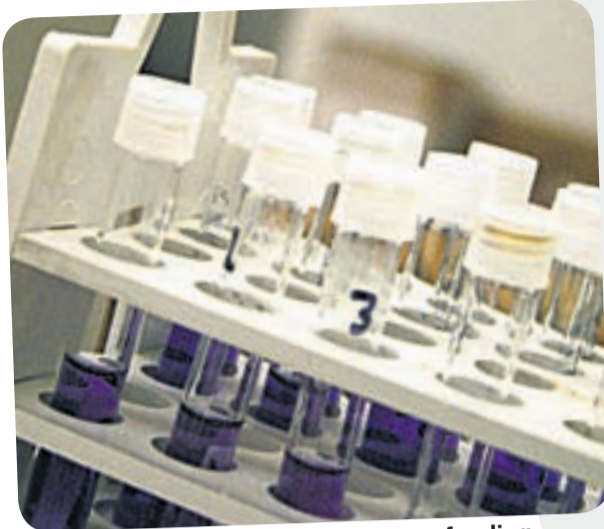
Along with a new payment scheme came a new funding and bursary scheme. Students paying £3,000 top-up fees may be eligible for an additional "HE Maintenance Grant". This makes up a proportion of your total loan amount and is not repayable. The Maintenance Grant is calculated according to your family's income and acts to reduce the level of debt incurred by students from poor economic backgrounds. A "Special Support Grant" is also available to students entitled to benefits which acts in a similar way to reduce the amount repayable on a student loan.

Institutions are also encouraged to offer bursaries that will widen participation in Higher Education. From 2007 Imperial College has awarded "Student Support Bursaries" of up to £4,000 per year to students from low income families. These bursaries are awarded to cover maintenance and study related costs during a student's time at Imperial.



Money: the root of many discussions, including this one

## What alternative funding methods are there?



Should universities be given more funding depending on which subjects they teach?

Well, some people believe taxpayers should have to pay for Higher Education once again making it free to everyone. However, this would be a major step backwards for the government.

One alternative model to both top-up fees and funding from taxpayers is a Graduate Tax. Students would contribute nothing towards their degree whilst they are studying; there would be no tuition fees. Once a student graduates his/her earnings would have an additional tax on them for a fixed period of time, say 25 years. The tax rate would be fixed for all graduates, meaning that higher earners would pay more than those on lower salaries.

Another suggestion is to revise the distribution of funding depending on the subjects a university teaches. So, for example, universities teaching science based subjects would get more money than those teaching arts subjects because test tubes and lasers cost more than books and paints.

## What does the future hold then?

2009 is an important year for students; the government is scheduled to conduct a review of variable top-up fee rates. The cap on top-up fees could be lifted meaning that universities are free to charge students whatever they like. If it's not lifted completely, it may be raised above £3,000 per year instead. Or... it could just stay the same.

It's highly unlikely that the government is going to have a sea-change and revert back to free education if previous policies are anything to go by. These reports do not (as can be seen from the Dearing Report) directly dictate policy to the Government. If the role of City Academies (schools funded partially by independent bodies, such as banks and partially by the Government) in secondary education is an indicator, the Government may see the benefits of privatising off both student loans and sectors of the higher education. Imperial College as an elite university may benefit from this whilst others might struggle to compete.



2009: The year of the top-up fees review and possibly the next General Election. Coincidence?

## So, how do I take this survey?

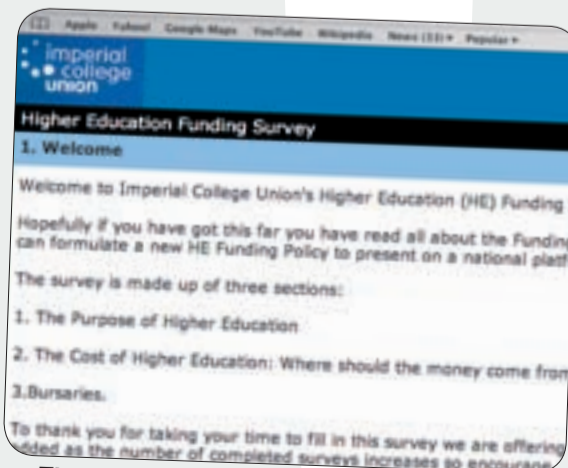
Head to:

[www.imperialcollegeunion.org/hesurvey](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/hesurvey)

You'll be asked to give your opinions on the purpose of Higher Education, where funding should come from and also bursaries.

Once you've taken the survey you will be invited to leave your email address to be entered into a free prize draw.

The main prize will be two return tickets to Paris on the Eurostar. More prizes will be added as the number of responses increases so watch out for more additional prizes over the coming weeks and get all your friends to fill in the survey.



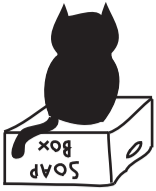
The survey is online now:  
[www.imperialcollegeunion.org/hesurvey](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/hesurvey)

## What's going to happen with the data?

After the survey the Deputy President (Education & Welfare) and the Representation and Welfare Board will draft a new policy to be voted on at Union Council.

While this piece of paper will not make very much difference on its own it will dictate how all 10 NUS delegates will vote at the NUS Conference in April. It will also give the President and DPEW a mandate to follow when presenting Imperial College Students' opinions and finally it will provide a powerful and substantial argument for the Great Higher Education Funding Debate which is taking place in March.

This will be an opportunity for Student Unions, academics and politicians to talk about the future of Higher Education Funding ahead of the review in 2009 and will take place over a whole day at Central Hall in Westminster.



## Comment, Opinion & Letters

Let us know your views: [comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:comment.felix@imperial.ac.uk)

Letters may be edited for length and grammar purposes  
Views on these pages are not representative of Felix

# How should universities be funded?

In light of the Union's survey released today, Comment returns to the Higher Education funding debate



**Steve Brown**  
Union President

## Take a step back from it all

**A**t times it can be difficult to engage one of the least politicised student bodies in the country but it is all part and parcel of Students' Union Presidency. Whilst the majority of Union activity centres around clubs and society activity and social events, the real reason the Union was established way back when was to provide a representative voice for the students of Imperial College. In the future the Union is looking to make greater use of electronic means of gathering student opinion which is why we are giving this electronic survey on the topic of how our Universities should be funded a go. The student body of Imperial has the power to mandate elected officers like myself to take a certain position on issues such as this so in order to help this process along I urge you to take the few minutes it will take to complete our short

survey. Whilst I am happy to share my opinion at the end of the day it doesn't really matter what I think – the view that matters is the one taken by the largest number of students.

My successor (who you are about to elect) will also be looking to collate and voice your views in the run up to the government's Higher Education funding review which is currently scheduled for 2009. In respect of the current £3000 cap on the contribution made by UK and EU students you will hear a variety of calls from student leaders, University Vice-Chancellors (most places don't have a Rector) and politicians to keep it, raise it or perhaps even remove it altogether. I will use the rest of this article to pose some questions to you

First of all, what are your opinions of the current system? I have made my own views clear on this matter in previous issues but do you think that the introduction of top up fees has

changed our universities for the better or for the worse? Are the enhanced bursary packages students in financial need now have access to whilst at university worth the debt? Getting in to debt on a buy now, pay later basis can be quite daunting but it can be considered to be quite attractive to the alternative of increasing the rate of income tax. One day we all will pay off our student debts whilst any additional tax burden on graduates could make our education even more costly than it currently is. One of the benefits of the current system is that what you pay back every month is determined by how much you earn and if your earnings never increase pass a certain level then you don't have to pay back a penny. Could it be that the endless scaremongering that has emanated from Students' Unions on the issue of student debt put some people off applying to university?

Secondly, looking to the future you might want to consider what mechanisms should be in place to direct funding? With finite resources available how should they be distributed and what criteria should be taken in to account? We are constantly hearing about shortages of suitably qualified and willing students wanting to study science and some have argued that resources in this area should be increased. With regards to the more popular subjects where there is already a glut of graduates to what extent should learning for learning's sake be funded?

These are some pertinent and controversial questions that we would like your views on. If you think my opinions are awful then our survey is a quick and easy opportunity to steer me back on to the right path and to better inform the Union's policy making process. Visit [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/hesurvey](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/hesurvey) to take the survey.



**Matty Hoban**

## Free education leads to a free society

**I**n the run up to the 1997 general election, Tony Blair promised that the new Labour/New Labour government would be about three things; the now famous, "Education, education, education!" We now know with the benefit of hindsight that he was really promoting arbitrary targets alongside part privatisation of schools. The same sort of hatchet job has been applied to university and higher education funding where rarely the student or institution is satisfied. With the Union asking for student consultation with regards to their future policy on higher educa-

tion funding (through the online survey), big questions and easy solutions are thrown about. I am personally for free education, and luckily due to my background I enjoy not having to pay tuition fees. However, I have witnessed first hand people struggling to pay tuition fees and the financial uncertainties it brings.

Aside from my ideological viewpoint that education should be free and readily available to all, I see the system as inherently hypocritical. New Labour set the now infamous target of fifty percent of school leavers to attend university. Through this they imme-

diately aligned themselves with university admissions and ideas of wider availability. However, at the same time they present a cheque as a solution to the funding implications. The main difficulty I have is the fact that those who suffer most from the tuition fees are the lower middle classes whose income lies just above the fees threshold. New Labour was about wooing Middle England and to do the above just makes no political sense, these are also the people I have seen suffer the most. You are lumbered with debts, which is a problem that you will personally have to solve. If anything, this destroys

the nature of social mobility, or at least makes it about as easy as walking through a pool of treacle.

Whether a Students' Union should naturally be in favour of free education will hopefully come to light from this survey; the Union is there to represent your interests. Just remember that education is the most liberating of human endeavours; could placing a price tag on it only undermine this liberty? Whether you believe this or are a self-proclaimed "pragmatist", one thing is for sure, someone will be burdened by the cost. However, you can choose who will be better at dealing with it.



**Caroline Clark**

## Fight for free education

**W**ith the suspension of the Union's policy on Higher Education funding last term, the Council said they wanted to gauge student opinion on the matter. You might ask why the President wanted to conduct a survey instead of having a referendum. After having a look at a draft of the survey last term, I can guess at the reason why – it asks vague questions about things such as who should be applying to university rather than asking definite questions on how university education should be funded, which should leave the few people pushing for new policy enough room to interpret the results however they wish.

Throughout this whole process certain people on Council have stressed

the importance of having a debate on this issue, while at the same time doing everything possible to inhibit the debate. At a meeting of the Representation and Welfare Board where the questions in the draft survey were supposed to be debated, the discussion was halted after several minutes and people were asked to voice their opinions by email rather than being able to discuss them with everyone else present.

So what are the main points in this debate? Firstly, our Union should fight for free education because any other policy would only weaken our position as a Student's Union. If we fight for a cap on top up fees, how do we decide what "cap" is suitable? In this situation, the Rector's position in favour of unlimited top up fees would

become harder to fight against. If we fought for the cap to remain at £3,000 thinking that it's the best we're going to get, then we are accepting that the free market should dictate Higher Education. Furthermore, if entrance to universities is dominated by the free market, then Universities will continually compete to increase fees, and it will become harder and harder for people to afford to go to University.

Secondly, the main duty of a Student's Union is to take a principled stand on issues that affect students. Fighting for free education is not because people "prefer something free over something you have to now pay for" as the President previously said; it is because people who can't afford to pay the top up fees are being excluded from going to University out of fear of

the resulting debt.

The previous Union policy stated that "Top-up fees have created a market in Higher Education which hinders the involvement of those students who come from backgrounds with historically low participation rates." They also said that the Union believed that "any 'review' by the Government is likely to be a sham, designed to smooth the passage of unrestricted top-up fees." As I have noted before, I believe that this comment should be applied to the review of this policy by the Council; it has been a sham, aimed at pushing through opinions which aren't representative of the student population at Imperial.

So I urge you to reflect the arguments made in this article in your responses to the Union's survey.



Gilead Amit

## Journey to the End of the Paragraph

Let's go on an expedition. Yes, that's right, you and me. Don't be nervous – I've been told I'm pretty good company. In any case, we're not going very far. In fact, you don't even have to move to make the highly glamorous Journey to the End of the Paragraph.

What drives a person to set off and make their mark on the vast, daunting expanse of a white page? Some are drawn by the rumour of hidden treasure, theirs for the unearthing if they steer the right course. Others want nothing else but to leave the world they know, and immerse themselves in the magical lands they may find beneath the cold whiteness of the page. Then, of course, there are those who seek the thrill of exploration. Who are driven on by the insatiable need to unlock the potential of these uncharted territories. Armed with but a handful of punctuation marks, a sturdy thesaurus and a strong pair of glasses they resolutely set off for the Terra Incognita.

The journey that lies ahead is not an easy one, and adequate preparation has to be taken. The first step is to ensure the possession of a sufficiently powerful vocabulary to fight one's way across the verbal wasteland. Without one, even the most ardent explorer will be lucky to cross into the second paragraph; the firepower a decent vocabulary provides is crucial for the success of a literary expedition.

Assuming that transportation is taken care of, a good supply of grammatical rules is indispensable for creating a healthy atmosphere; making sure the group stays united and structured, and that no individual words go straying off into the wilderness, where no feat of construction, however daring, will save them.

/// Armed with but a handful of punctuation marks, a sturdy thesaurus and a strong pair of glasses they resolutely set off for the Terra Incognita ///



Not quite as glamorous perhaps, but just as thrilling

Any such trip's failure can be guaranteed by the absence of proper planning. Paths have to be sketched out, goals must be set. Certain fixed destinations must be reached before others. Above all, random meandering in the wild leads nowhere. For a sentence to be successful it must have a fixed aim, and a detailed map must be drawn up as to how to get there.

The trip seems more daunting now than it did before, doesn't it? Constructing a sentence outline, ensuring sufficient word-power, being familiar with the grammar? Don't worry. You're well equipped. You have the finest set of punctuation marks in the history of man in your rucksack; an invaluable aid if you know how to use them.

Vital to success is the comma; the most precious tool available to you. You can now embark on the longest of sentences without fear. The steep climb to the end of a thought can be dangerous, and without the assistance of a comma, one can fall all the way back down the cliff face to the beginning of

the sentence. The 'fallen apostrophe' is a crampon for these sheerest of slopes, giving you a resting-place while you plan the next section of your climb. Be warned, though – use too many and you won't get anywhere.

The semi-colon is the big-boy equivalent. A much more powerful, more finely-crafted tool, it is extremely dangerous in the wrong hands. Needless to say, it is very effective; but unsupervised use can result in structural chaos. It is, of course, made by the same manufacturer as the colon, which is no less risky, and should be used only in the event of an emergency. It serves as a warning shot: it slows the pace of your expedition down, but keeps them moving. Be prepared though: the general tension will rise after its use, and everyone will be desperately eager to reach the end of the sentence as soon as possible.

The dash is a helpful and compact rope bridge for getting across the most perilous of breaks in the sentence structure. The linguistic framework

can collapse under your feet in a moment – and it is the dash that can guide you to safety. Should you fail to use it in time, however, a solitary ellipsis will indicate the final resting-place of a thought cut off before its time...

There will be times when your words will get restless and want to stray from the arranged path. Occasional deviations are very healthy (so long as you mark your trail properly with parentheses, so as to be able to return to it eventually), but if your phrasing gets overexcited, you may have to pull the trigger and fire a full stop through its head. Sentences that are going nowhere do sometimes need to be put to sleep; as gut-wrenching as that can sometimes be.

These adventures are by no means rare, but they are remarkable, and can be as thrilling and terrifying as any. They are voyages that anyone can make with ease, so long as one plans one's trip well, is well-equipped, knows where one is headed, and, above all, avoids excessive comma usage.



A. Geek

## Roses are red, violets are more costly

Four weeks, then. Less than that, by the time you're reading this. I don't need to tell you what it's four weeks until, because there are amoeba living at the bottom of trenches in the Pacific that have already begun to put up Valentine's Day decorations in their presumably single-celled shopfronts. You can't not know that it's Valentine's Day soon, because if you're single then High Street Kensington looks like it's dangling its genitalia and laughing at you from every shop window you pass, and if you *aren't* single then you've probably been obsessing about gift-buying for the last two months, and if you haven't then *why not?* Don't you love your partner? Don't you? Then *why aren't you buying You2Me bears to express it?* Why not, you loveless shit?

Not that people are predictable, but around this time of year you generally get two camps forming based on the groups above. There are those who are ready to chow down the colour pink in every available form for the two weeks running up to The Big Day, and there are those that claim that it's "a manufactured holiday" that "the greetings card companies" made up. I don't know whether the greetings card companies deserve being referred to in the same tones as OPEC, but I'm pretty sure that if they're planning anything, it's more likely to be how to make their celebrity-parody cards even bloody

noisier rather than convincing people to express their love in paper form.

But what's so bad with a manufactured holiday, anyway? It's not like it makes the gestures any less sincere. It's not Hallmark that's screwing you over really, it's just *you* that's doing it. It's like how heroin on its own is actually kind of pretty, if you put it in jars and shine halogen lamps through it. But if you give it to nine year-olds, suddenly it's a massive evil and bang! You're in jail for twelve to eighteen months. Jesus. My point being, firstly – dealing drugs to primary school children? Moral grey area. But secondly, and more importantly, it's you that's to blame deep down.

Now, I like to think that my girlfriend and I are different, but then again I would. And though I should point out that she not only knows I write this, but also – god forbid – actually *reads* the shit I churn out, you might have a right to be cynical about anything I say this week. But that's up to you, really.

Anyway, there's this girl, as mentioned above, and God love her she manages to tolerate my unhappiness and general anger on a weekly and frequently daily basis. I'm incredibly grateful for this. It makes me ludicrously happy, in fact, and there are times when she manages to entirely defeat the whining, rage-filled sloth that pulls the majority of my levers. I don't know if that's *supposed* to be something a

girl puts up with, but I guess it beats putting up with, say, physical abuse or a private stash of pornographic magazines. Maybe.

The point is that I'm extremely grateful and take any opportunity I can to show this. That means that Valentine's Day is just a convenient marker, a kind of 'why the hell not' label in the diary where we think it might be a good idea to put aside trivial things like study or other people and take the time to remind each other that we really feel better with the other around. And that whiny sloths can never beat roses bought from French people.

Now, if you're looking at Valentine's Day as a day where you've got something to prove, then you're just setting yourself up for a fall. This is why most people end up collapsing under the weight of their own self-pity, or panic-attacking every time they see a stuffed toy in January. The 'commercialism' is just what shops do. It's why there's a guy selling umbrellas outside Gloucester Road every time it rains, and sure, I want to punt him in the groin with one of his own products just as much as you do, but it's not *his fault*. When the hell else is he going to sell them?

No, the reason everyone gets so depressed is because they convince themselves that there's some kind of demand being put on them by everyone else. It's why you want a pair of Converse now that you've seen them in Felix's fashion

page, and it's why you can never tell people 'no'. Because you can't, can you? You feel bad, as if there's going to be some repercussion that the Universe itself will exact upon you. Well, good news – there won't be. No-one's going to care if you're single come this Valentine's Day, and if you're so desperate to have someone for that particular day then it's probably time to reassess your life vis-à-vis being a normal human being. Similarly, if the best you can think of your partner is that they're going to abandon you unless you offer them a chocolate box so big that it interferes with the Earth's own gravitational field, then you're probably not in a healthy relationship. Trust doesn't just mean leaving your boyfriend alone with that pretty research assistant from the fourth floor. It also means that you don't think they're so gullible as to judge your commitment to them on the basis of confectionery.

This compulsion thing, actually, is one of the more frustrating things I see from day to day; the fact that so many of us are bounded by expectation. Most of the time, though, I can't find a way to make it sound funny rather than just very, very sad. If you're lucky, I just might tell you that story another week. For now you should scurry off to the local commercialism store and stock up on exploitation. I will be at in my apartment, looking after my garnet. Much love.

/// My point being this – dealing drugs to primary school children? Moral grey area ///



Noel Forrest

**// We need to start asking more pertinent questions, like why must Imperial's front doors rotate slower than the earth? //**

## Celebrities say the funniest things

**A**ren't celebrities silly! The charity Sense About Science have flagged up some classic science gaffes from 2007, including Sarah Beeny's, "lovely make up and moisturisers which don't have any chemicals in them" and Heather Mills' views that animals farmed for meat and dairy "are at the heart of almost all the world's environmental catastrophes." Richly comic, but based on personal experience, I really can't believe my state of knowledge about the world is any good either, even as a scientist. Not because there's so much information out there, but because there is so very much horse manure out there.

As an ecology student I fretted about a sixth and this time human-led mass extinction, but was then taught that plant diversification has actually constantly progressed upwards throughout earth's history, as explained by the 'zoo versus botanic garden' paradigm. I diligently uprooted the invasive Himalayan Balsam from the banks of my local river, but did I poison the alien Rhododendrons in my garden? I did not. I believed the eminent climate scientist Jim Hansen when he said we'd "exceeded the normal operating range for carbon dioxide in our atmosphere", and in the context of the recent glacial/interglacial cycling that's true, but is it true in the context of geological time? Well, no actually.



**Heather Mills: Speaking sense since the dawn of time. Cough**

Geologist Stephen Drury sums up earth's history as "constant change", which kind of puts things in perspective. We may even have averted the onset of the next ice age. I walked in the

woods and I marvelled at nature, and then I read Oliver Rackham's *The History of the Countryside*. Nature went when Bronze Age man cut down all the trees I'm afraid (that's if you still believe there was ever such a thing as wilderness in the first place.). Legendary plant scientist Peter Grubb ("spend an hour with him you'll think he's Darwin, spend a week and you'll think he's God") rounded off my undergrad days with a lecture on how many intelligent people leave ecology because they can see it's faults too clearly, and that the only people who ever really discover anything anyway are the obsessive "shrinking violet" types. So I left too, and went into banking.

But let me tell you, things aren't any better there either. If you think you can read the business section, see M&S' sales falling and think "oo I'd better sell those shares", and make some money like that, you are very, very much mistaken. You'll probably sell them to a trader who is buying the dip because he has a hunch there'll be a private equity bid, and what's more if he himself makes any real money then that too will be basically luck. Because unless you've worked in an industry or consulted for it, you'll be hard pushed to say which company in that sector is likely to outperform over the coming year. And as for timing entry and exit into asset classes, well just forget it. But does that stop heavy advertising

by fund managers to get your money into a zero-sum game where they're charging a fee? Or sales driven stockbroker chat for the commission on the trades they make, all well within the FSA regulations? You know it doesn't. Many adverts boast of established positions in India and China, but could they please explain why that's a good thing? Ever heard of emerging market crashes? Nah, China's all the rage! Fine, I'm sold. Buy. Buy manure.

This is why enhancing our sense of personal responsibility is thankfully moving up the political agenda. Vulnerable members of society will not make the most of life unless they realise they have to work things out themselves. Interestingly, at the other end of the spectrum, the message appears to be the same. According to the Vice Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, Alison Richard, the aim of an elite education is to learn to think for oneself.

My point is simply that this is very important, because of the vast swathes of claptrap we need to navigate through in life. We need to start asking more pertinent questions, like why must Imperial's front doors rotate slower than the earth? If I die in there after someone touches the sides and it stops, then I don't want to be moved. I want to rot in a bloody Catherine-wheel of protest against getting it wrong. That's if it ever gets going again.

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Lisa

# The idiot is whinier than the sword

Student journalism is A Good Thing. Let's put that onto the table right there, before we get too far into this one-sided conversation between you and my fine self. Student Journalism is A Good Thing, and when I envisage the world collapsing under the strain of nuclear war with only the core tenets of human society remaining intact, I like to think that dry-roasted peanuts will still be the snack of choice for the discerning gentleman, and that students who can string seven words together will still continue to write entertainingly for their fellow slackers.

However, I think it's fair to say that Real Journalism is not the same as Student Journalism. Here are some ways in which Felix, for instance, differs from a real publication – first of all, Felix isn't hugely reliant on anyone. It has advertisers, sure, but they're largely unrelated to anything they write about and the income isn't the only thing that keeps it going. Felix also is running in a one-horse race. If you want to read something written by students, for free, in paper format, then you're picking up Felix. No competition. No stress. And most importantly, no other outlets for budding student journalists.

Now I'm not one to tootle my own cor anglais, but I've been lucky enough to experience both of these worlds. By day, I'm a mild-mannered freelance journalist, and by night I don black leather and a gimp mask and write something like this for something like Felix.

If the self-appointed title of 'freelance journalist' makes you think of me as an arrogant retard then you'd pretty much be right on the money, but nevertheless it doesn't change the fact that I'm paid, on regular intervals, to produce amounts of words for others to read. It's a completely different experience for writing aimless rants in a student paper, and it's possibly why I found last week's article in Felix Games a little bit wide of the mark.

For those of you too cosmopolitan to be caught reading the Games section of Felix, even though you secretly really want to, last week it covered the scandalous – if slightly old – story of a one

Mr. Jeff Gerstmann, a games journalist who was last year dismissed from the high-profile website GameSpot. The story goes that Gerstmann reviewed blockbuster title Kane and Lynch and gave it such a low score despite the game garnering huge advertising revenue that the website sacked him. GameSpot denied that this was the cause, but then they would, wouldn't they because they're the evil corporation and that's exactly what they want you to think.

At this point I'd like to make sure no-one's getting turned off by the mention of 'games' and so we're going to abstract away the product and pretend that we're talking about the 'Object' industry, where journalists review and write about 'Objects' so that you, the public, might decide to pay money in some way to read their words about the 'Objects'.

Fuck it, I'm calling them games, you can abstract it yourself.

It's fair to say that people's reaction to Gerstmanngate has been less than rational. The media, or rather 'the bits of the media who give a toss', covered it with usual aplomb and overuse of inflammatory headlines, and most blogs took the opportunity to wax lyrical on the ethics of journalism and, of all things, the integrity of the games industry. Which I assumed was a sarcastic joke until I began reading past the opening paragraphs.

Here are some things that no-one ever mentions when they attack large media outlets – and I'd like to point out that this goes for film, music, theatre, television, food; whatever kind of reviewing you like, my personal experience being the first in that list.

First of all, Gerstmann wasn't a boat-rocker all of his life. In case I didn't make it clear, the implication people made after his being fired was that most reviewers will tack on an above-average score to please publishing houses even if it means lying to the reader, and that Gerstmann was some kind of loose cannon who chose to defy convention. Well, he wasn't. Gerstmann was the kind of guy who gave super-generic button-masher Tekken 5 a score of 92%. He was the sort of

journalist that thought lazily designed, lowest-common-denominator stuff like Unreal Championship 2 was worth 9 points out of 10. Gerstmann was like every other games journalist, he just guessed wrong when it came to Kane and Lynch.

Second of all, although you see Gerstmann's review as critical and uncensored, this was only because there was no-one directly above him editing his work, because he was the editorial director. The kind of high-level censorship that was seen after his dismissal – his review was edited by GameSpot's higher-ups – is endemic among lower-level journalists. If you review a game and your editor thinks you made the wrong call, your opinion is going to get changed. Sure, they're not going to add 40% onto a score. But they can easily turn a few negative-sounding phrases into a positive one and add an extra mark out of ten on. The only difference is that no-one notices and even fewer people would care.

Perhaps most importantly, though, is that people are suddenly complaining that media monoliths such as GameSpot have too much power. Internet swinging dick CNET took control of GameSpot over seven years ago, the owners didn't wake up one winter's morning last November with a dark suit on and a white cat in their arms. I'm fortunate enough to do most of my writing for media groups with less complicated chains of command. CNET is a group so large and so hungry for advertising revenue, that anyone visiting them in serious search of journalistic integrity is like an Aztec visiting a Medics' Bar Night looking for a virgin sacrifice.

What puzzles me most, however, is that this isn't a monopoly, like Felix, and it's not a place where advertising isn't a big deal. It's on a high-profile website that's slap bang in the middle of the internet. The Internet slings opinion and up-to-the-minute news at you like a monkey at the zoo and even though, as with the monkey, most of what's flying at you is shit, it's not that hard to find alternative sources of opinion or comment. GameSpot aren't 'signal[ling that] this type of thing is acceptable.

They just made a PR cock-up at executive level. I can understand people wanting to make the gaming world more exciting than it really is, but even geeks should have their limits.

Games Editor, **Azfarul Islam** comments:

*Felix being a rather independent body is what encourages us to speak our minds, engender constructive debate and bring forth what we feel is necessary. It's definitely a place where opinions from across the spectrum are appreciated. Constructive opinions, in particular.*

*And to be fair, the discussions were from three different perspectives. I'm talking about the actual status quo of the commercial bodies that govern this medium, Sebb speaks of the reviewing conundrums and Samir waxes lyrical about consumerism in this niche.*

*We're not complaining about media monoliths possessing much power, we know they do.*

*And, oh, sure. Hurray for the bigwigs. Let's all rally up and give 'em a big Thumbs Up™ so that Small-'n'-Squishy can keep charging snide amounts for its Bazaar and Sunny can make over-priced products all under the guise of media convergence. Huzzah.*

*Ah, sorry. Just had to.*

Games Editor **Sebastian Nordgren** comments:

*The gaming public isn't martyring Jeff Gerstmann – he's not the saviour of gaming reviews. Nor are we surprised or outraged that review scores have and will always be fudged a bit by upper management (though I do question how CNET knows that Kane & Lynch was better than Gerstmann claimed it was, having presumably never played it). No, the issue at hand is one of escalation. Yes, advertising dollars have always played their part in review scores, but never before have they got anyone fired. It's a worrying trend by any standards, especially if corporate swinging dicks everywhere gain momentum from it.*

It was covered by the media with the usual aplomb and overinflammatory headlines

## Letter to the Editor

### Man-handled and kicked out of the Senior Common Room

Dear Felix

Last week I was having a quiet lunch in the Senior Common Room with several friends when we were interrupted by a rather rude member of staff who had taken it upon himself to go around the SCR asking for ID from anyone he deemed not worthy of being there. As Masters students, there is some debate as to whether we are allowed to buy and eat food in the SCR. However, this 'gentleman' (he declined to give his name) obviously thought otherwise, and told us to leave. After we politely asked if we could at least finish our lunch first, he proceeded to man-handle us out of our seats whilst subjecting

us to verbal abuse.

There are two points I wish to make concerning this incident. Firstly, to address the behaviour of the individual concerned, I was somewhat shocked by the arrogant and patronising behaviour coming from a member of Imperial College staff. Obviously he had nothing better to do during his lunch-break than talk down to people like an irate headmaster.

Moving on from discussing superiority complexes, I come to my second point. Is it really necessary to segregate taught Masters students from the rest of the postgraduates? I would like to know the reasoning behind this. As a thirty-two year old with a PhD (from Imperial), MSc, six years industry experience and studying for a second MSc, I consider myself mature enough to sit and eat lunch for thirty minutes without making a scene. I am also paying (some might say pay-rolling members of College staff?) a substantial amount of my own money to be at Imperial, so I rather resent being treated

like a school child when I want to eat my lunch.

The SCR and Junior Common Room are both busy at lunch time. Allowing taught Masters students into the SCR is not likely to cause the whole system to collapse though (I should also imagine that the caterers would be quite keen to have the extra customers). One-year taught Masters students are postgraduates just as PhD students are. I understand that Imperial runs many four-year undergraduate Masters courses, but these are still undergraduate courses so I do not include them here. It's an issue of attitude. To have segregation between postgraduates seems to me to be divisive and just plain daft. Where is the forum for intellectual development and exchange of ideas within the postgraduate and academic community at Imperial? The College should be encouraging such interactions, not making us feel like children.

**Dr David Stacey MSc DIC**

Editor-in-Chief **Tom Roberts** responds:

*Thank you for writing in Dr Stacey. I hope you're not too badly bruised! Your letter came as a surprise to me for two reasons: firstly because of the appalling behaviour of the staff member you described and secondly because I had assumed that MSc students were allowed in the Senior Common Room anyway.*

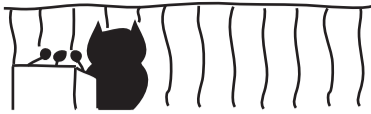
*I have always thought of the SCR as a place for postgraduate students and as you say it seems incredibly daft to segregate them from each other.*

*One possible explanation the Felix office came up with is that MSc students are forbidden from the hallowed SCR because lecturers don't want to be hassled by them whilst they're eating their lunch. It seems like a pretty feeble explanation though and I'm interested to find out what the real reason is.*

*What do you think, dear readers? Should MSc students be allowed in the SCR or left to mix with the undergraduate paupers in the JCR?*



**Should MSc students be allowed to use the SCR?**



# Can we see peace on the horizon?

With a growing humanitarian crisis in Gaza, Kadhim Shubber investigates a possible route for peace

Conflict in Israel, or Palestine if you prefer, was one of the defining features of the 20th century, and its continuation in the 21st century stands as a regretful monument to humankind. I will not label the Palestinians as terrorists; nor will I condemn the actions of the Israeli state; those wishing to reinforce their prejudices should read elsewhere. Is there a realistic route for peace in the future? I believe that there is, but it does not lie in a two-state solution.

In a rather tedious way I must reiterate the basis of peace in the Holy Land, as has been iterated countless time by various world leaders; an end to violence is paramount. The situation as is it now makes this goal substantially more complicated than it was a mere 10 years ago. While in the past U.S. leaders have put a lot of effort into ending violence in the Holy Land, for example under Bill Clinton, the current administration has neglected this conflict and thus lost credibility as a peacemaker. Also, there are now two separate groups who have a hand in deciding the fate of the Palestinian people; the Islamist Hamas that has control in Gaza and the secular Fatah, which has control in the West Bank.

This makes the problem of ending violence more difficult. Firstly, because gaining a meaningful ceasefire agreement is much easier when you only have to deal with one group, but realistically this alone does not turn a molehill into a mountain. Secondly, and more importantly, for violence to end Hamas must stomach its aversion to dealing with Israel while Israel and the U.S. must stomach their aversion to dealing with Hamas. However we should not exaggerate this issue and deceive ourselves that this is impossible. Hamas and Israel have previously held a ceasefire and in fact currently Hamas is seeking a ceasefire with Israel. Infrastructure minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer and transport minister Shaul Mofaz have both said that Israel should be receptive to a ceasefire with Hamas. "If Hamas comes to us with a serious proposal for a long-term truce, in my opinion Israel should not reject it," Mr. Ben-Eliezer told Israeli public radio. Despite my optimism, I concede that at present neither side has shown the political guts to work seriously for peace. Israeli PM Ehud Olmert has ruled out a ceasefire with Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas unless it recognizes Israel and renounces violence. "This



Hamas militants armed to the teeth

war will continue," Mr Olmert told his ministers. a Hamas spokesman also denied it was considering a truce. "It is up to [Israel] because when they stop all their aggressions we will then discuss the issue."

The Israeli government argues that allowing refugees to return to their original homes (many of which are in what is now Israel) would create a Palestinian majority and undermine Israel's status as a Jewish state. Critics of the right to return state that Palestinians were made homeless because of the Arab-initiated 1948 war. However, several UN resolutions call for refugees to be permitted to return to their homes "at the earliest practicable date". Little progress has been made on what is perhaps the most difficult issue.

Regardless of the differences on both sides, progress is steadily being made on the issue, and despite suspicion from some quarters, both sides generally agree that a peaceful solution is mutually more beneficial than constant conflict.

Tension between Iran and the U.S.A has, in some ways, made the peace process more difficult. The U.S. and Israel are distracted from the goal of peace and instead feel their national security is threatened. Hamas is regarded as a proxy fighter for Iran rather than a representative of the Palestinian people and so this conflict is interpreted as a proxy war against Iran rather than a tragedy that requires a rapid peace. Iran does not act in the interests of the Palestinian people. It perpetuates the violence by supplying weapons and funds to militants. The use of this conflict by both sides as a proxy war is highly damaging to the peace process and obviously the lives of Israeli and Palestinian people. There is an unexpected benefit however of

the tension surrounding Iran. Other Arab states, seeking to counter-act the rising power of Iran have been more willing to co-operate with Israel. This was seen at the Annapolis conference in December. Israel often feels threatened by its Arab neighbours and this hinders peace, therefore by bringing the Arab states closer to their Jewish neighbour, Israel will gain the confidence to pursue peace with the Palestinians. It remains to be seen whether renewed co-operation with Arab states will re-assure Israel as much as tension with Iran concerns it.

Previous ceasefires and peace agreements have come to nothing. Despite the many summits and opportunities in the past that seemed to point towards peace, we still find ourselves no closer to the light at the end of tunnel. The Oslo Peace Accords are the most public example in our lifetime of high-level meetings resulting in little progress on the ground, due to in part the actions of Hamas. What will make a peace agreement work? Instead of agreeing on terms through which the Palestinians and Israelis will be divided, the exact opposite should be done.

In comparison to the economic condition of the UK, the Palestinian territories' situation is appalling. The unemployment rate is approximately 35 percent in Gaza but slightly lower in the West Bank. Import and export is essentially a non-entity with the Gaza Strip's only import being humanitarian aid. I do not wish to trivialise the issue, but the cause of this miserable economic situation is rather easily summed up. It is the isolation of the Palestinian Territories due to ongoing violence and the restriction on travel and trade imposed by Israel. Israel has destroyed Gaza's airport and harbour while keeping its people behind a

## History and facts on Hamas



From top: Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and Ismail Haniya

With over 1,000 active members in its military wing Hamas is the largest and most influential Palestinian militant movement.

2 years ago this month Hamas won the Palestinian Authority's (PA) general legislative elections. They defeated Fatah, the party of Mahmoud Abbas, the PA's president. Hamas grew out of the Muslim Brotherhood, a religious and political organization founded in Egypt in the 1960s, Hamas' founder and spiritual leader, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, started Hamas as the Muslim Brotherhood's local political arm in December 1987, following the eruption of the first intifada.

Hamas combines Islamic Fundamentalism with Palestinian Nationalism. Its founding charter commits the group to the destruction of Israel, the founding of an Islamic state in Palestine. Hamas devotes much of its estimated \$70-million annual budget to an extensive social services network. "Approximately 90 percent of its work is in social, welfare, cultural, and educational activities," writes the Israeli scholar Reuven Paz.

Hamas is believed to have killed more than five hundred people in more than 350 separate terrorist attacks since 1993. The group uses mortars, short-range rockets, and small arms fire as well as suicide attacks.

## Humanitarian Crisis

Recently, Israel has tightened its grip on the Gaza Strip. Restrictions have been placed on fuel imports resulting in Gaza's only power plant going offline. U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice urged Israel to avoid a humanitarian crisis in Gaza; she joined a large number of nations condemning Israel's actions. She did add that, ultimately, Hamas was to blame for the situation.

40km long barbed wire fence. It is not for nothing that Gazans regard themselves as prisoners in the world's largest open-air prison. For Israel too, there is a harsh economic cost of the current status quo. While the uninformed often disregard the effect of the conflict on Israelis, the impact of the Second Intifada in 2000 was dramatic, including a cessation of economic growth an increase in the extent and depth of poverty. Israel suffers from the conflict and from financing its involvement in the conflict.

Is there anything to be gained from these statistics? Both Israel and the Palestinian people suffer economically from the conflict. Please no applause, I beg you. What is important is that economics provides both an incentive for peace and also the glue that will hold peace together. Once begun, it becomes self-sustaining. If the Palestinian territories are able to produce and export goods then links are established with the wider world, wealth is produced and greater prospects are opened to the Palestinian people. With a stable economy, a stable job market and stable future then militant groups – those who wish to destabilize the region through violence – will lose support.

The economic angle has another important part to play. Isolation between communities is one of the biggest perpetrators of conflict in this region. Israelis and Palestinians develop prejudices against each other based on the worst atrocities of the conflict. These prejudices are not easily destroyed. The West Bank Barrier physically separates Israelis and Palestinians, for example, but there are also no trade links or other connections between these two peoples. By encouraging and initiating trade and commerce between the Palestinian Territories and Israel then these links will begin to exist. Palestinians and Israelis will interact daily with each other through business, initially, but as this regular contact has an effect also in friendship. Today the Palestinians and Israelis lose tremendous amounts from conflict but fear and prejudice allow them to justify these losses. Their leaders have been unable to make peace but it is not at high-level talks that this conflict will end. It will end as these communities come closer together on a long-term basis through trade. Instead of justifying their losses, an opportunity should be presented for them to justify moving past this tit-for-tat conflict with long-term economic benefits.

Off the coast of Gaza lie at least \$2 billion in undeveloped gas reserves. This provides the basis for the future of economic development in Palestine.

As stated earlier, the division be-

tween Fatah and Hamas complicates the matter. In the West Bank, Fatah has made leaps and bounds in terms of good governance. The Palestinian Prime Minister, Salam Fayyad, has won Western plaudits through his efforts to put Palestinian finances on a new footing - and root out corruption. He has announced plans for a sewage treatment plant in Gaza and a number of projects in the West Bank, including an industrial park in Jericho and an industrial zone in Hebron. However while in the West Bank Mr. Fayyad, an internationally respected moderate, is in charge, in the impoverished and overcrowded Gaza Strip, the other Palestinian Prime Minister, Ismail Haniya leads an organization regarded as terrorist by the EU and U.S.A. Since Hamas took over Gaza, leading President Abbas to choose another Prime Minister, Salam Fayyad, Israel and the U.S. as well as international donors have tried to undermine, bring down and skirt around the authority of Hamas. This action has been taken under the assumption that Hamas will not make peace readily and instead must be forced economically and militarily. Definitely Hamas has proved itself as a force against peace, it showed an effective veto over the peace process launched by the Oslo Peace Accords by launching suicide attacks. However the isolation of the people of Gaza does not persuade anyone to come to the negotiating table, instead it reinforces the mentality of conflict and gives justification to those who label Israelis as the enemy. The economic stranglehold on Gaza is simply driving people to join Hamas, if only because it is one of the few employers left. After decades of conflict the defiant streak of the Palestinians still exists, coercion simply hardens attitudes and reinforces prejudices. Hamas can be dealt with in a peace process; currently they act as the defender of the Palestinian people. Remove the impetus to fight through a ceasefire and they will be forced to act as the provider of the Palestinian people. The reason why they were elected was not because Palestinians were affirming their support for terrorism; it was because Hamas were seen as honest and capable of providing basic services. Instead of forcing them into conflict, we must force them into good governance.

The most important tool of peace-making is the unshakeable will to reach an agreement. There are many signs that neither the Israeli nor the Palestinian government possesses this will. Israel's role in preventing the exploitation of Gaza's offshore resources leads one to the conclusion that Israel does not want the Palestinians to stand on their feet economically while Ha-

## Is there really gas off Gaza?



BG GROUP

This will probably be the first time you have heard about gas reserves off the coast of Gaza. BG Group Plc was meant to drill for natural gas 36 kilometers off of the Gaza coast, in an area that was designated as PA territory following the Oslo Accords. The gas was meant to then flow four km underwater in a pipeline 850 meters below the surface to an Ashkelon refinery. The field, which BG purchased in 2000 and to which Hamas now claims rightful ownership, contains 1 trillion cubic feet of natural gas worth an estimated \$4 billion. If Israel were to be the main purchaser of Palestinian gas exports it would represent a win-win situation. The Palestinians would have a guaranteed purchaser for their gas, one that would generate £50 million a year for 15 years in tax revenues, and provide the foundation for sustainable economic growth. And the Israelis would have a secure source of affordable gas to underwrite their economy's growth. However the deal was scuppered due to Israeli fears that revenues from the gas development could fall into the hands of its enemies such as the various militant groups that operate in Palestine specifically Hamas.

mas and other groups seem more than ready to allow their people to wallow in poverty than build a sustainable future. The most important thing, more important than a ceasefire or economic co-operation, is that these two peoples have representatives that share their desire for peace.

Isolation is the fuel that drives this conflict. Israel isolates the Palestinian territories due to security concerns, and by isolate I mean denies freedom of movement to Palestinians and prevents the Palestinian economy from functioning. This isolation leads to desperation and desperation can end nowhere except in violence. First these security concerns must be addressed. However the mistakes of the past must not be repeated, we cannot wait for peace before peace talks. Israel must be prepared to negotiate with its enemies and appeal to the Palestinian people

through economic assistance. A two state solution is a misnomer. There can be no solution as long as the Palestinians and Israelis are kept separate. The Israeli state will remain suspicious of its neighbour and continue to have total control over it while the Palestinian people will continue to rue what they see as the greatest injustice in mankind's history. There is no inherent animosity between the Jewish and Muslim faith, only that which exists today because of association with the Palestine-Israel conflict. The future of sustainable peace is one state for both Palestinians and Jewish people. A state for the Jewish or Palestinian people carries an inherent discrimination that could only lead to conflict, conversely an inclusive state will lead to peace, understanding and an end to this chapter of human history that reveals the worst within us all.

## More immigrants please!



### Samuel Black Political Know-it-all

The country's full! We're storing up problems for the future! Immigrants are blood-sucking, benefit-stealing, lazy terrorists! Any idea what these statements have in common? Let me add another to help you: "like the Roman, I seem to see 'the River Tiber foaming with much blood'". That is a quote from Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech and the thing that they all have in common is that they are all bullshit.

Those of you who have a copy of the Daily Mail in your bag will be aghast at my statement; luckily, due to the multi-cultural and well-educated nature of Imperial students, you are a minority. Immigrants are economically beneficial; you are free to dispute this, though you run the risk of embarrassing yourself. The Economist recently reported "Without migrants, the greying and increasingly choosy populations in much of the rich world would already be on the decline today." One estimate in 2004 of the impact of letting an extra 16m migrants into the OECD club of rich economies suggested that the gain to the global economy would be in the order of \$156 billion. There may be strains on local public services - at least until bureaucrats catch up and allocate resources according to the larger local populations. Problems with the prison system, NHS and crime in Britain today are just those; and to label immigration as the cause simply distracts us from the true roots of the problem.

The thought that we can just build a fence and watch NHS waiting lists disappear is very comforting. It is however, equally delusional when you consider the strain smoking, drinking and over-eating put on public services. We are all scientists, and as scientists we must look at the facts. Opposition to immigration is simply ignoring the facts.

Unfortunately, the facts of immigration don't actually make a difference to politicians devising immigration law. More important to rational government decisions, it would seem, are the nonsensical ranting of the tabloid press. The horrifying story of an illegal immigrant who wasn't deported is more important in the public mind-set than the tangible economic gains of international migration. Everybody at Imperial will have experienced the benefits of migration either directly, through friendship and their own experience as migrants, or indirectly through a high standard of living (a quick scroll through your contact list will remind you that your life would be worse if not for immigration). Certainly there are immigrants who do not integrate or learn English, but these are not symptoms of a system headed for disaster; rather they remind us that - like the readers of the Daily Mail - close-minded idiots come in all colours, creeds and religions.



Jerusalem is a barrier to the two state solution, with both sides claiming it as their natural capital. For both Jerusalem is a sacred city.



# Nominations open Mon 28!

**Elections season is almost upon us where you get to decide who will be your sabbatical team for 2008/09.**

Taking a sabbatical year involves taking a year out of your studies or doing (as I did) it at the end of your course. The positions of President, Felix Editor and the three Deputy Presidents are all full time jobs and successful candidates will be employed by our Union for one year taking on one of the following roles. I will now attempt to sum up exactly what is involved in these roles. The work of Sabbatical officers is so varied that these descriptions will be no where near exhaustive. So if you are thinking about running for a position I would strongly advise you to get in touch with whoever it is doing the job at the minute; as myself and the other sabbaticals will be delighted to fill you in on what our respective roles entail.

## President

The Union President is ultimately responsible for all Union activity and finances. The President meets regularly with the Rector and other senior College academics and managers to provide student input in decision making processes and to raise any immediate concerns that students have. The President also works closely with the General Manager who is in charge of the Union's staff. Finally the President is responsible for ensuring that the Union's finances are in order. To answer the question "What the President does?" would solicit a 2000 word essay so all I will say is, it is a very rewarding job where you have a real opportunity to make positive changes for students on campus and within the Union itself. As ever I can be contacted at [president@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:president@imperial.ac.uk)

## Deputy President (Education and Welfare)

The DPEW is responsible for coordinating academic representation and welfare provision within the Union and sits on countless College committees giving input on a very diverse range of issues from e-learning to student residences. The DPEW is also responsible for coordinating all the Union's campaigns and works with the student volunteers who organise them to make sure that as many people hear about them as possible. Kirsty Patterson is the current holder of this office and can be contacted at [dpew@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:dpew@imperial.ac.uk).

## Deputy President (Clubs and Societies)

The DPCS makes sure that all the Union's 290+ clubs are kept as happy as possible. The holder of this office can expect to work closely with Sport Imperial, ULU and BUSA to address any issues arising regarding sports teams, competitions or facilities. The more serious side of this role involves responsibilities for ensuring that health and safety requirements are met across all Union activities so that the organisation is compliant with the relevant laws and College policies. For more information contact Ally at [dpcs@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:dpcs@imperial.ac.uk).

## Deputy President (Finance and Services)

The DPFS is responsible for the day to day financial administration of the Union. The holder of this office will spend a lot of time dealing with budgetary queries from Clubs, Faculty Unions and event organisers. You would also collate and solicit student feedback about the Union's bars, catering and shop to gauge how students would like to see things run. The holder of this office is also responsible for coordinating the Summer Ball (the preparations for Summer Ball 2008 actually started in November 2007) which is a great opportunity to be creative to make sure thousands of us students have a brilliant time at our end of year bash. Chris Larvin will be more than happy to provide more details and you can reach him at [ddfs@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:ddfs@imperial.ac.uk).

## Felix Editor

The Felix Editor produces a copy of Felix every week during the Undergraduate term time. Your main challenge in this role is to recruit and motivate a willing band of volunteers to do a range of tasks including writing, editing, photography, design work and good old fashioned investigative journalism. Once you have a happy team in place for the rest of the year you keep a watchful eye on both the College management and the work of the other Union Sabbatical Officers and committees on behalf of the student body. Tom Roberts can be contacted at [felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:felix@imperial.ac.uk) although I imagine dear old Ed has his contact details available on many pages of this fine publication.



**Monday 28 January – Nominations Open**  
**Monday 11 February – Nominations Close**

## NUS Delegates

NUS Annual Conference 2008 takes place from the 1st to the 3rd of April in Blackpool. Imperial College Union is entitled to elect another 8 delegates and these elections will take place concurrently with the Sabbatical Officer Elections. The students who volunteered to come along to the Extraordinary Conference held in December thought it a very interesting experience so without reiterating some of my colourful views of this organisation I would like to encourage you to come along. For more information contact me at [president@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:president@imperial.ac.uk)

## Student Trustees

The Trustee Board is the governing body of the Union and is there to make sure that the Union is being managed effectively, has sound finances and is legally compliant. I know this sounds rather dry but the last meeting did formally approve the next phase of the Union Building Redevelopment so I hope you would agree that this is of huge relevance to the student body. This committee is a very important new feature of the Union's governance structure (more info on our website, governance is not the sexiest topic you encounter as a sabbatical officer but it is an important one) and has 4 student members elected by cross campus ballot in addition to the President and the

other Trustees. We are going to be electing 2 student trustees for next year so if you would like to provide some student input into the strategic direction of a charity that turns over millions of pounds a year please stand for one of these positions. Again, drop me an email if you would like more information.



**Stephen Brown**  
President  
[president@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:president@imperial.ac.uk)

## So how do I stand?

If you wish to stand for one of these positions nominations open on Monday 28 January online at [www.imperialcollegeunion.org/vote](http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/vote) and close at midnight on Sunday 10 February. Depending on what position you are running for you will need to get a certain number of your friends (no more than 20) to log on to the same address and second your nomination. The Returning Officer for these elections is ex-ICSMSU President Daniel McGuinness who can be contacted with any questions about the elections process or procedures at [elections@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:elections@imperial.ac.uk).

**stand at [imperialcollegeunion.org/vote](http://imperialcollegeunion.org/vote)**

# at the union jan 25 - 3

## FRIDAY 25

BAR FTSE + ^ %

1.67



£

\$



2.02

Drinks prices change depending on what you buy, watch out for the market crashes!



Come dressed as  
Pimps & Hoes!

## WEDNESDAY 30

SIN CITY

The best value  
Wednesday night in town!

Gladiator Jousting

SIN CITY

Drinks Offers!

Carlsberg

TETLEY'S

BLACKTHORN

only

£1.30 a pint!  
From 20:00

## FRIDAY 1

A new rave indie disco. Dance to D.I.Y disco. Indie electro punk rock, Old Skool, Hip Hop with a kick back of Grime plus a flavour of 80s and 90s retro pop.

**Act. Normal.**  
(they won't suspect a thing)

## SUNDAY 3

Super Bowl XLII



Watch the game live at the Union with the bar and catering open until the end of the game!

### ALSO ON

Tue 29

Super Quiz

Coming Up

Wed 6

Sin City - England vs Switzerland

Fri 8

Stick it On!

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

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

imperial  
college  
union

# Felix Festive Fundraiser results

Many of you will remember being accosted last term by various members of the Felix team, along with myself (Sally!) for the Felix Festive Fundraiser. £375 was raised in total; thanks for all your donations!

**Sally Longstaff**  
Fundraising Organiser

Last term Tom Roberts and I spent a Saturday morning begging and cajoling various shops on High Street Kensington to give us prizes for the Felix Festive Fundraiser.

After an exhausting day we came away with over £250 worth of fabulous prizes to be raffled off to one lucky winner. The prizes included: champagne, festive food goodies, DVDs, a memory stick, a teddy bear hot water bottle, games, guidebooks, a day sack, gift vouchers, towels and chocolates!

Along with Alex Casey and Kris Till we then spent four days badgering most of you into parting with cash in order to enter the competition. The response was amazing, and some people entered up to 10 times!

Altogether the Felix Festive Fundraiser raised an amazing £375 for the Oxfam Unwrapped Campaign. Thank you to everyone who bought a ticket and donated to the cause!

The lucky winner of the goodies was Farhad Chikhalia (1st year Aero),

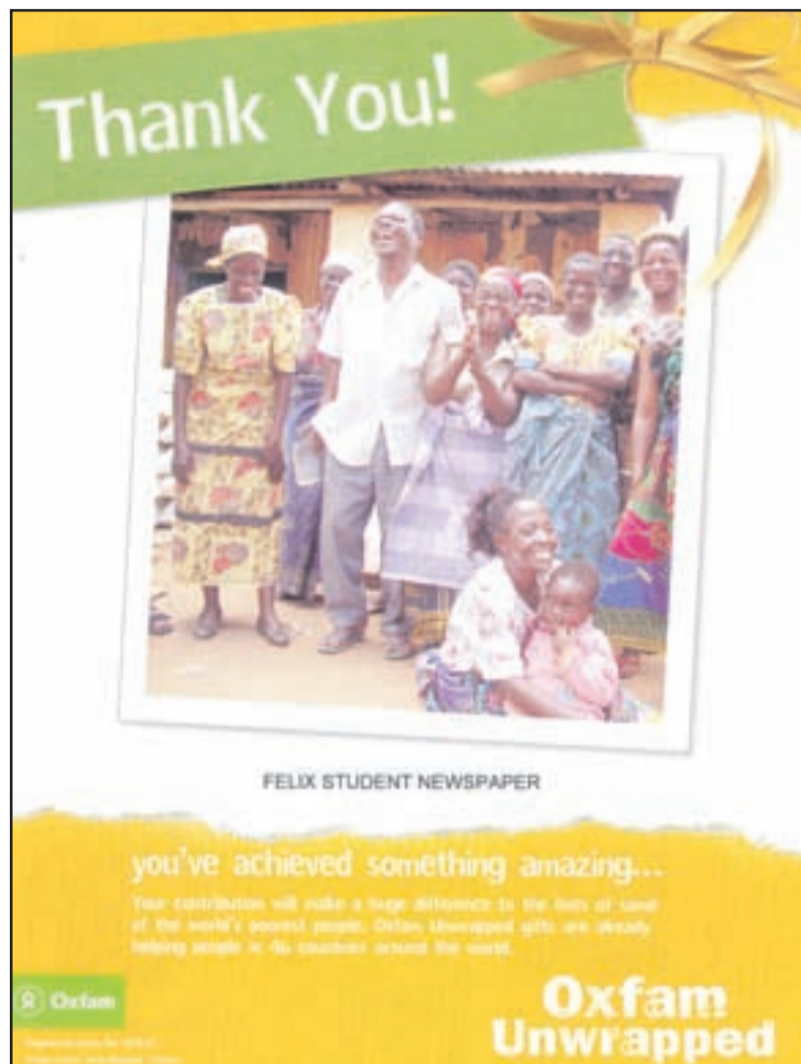
who described himself as being "well chuffed"!

The Oxfam Unwrapped campaign has been running since 2004. It provides a selection of gifts for people in need, which can be purchased by the public. Contrary to many of your concerns, all the proceeds from the raffle went to this campaign - none to Felix! Gifts are carefully selected following feedback from communities on what is needed most to overcome poverty and suffering. The impact gifts have are monitored.

With the money raised, Felix bought a range of gifts which can be seen below, with a little explanation of how they will help.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this event a success, including all of you who parted with cash to help out others in need!

**Oxfam GB is a registered Charity (no 202918). Oxfam works with others to find lasting solutions to poverty and suffering. Oxfam GB is a member of Oxfam International.**



Felix would like to thank the following shops and businesses who contributed prizes:



**£26: 1 x Share in a Well:** This will help to bring a reliable water source to communities and their livestock in remote parts of the world - with plenty left over to water the veggie patch! The picture shows girls collecting water at an Oxfam well in Kebkabiye, North Dafur. "We used to collect water from far away. Now everything is easier and safer" says Kalton Ibrahim Deen.



**£49: 1 x Reading Classes for Seven Adults:** The reading classes gift will give seven adults who have never been to school the chance to learn to read their children's homework, their prescriptions, or anything else! Writing skills are also taught. The picture shows Adi Yatani of the Kalacha Women's Group, writing her name during an adult literacy lesson supported by Oxfam.



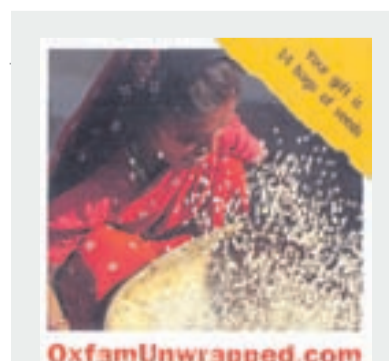
**£50: 1 x "Build a Bog" Package:** This build a bog gift will provide all the tools, training and labour needed to built toilets for school children and people in emergency situations. Ntombizodura Marufu says, "Because of Oxfam, I've had a toilet for 7 months, which means that disease isn't spreading to my children and the community. It's very beautiful, and even has a tap for cleaning hands!"



**£50: 2 x Goats:** A goat (always bought locally) will provide people with fertiliser to spread, milk to drink and sell, plus kids too! Noolarmi Kilanga bought nine goats under Oxfam's restocking programme in her village in Tanzania, and feels her life has been transformed. "My children have milk, and I won't miss food again. And when they multiply, I can sell one to buy things for my family."



**£48: 2 x Teach a Teacher:** This teach a teacher gift will help to train more teachers and give them the support they need to do their jobs even better.



**£28: 14 x Bags of Seeds:** This gift will help to get quality checked seeds to the people who need them most - so they can grow more, eat more and sell more.



**£24: 6 x Textbooks:** These textbooks will be a great addition to the community school and help countless kids with their lessons over the years.



**£100: 1 x Medicine Kit:** This covers sanitary kits, first aid kits and simple drugs that can help a community health worker to make someone's life a lot better.



# Focus on... The Pakistan Society

Last year the Pakistan Society won the President's award and are one of the most active societies in college. This year promises to be even better. Sally Longstaff reports on this year's events including SHAAM '07

The Pakistan Society is a very proactive club that strives to unite the Pakistani community within Imperial College. They hold events to bring the community closer together throughout the academic year. In 2007 they were awarded the President's Award for their achievements during the year.

On the 20th of November last year, the Pakistan Society held their annual Charity Dinner, SHAAM. The aim of the night was to meet up with friends, eat well, enjoy comedy and raise money for the Edhi Foundation.

SHAAM 07 was very well attended by both students and families, and the organisation was excellent. The marquee was decorated with a main stage, soft lighting and each table had floating candles and decorations. It was clear that a lot of work had gone into the event. Two large screens were used for videos and information about the raffle, sponsors and the forthcoming East Meets West extravaganza.

The meal was traditionally Pakistani food, and was delicious. The dishes included: Tandoori Chicken, Vegetable Spring Rolls, Chicken Jalfrezi, Palak Aloo, Chana Pilao rice, naan, and Gajar ka Halwa. It was provided by Barkat

**"SHAAM was once again a hugely successful evening"**

Catering, who also provided an extremely popular 3 foot high chocolate fountain!

The night started with a musical act and then continued with comedy acts including: Haqi Ali, Shazia Mirza, Halal Bilal, and Prince Abdi. After dinner there was also a lovely performance by a Bollywood fusion band, with performers Salwa Malik, Roshina Nandra and Mez Pahlan.

Whilst the main theme of the night was to raise money, the comedy seemed to focus on the differences between Pakistanis and "others" and Muslims and "others". Many of the jokes revolved around stereotypes, and even some of the Pakistani audience were blushing at jokes about the Jewish, Western and Indian people! The aim was to use humour as a way to break down barriers within the Asian community. Shazia Mirza, my favourite of the night, was a truly funny comedienne, using mostly observational humour about people in the room and everyday life.

At this year's dinner, the Pakistan Society raised over £1600 for their cho-



Top: Playing Carrom - a mix of billiards, marbles and air hockey!  
SHAAM 07: Some of the participants at the Annual Charity Dinner

sen charity. The Edhi Foundation is a non-profit organisation that provides social services and relief work in Pakistan. Founded in 1951, they provide 24-hour emergency care at 250 Edhi centres throughout Pakistan, including medical care, air ambulances, burial services, and shelter for destitute peoples, orphans, abused women and the handicapped. They also provide free dispensaries, wheelchairs and crutches, as well as drug rehabilitation centres, family planning and maternity care.

Shazia Arshad, the President of the Pakistan Society said, "SHAAM was once again a hugely successful evening, as it was well enjoyed by everyone who attended, and we raised a significant amount for charity." She also wishes to thank the committee for their hard work and dedication, and the sponsors of the event, TravelPak, who organise small group adventures of Pakistan, and the Finance Society.

On Wednesday January 30th there will be a political talk about the current situation in Pakistan, entitled: "Pakistan at the Crossroads - A Jour-

ney through the Changing Political Climate". This will be held in Mechanical Engineering Room 220 from 6:30 - 9:00pm. There will be representatives from all the major Pakistani political parties, who will give short talks, outlined below, and a lengthy questions and answers session.

Mr Shahid Dastgir from the Pakistan Tehrik e Insaaf (PTI) will talk about why his party chose to boycott the elections and what the PTI will do during this time and the party's future course.

Mr Mohammad Anwar from the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) will outline why MQM should not be underestimated as a small party in national politics, whether the election will be free, fair and transparent and predictions on how MQM will fair in the elections and its future role in Pakistani politics.

Mr Ziauddin, the senior editor from Dawn News will provide an impartial and factual analysis on whether Pakistan has ever witnessed the likes of the current socio-economic and political

environment in its history, especially after the death of Benazir Bhutto. It will also be discussed if there are any similarities with any events in the past and what the predicted result of the upcoming elections will be; for example, a coalition or a single party win-

**"...whether Pakistan has ever witnessed the likes of the current socio-economic and political environment in its history..."**

ning a majority in Parliament, and the future of the role of the Military in Pakistani Politics.

Mr Manzoor ul Haq, Minister of Political Affairs will be attending from the high commission. He will brief the audience on why the elections were postponed and how the government is trying to ensure that the elections are free and fair. He will explain if there will be any bans on organising rallies and any new rules and regulations regarding campaigning that have been drafted in the light of the security situation. He will also advise Pakistanis living in London on how to cast their vote. Also there will be speaker from the Pakistani People's Party (PPP). Entry will be on a first come first serve



The late Benazir Bhutto

basis for 300 guests. This is a chance to take part in an extremely challenging and engaging event about the future of Pakistan and its government.

During the second week of February, the Pakistan Society will be hosting their "infamous" Carrom Tournament, where students will battle one another to become supreme champion of this game which is a mixture of billiards, marbles and air hockey.

Also in February will be Dholki Raat, a girls' only night of henna, music, good food and much more! For the boys there will be a Poker tournament. Later in the term there will be an arts and culture exhibition, which promises to be a showcase of the best in Pakistani culture.

**Details of these events and information about the Pakistan Society can be found on their website: <http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/osc/pakistan/>**





**Emily Wilson**  
Arts Editor

A few months ago I started out writing the occasional art exhibition review, generally with an emphasis on the phallic symbols I found in the art and how good the cake in the café was. This term, I'm suddenly one of the Arts Editors. I like the way things work here at *Felix*.

This week I review the Wellcome Collection. I could ramble on about how AMAZING this place is for hours on end, but until now I've never persuaded anybody else to go. I hope this week's *Felix* changes that. You'll notice that the article doesn't discuss my café experience, this is because I didn't have one. However, the cake I have eaten here on previous occasions was excellent. They do some kind of chocolate-y Millionaire's Shortcake which I highly recommend. But you will be pleased to know that I found plenty of phallic symbols to satisfy your expectations. Not to mention Napoleon's toothbrush.

One problem I did encounter on my trip to the Wellcome Collection this week was with getting there. Normally I can zip over to Euston Square on the Hammersmith and City line in less than half an hour. But this weekend the Hammersmith and City line was closed, as was most of the District line and the buses were all diverted because of some kind of religious procession. London public transport at its finest! Nevermind – five buses and multiple hours of travelling was a small(ish) price to pay for art. Don't ever say I'm not dedicated to my journalistic craft.

It looks like I'll be out and about being arts-y in the next few weeks, to keep you entertained. Not that I have any objection. The last time I set foot in an art gallery was in fact yesterday, when I nipped into Tate Modern. But, OK, I'll be honest with you- I was in there for a grand total of six minutes, as I only went in there to use the toilet. It turns out there's a distinct lack of public facilities on the South Bank (if you're reading this, Ken, sort it out!). It's not the first time I've done it either. Sorry, Tate, I love you for your art really.

In addition to my introduction to the Wellcome Collection, we have two new regular features starting this week. Rosie Grayburn is fed up of you all sitting at home in your bedrooms all weekend. Don't claim you're working – we don't believe you! Rosie's going to come up with some exciting ideas for day trips in London on a student (i.e. very, very low) budget. And then we've got our resident musical theatre buff, Lucy Harrold, poised and ready to introduce you to a few shows you may not have discovered yet.

Obviously, I can't be much of an editor if I don't have anything to edit, so I'm very eager to receive any contributions. Rantings and reviews of books, theatre, musicals, art, opera and classical music are all welcome here. I can even try and get you free press tickets (yes, free! Every student's favourite word) to anything you want to see – just drop us a line.

# Welcome everyone to the Wellcome Collection!

Emily Wilson introduces you to a little-known London museum that blends science, medicine, history and art all in one very swish and glamorous package

Let me introduce to you perhaps my favourite place in all of London – a place that brings together the two polar opposites that are art and science: the Wellcome Collection. This museum, funded by the Wellcome Trust, contains two permanent collections, a changing exhibition, a bookshop, a café and a world-renowned library. It is completely free to visit and open to the public.

The Wellcome Collection can be found at Euston Square, over the road from Euston train station, so it's very easy to get to. The building is subtle – a dull, concrete affair jazzed up with a few flags. But you're impressed as soon as you walk inside. The interior is big, clean and modern. The design of the whole place is crisp and minimalist without being soulless. On the ground floor, aside from the space for temporary exhibitions, there is a specialist branch of Blackwell's that sells a few Wellcome-related gifts, and a very classy (i.e. not cheap) café/restaurant.

The first of the two permanent collections, *Medicine Now*, is a slick, shiny exploration of modern medical issues. It aims to portray the experiences of scientists, doctors and their patients. It focuses on a few key topics at the forefront of medicine today, including genomes, malaria and obesity. Most of the material here would probably be considered art, for example "Left-sided orchidectomy II" by Michael Landy (2005). This is a down-to-earth coloured pencil drawing of the scar left after an operation to remove the artist's left testicle. At the other end of the room, bringing attention to the human genome project, Andrea Duncan's "Twenty three pairs" (2002) is a human karyotype – a map of chromosomes – made up of socks. There is also a range of artistic manipulations of the human form, such as a rearranged human skeleton and a hideous blob monster to alert us to the dangers of obesity. On a far wall, there is the opportunity for visitors to contribute a postcard of their own writings and drawings related to health and medicine. They are wonderfully varied, and I could have looked at them all day. One person had drawn "this is what is in my brother's veins", depicting some limp, mutated red-blood cells. There were several doodles of evil viruses attacking people, some more science-based than others. I also noticed there was an oddly large number of unicorn drawings.

But *Medicine Now* isn't just art, it's also hard science. The Sanger institute has contributed a giant robot that was previously used in the sequencing of the human genome. Next to it is a bookshelf full of lever arch files containing the Gs, Ts, As and Cs that make up the genome itself. One file is open, revealing a typeface so small as to put into perspective the staggering volume of genetic information that is required to generate a human being. Also present are some droppings and



If the Wellcome Collection is good enough for Stephen Fry then it's good enough for you. He doesn't look too happy about being there. Possibly because he's being followed by some kind of blob monster

fleece taken from Dolly the Sheep.

Something else that should be noted about *Medicine Now* is the interactivity of the gallery. There are touch-screen computers to tinker with, books to read and there was a whole crowd of people drawing their own postcards to contribute to the wall. There are also a lot of headsets dotted about, where you can listen to patients' stories. I'm not usually a big fan of interactive exhibits – they tend to detract from the substance and attract small children who want to bang on the touch-screens mindlessly. But I think Wellcome have used them unimposingly, usefully and to great effect here.

Next door is the second permanent exhibition, *Medicine Man*. This contains historical artifacts collected by Henry Wellcome, founder of the Wellcome Trust, himself. It's a treasure chest of medical oddities from around the world. Many will enter and see a stuffy museum of old junk, but there are some real treats to be found here. Objects range from simple bleeding bowls to "porcelain fruit and vegeta-



This is Stephen Fry after the blob monster was done with him. Now he's doomed to stand for all eternity, greeting visitors





Left: the *Medicine Man* gallery filled with dead bodies and penis amulets. Right: yes, it's a penis. With legs and hooves. This is what old Henry Wellcome was into, it would seem

bles containing erotic scenes". There's a snuff container made of an entire ram's head from nineteenth-century Scotland. Near it is a box containing a selection of glass eyes. I also find a gall bladder (possibly Chinese, the label says) and a fragment of Jeremy Bentham's skin. Not to mention an entire mummified male body from medieval Peru, curled up in the corner.

There are items that really make you wonder how they got there. Like the death mask of Benjamin Disraeli. Er...

might he want that back? And then there's Napoleon's toothbrush. There's also a whole glass case of sex. Such items probably belong down a side street in Paris. "Statue of a copulating couple", "figurine depicting sexual foreplay", "still life with concealed erotic scenes", "Japanese sex aids"... Henry Wellcome was clearly a very dirty old man. The phallic amulets are unmissable – ornaments of penises with legs and wings, hailing from Roman times. Medical history wouldn't be medi-

cal history without a healthy helping of blood and guts. *Medicine Man* does not disappoint. There's a top notch painting of a Victorian woman midway through popping out a baby. Plus if you're squeamish, you won't like the nearby case of metal instruments. Knives, saws and a staggering array of birthing forceps. Nice. This case almost puts "torture chair" to shame.

Now, I could rant and rave about the unequalled brilliance of the Wellcome Library, but I'll try to keep it to a mini-

mum. If you're studying medicine, biology or any kind of history of science, I guarantee you'll find all the books you'll ever need here. For everyone else, this is a blissfully quiet and comfortable place to work, complete with computers and Internet access. Never again will you have to beat people off with a stick to get a library desk around exam time. You can turn up at any time and register for free. They'll even take an unflattering photo of you and print it on a handy swipecard.

The Wellcome Collection is like the Science Museum, but mixed with a splattering of art. It has the advantage of being more compact – you can easily work your way round all the galleries in a few hours. Something I very much appreciate is the relative absence of small children running about under your feet, even at weekends. A trip to the Wellcome Collection would make a sophisticated, intellectual but fun (and free!) day out for any future doctor or scientist.

# The Science of sleep and dreams

The Wellcome Collection's current exhibition explains why sleeping through your lectures might one day earn you a Nobel Prize. Emily Wilson stumbles about in the dark to find out. Zzzzzzzzz...

**W**hy do we sleep? What purpose does dreaming serve? These are some of the questions which the current Wellcome Collection exhibition, *Sleeping and Dreaming*, seeks to answer. To answer these questions, simply enter the imposing glass door to the left of the information desk as you walk into the building. You will feel a blast of cold air as you walk in – the exhibition space is noticeably cold. You're also plunged into near-darkness, which isn't too helpful when you're a journalist trying to take notes. But, on the bright side, there to greet you are some giant sleeping faces projected on to the walls.

So what's in *Sleeping and Dreaming*? Much like the rest of the Wellcome Collection, it's a trendy fusion of science and art. There are paintings and sculptures of people sleeping, images of dreams, but also medical instruments and footage from experiments. Some of the artwork is deeply sinister. A painting about narcosis by Richard Tennant-Cooper from 1912 is fuck-off scary in fact, showing little green men torturing a naked, sleeping man. Apparently it portrays the fears aroused by temporary loss of consciousness. Well Richard, until now I had no such fears. "Die nacht/der traum" by Battista Dossi (1544) is more amusing. A sleeping woman is surrounded by an owl, a rooster, a lobster waving a flag and a bearded bloke about to whack her over the head with a stick. Also good is "A dandy fainting", a cartoon by Robert Cruikshank from 1835. The caption

reads "this caricature pokes fun at the effeminate behaviour of English dandies who wore their clothes too tight and swooned upon hearing a castrato singing". As you do, really.

But the science is just as interesting. There is an interesting section about the development of electroencephalography (EEG), which allowed brain activity to be recorded for the first time in the 1920s. It apparently revolutionised sleep research and medicine. The information is accompanied by footage from a sleep laboratory. I was hoping somebody to start sleepwalking or sleep-killing-spree-ing, but it's just people snoring in bed. Shame.

I also found it fascinating how many scientific discoveries have been made through the dreams of their creators. August Kekulé von Stradonitz attributed his discovery of the ring-shaped structure of the benzene molecule to a dream he had in 1861 or 1862, which featured a snake twisting and turning. On 17th February 1869, Dmitri Mendeleev dozed off and in his dream he saw a table in which all the known chemical elements fell into place. Two weeks later he published the Periodic Table. And in 1920, Otto Loewi dreamed the design for an experiment on the transmission of nerve impulses. He discovered neurotransmitters and won the 1936 Nobel Prize for Medicine. Such evidence showing the importance of sleep to science, is surely a perfect defence for anybody caught snoozing through lectures.

Carrying on the dream theme, there's a looped showing of the Salvador Dalí film "Un Chien Andalou". I've



*Sleeping and Dreaming*: it's cold, it's dark, it asks too many questions, but you might just learn something

seen it before (it's become somewhat of a cliché recently, I think) and I don't want to revisit the scene with the eye. \*Shudder\*. However I love "Dream Paintings" by Jane Gifford (2004) – 144 different miniature paintings of her various dreams.

My personal favourite is number fourteen, described as: "I saw Gordon Brown carrying a mug of 'Covent Garden' carrot and coriander soup across the courtyard". Other exhibits I appreciated were the display cases of

modern sedatives (Nytol, Sleeppeaze), devices to prevent snoring (SnorBan, AntiSnor – so originally named) and stimulant drinks and tablets (Red Bull, Relentless, several mysterious Japanese products). However, the "Headthinker" sculptures by Laura Ford (2003), sleeping children with donkeys' heads, are ghastly and their role in the exhibition seems to be little more than filling empty space.

Overall *Sleeping and Dreaming* is good, but not very good. It is of a very

high standard considering it's free to view, but I much preferred their previous exhibit, *The Heart*, which filled the available space impressively and had a bit more substance to it. This exhibition just keeps on asking questions. What happens when we are asleep? Is life without sleep possible?... But I didn't come away from the exhibition feeling any of them had been answered. Perhaps Wellcome need to spend less time making us think and more time teaching us something.

# How to... Get out of your house and enjoy all that London has to offer

Rosie Grayburn would like to give you all a metaphorical kick up the backside... in a nice way, of course

I have been putting this off for a while in anticipation of better weather and for Christmas-y things to get out of the way. Seeing as our 'monsoon' season has halted temporarily, I feel this is the time to put forward my case in favour of the Great British Day Out.

This series of articles aims to tear you away from the telly and to get you exploring in and around this great and ancient City. You deserve a break once in a while!

**You're right there, Grayburn. Now, where do I start?**

The 'Day Out' can be approached in many ways. The meek and timid human species may prefer to follow guide books or crowds. On the opposite end of the spectrum, there are uber adventurous types who will hop on random buses and hop off at random locations.

Other methods include getting a tube map and playing 'Mornington Crescent' or the very popular 'Find the 266 bus'. The latter is not recommended as it requires a high level of skill and it is extremely time-consuming.

**Sarcasm won't get you anywhere. Really, where's the best place to start?**

*Time Out* magazine has up-to-date events diaries and their website (<http://www.timeout.com/london/>) is equally good. Also, check out [www.london-freelist.com](http://www.london-freelist.com) which has extensive lists of events and places that are free, or less than £3.

**Good point. I'm pretty broke – I spent my entire loan on sex, drugs and drink. Oh, and blow and hookers. Bugger.**

Days Out don't have to be expensive. Buses are cheaper than chips and walking around always does you some good! Make sure you enjoy the free things in life. Use the above website. Most museums and galleries are free in London except for some special exhibitions.

Unfortunately, some venues in London are out to leech all the cash they can from unsuspecting tourists, so utilise your student card to get a small discount. If they aren't advertising a discount, ask for it! It is your right as a poor student to accept free/discounted things at the drop of a hat.

**Yey! (bounces around the page like a little girl)**

Next week we will introduce the South Bank to you REAL 'Days Out' virgins. Have you been somewhere cool and groovy (baby) lately? If so, please tell us about it and we will put it into a handy guide for your fellow students. Get in touch: [arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk) and do something useful today!

**Yey! (bounces around the page like a little girl)**



These kidlets are out having fun in London – why aren't you? We promise the shorts are optional

## Musical Theatre Weekly – The Little Shop of Horrors

### History

Little Shop of Horrors is based on the 1960 Roger Corman B movie of the same name. He did it as a little weekend project on some left over set. It didn't seem to do that well but obviously some people thought it had potential. Alan Menken and Howard Ashman (the guys who reinvented the Disney movie – they did all those early 90s ones we grew up with, you know... Aladdin, Beauty and the Beast...) chose the story as the subject of their first musical.

Little Shop of Horrors was the show that started the revival in musical comedy that can be seen even now by shows such as Avenue Q (go see it!) but also dared to use darker themes and black comedy. It also utilised other musical styles such as those of the American doo-woop groups and rock and roll.

The show had its off-Broadway debut in 1982 but didn't make it to Broadway until the 2003 revival. The film of the musical came out in 1986 starring Rick Moranis (that geek from Ghostbusters, Honey I Shrunk

the Kids...) and Ellen Greene (she's Syllar's mum in Heroes!). The first London revival of the show recently finished at the Ambassador's Theatre.

### Main Characters:

**Seymour Krelborn:** A loveable geek who likes plants and Audrey

**Audrey:** A ditzy blonde whose going out with Orin but secretly loves Seymour

**Audrey II:** A cannibalistic plant that sounds like Barry White

**Mr Mushnik:** Mean-spirited plant shop owner

**Orin Scrivello:** Sadistic dentist, who's really mean to girlfriend Audrey

**The Urchins:** Funky Greek chorus named after girl groups of the sixties

### Plot

Seymour Krelborn is a down-and-out orphan living on Skid Row. He's a bit geeky and social inept (aren't we all? Hang on, I'm at Imperial, perhaps I

shouldn't answer that). He works for the mean Mr Mushnik in his plant shop and spends most of his days creating new plants and lusting after the beautiful but ditzy Audrey.

The shop is about to go out of business when Seymour discovers a new plant during a full moon: Audrey II. Unfortunately the only way for Audrey II to survive is to drink blood (oops!) Poor Seymour has to become more and more criminal to keep up Audrey II's addiction, including having to kill a few people. I won't give away who though, as that would spoil the story!

### Songs to look out for:

**Skid Row:** Omg I love this song so much. If you like overlapping harmonies you'll love it too.

**Feed me:** Funky ass "rock-off" between a geek and a plant – gotta love it!

**Suddenly Seymour:** Ok, personally I don't like Ellen Greene's voice, but it's such a sweet song

### Where can I get it?

The DVD is really cheap; just make



Well, what else can you do when there's a giant man-eating plant but stand there looking desperately sexy?

sure you get the 1986 version. The London revival is going on tour next year. Perhaps you could go see it in the vacation break!

### If you liked this, try:

**Enchanted:** the new Disney movie:

because both feature music by Alan Menken!

**Hairspray:** It's got the whole sixties thang going on. You know you'll love it.

by Lucy Harrold

# Phoenix rises from the ashes again

The Arts magazine of Imperial College is returning this term and we need writers and content. If you enjoy writing short stories, poetry, drawing and any other forms of art that you can think of, come, get acquainted

Tom Roberts

Way back in 1887, H.G. Wells – an Imperial student at the time – founded the literary publication Science Schools Journal, which would later become the Arts magazine of Imperial College, Phoenix, in 1904.

Phoenix started life covering news and events around college, but as time passed the magazine evolved into a more artistic publication. With the creation of Felix (which is in fact a spin-off from Phoenix) on 9th December 1949, Phoenix lost its role as a news source for students and consequently its focus shifted onto creative writing.

Since then Phoenix has been through many changes and different versions over the years. Technology has changed dramatically during its lifetime. Phoenix has gone from typewriters and sketches to glossy paper and full CMYK glory, most recently with its most latest publication in 2005.

2005. That's quite a gap since the last issue was published, but over the last century a space of three years in between publications is relatively short. It seems that whoever came up with the monicker "Phoenix" had some spookily accurate foresight.

Rather inevitably considering the nature of this article, you won't be surprised to hear that Phoenix will be rising again later this term and subsequently during the summer term.

We need contributors. Felix Arts editor David Paw will be at the helm of the operation with yours truly assisting him all the way. If the brief history lesson above has whet your appetite enough, then you can email David straight-away on [arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk). If, however, you're still feeling undernourished, let me continue...

This term's issue of Phoenix will be based on the same specifications as I,Science; a full technicolour A4 maga-



Above: Just a small sample of Phoenix front covers from over the years. Below: A selection of poems from the archives

zine. Sections are yet to be finalised, but we would love to receive your short stories, poems, sonnets, haikus, drawings, comic strips, theatre and culture reviews, photography, screenplays and anything else you can think of! If you can come up with any bright ideas of your own that haven't been mentioned above, fire your mind bullets in David's direction and he'll consider them.

If you look around the page in front of you, hopefully you'll be able to get a feel for what the essence of Phoenix is. It's about as far removed from Felix as possible. Issues in the past have been made wholly from seemingly random articles; snippets from warped minds that have been and gone through Imperial College.

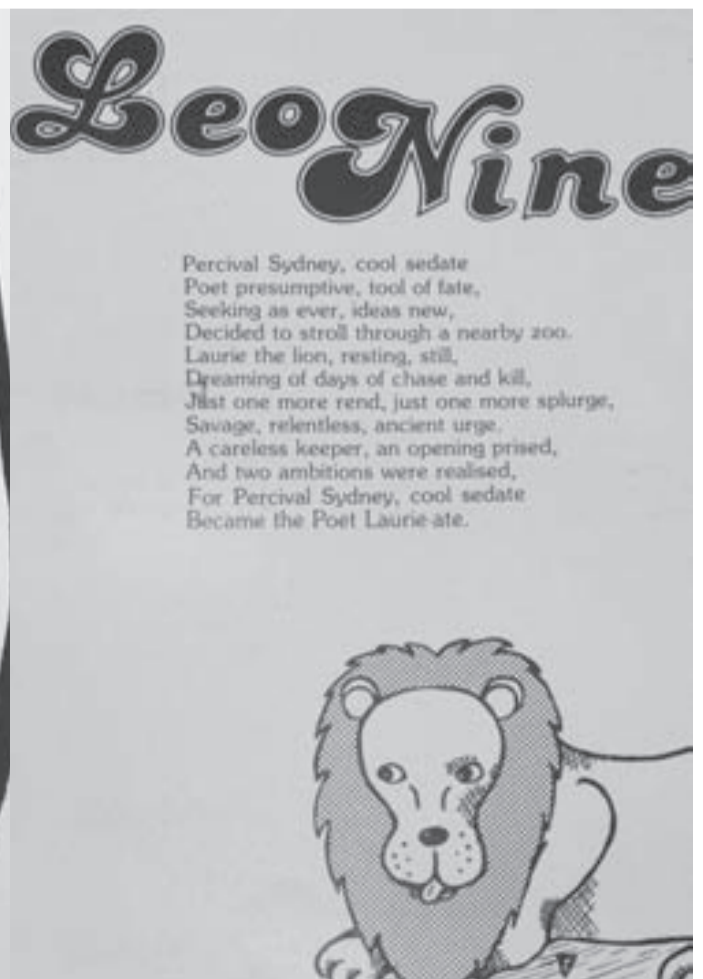
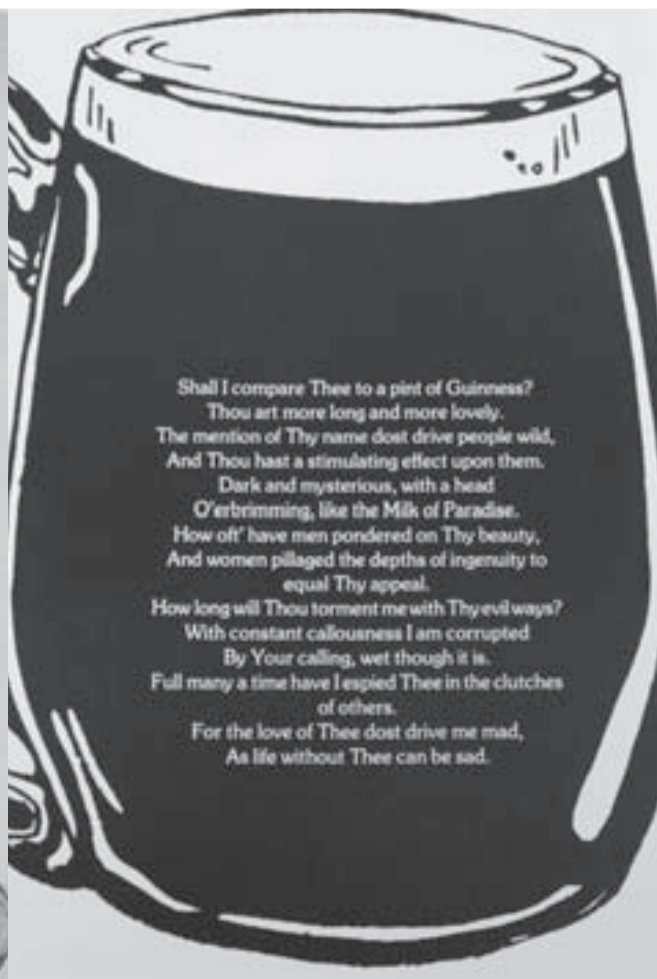
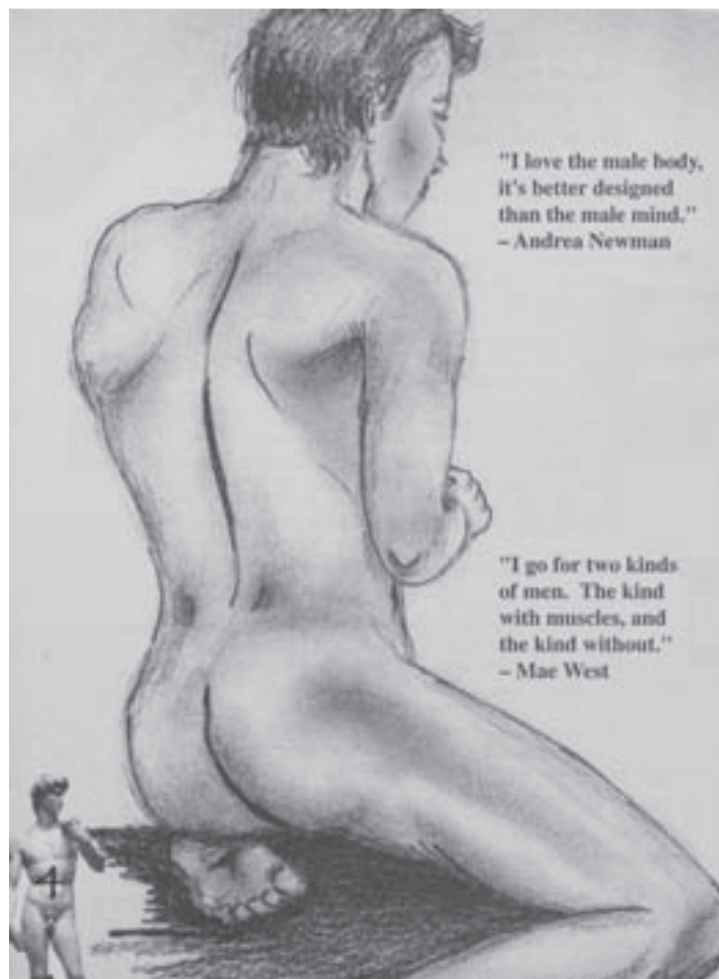
Phoenix is free from the newspaper

conventions that restrict Felix. Whatever your brain can conjure up, Phoenix can consider it to be published. Beware though, we will be drawing the line at fascist dictator love-ins though. Phoenix got stung by that one when one of its old editors, namely David Irving, used the magazine as a platform to spout his pro-Hitler views.

But... don't let that put you off! Ahem.

As students studying science, creative opportunities like this aren't as readily available in comparison with other institutions, so put your literary cap on (the one with the flower and the ribbon) and get in touch!

Contact David Paw by dropping him an email on [arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:arts.felix@imperial.ac.uk). He awaits your email with baited breath.



Written by Sally Longstaff, designed by Rosie Grayburn

# Culture Crawling with a Friend

## Chapter Six – 2 for 1 with your Oyster card

For details on all the offers mentioned here, and more, go to: [www.tfl.gov.uk/microsites/oysteroffers/](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/microsites/oysteroffers/)

### Lord's Ground Tour

**St John's Wood Station**

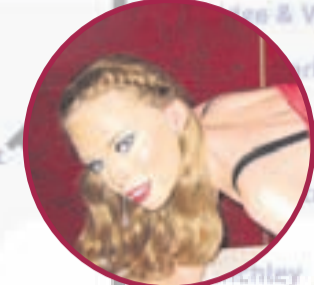
Have a guided tour at the "Home of Cricket", including walking through the Pavilion, the Long Room, the Dressing Rooms and onto the Balcony. It also includes a visit to the MCC Museum to see the Ashes Urn. Offer Ends 29 February.



### Madame Tussaud's

**Marylebone Road Baker Street Station**

Mingle with the stars, dance with Kylie and ogle at Prince William at the world famous Madame Tussaud's. It's usually ridiculously expensive, but with the 2 for 1 offer it becomes really worth it. Offer Ends 29 February.



### West End Shows

**Various stations: Covent Garden, Leicester Square and Picadilly Circus**

2 for 1 deals at the following shows: We Will Rock You, Chicago, Les Miserables., Stomp, The Woman in Black, Buddy and The 39 Steps. This offer involves booking through TicketMaster (there are the appropriate links from the Transport for London website: [www.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.tfl.gov.uk)) for two top-price tickets and paying for just one. This is a very good deal, because although it means paying up to £50 for tickets, they will be the best in the house for about £25 each. Bargainous! Most offers end on the 31st March, although a couple run for longer. London plays host to some marvellous shows and going to see a West End Show is a must-do whilst you are here!

### Institute of Contemporary Arts Cinema

**The Mall Charing Cross Station**

Home to some of the best new art and culture from Britain and around the world. It showcases contemporary culture and screens both documentary and fiction feature films. Monday to Thursday and late night Friday films. Pre-booking required. Offer ends 31 March.

### Shakespeare's Globe

**21 New Globe Walk Mansion House Station**

Visit the Globe Theatre and see where Shakespeare, the world's greatest playwright lived and worked. 2 for 1 deal on Globe Tour and Exhibition. Offer ends 31 March.



### London Dungeon

**28 Tooley Street London Bridge Station**

Transport yourself back to the darkest moments in the capital's history within the deep depths of the London Dungeon. Everything that you see is based on real historical events from Jack the Ripper to the Great Fire of London, torture and the plague. Offer ends 31 March.

### HMS Belfast

**The Thames, off Tooley Street London Bridge Station**

Moored on the Thames, HMS Belfast is a museum showing life on board a big gun armoured warship of the Royal Navy. A brilliant day out! Offer ends 31 March.



### London Aquarium

**County Hall, Westminster Bridge Road Westminster/Waterloo Station**

Amazing aquarium with over 350 species of fish and aquatic beasts. Offer ends 31 March.



### Vinopolis

**1, Bank End Borough Station**

The best place in London to try different wines. Vinopolis offers a self-guided tour where you can learn about and try wines from all around the world. Offer ends 15 April (Sundays and Mondays only)



### Cabinet War Rooms

**King Charles Street Westminster Station**

The Churchill Museum is the first major museum dedicated to the achievements of Winston Churchill, combining cutting-edge technology, rare historical objects and film recordings to tell his life. Housed in the Cabinet War Rooms, the secret underground HQ that served as the nerve centre of Britain's WW2 effort. Offer ends 15 April.

### Chelsea Physic Garden

**Swan Walk Sloane Square Station**

Don't miss this rare chance to see London's oldest botanical garden. A "Secret Garden" in the heart of Chelsea, it's very peaceful and relaxing. Founded in 1673, it continues to research the properties, origins and conservation of over 5000 species of plants. It played a major role in renewing interest in natural medicine, with a Pharmaceutical Garden and garden of ethnobotany. The garden is open on the following dates: 3-4 and 9-10 February.



### Wildlife Photographer of the Year

**Natural History Museum South Kensington Station**

This exhibition showcases the very best photographic images of nature and is truly inspiring. Weekdays only until 15 April.



### RHS Shows

**Greycoat Street Victoria/St James's Park Station**

The Royal Horticultural Society hosts the following wonderful flower shows in spring:  
Signs of Spring Exhibition: 12-13 February  
The World of Plants Exhibition: 11-12 March  
London Orchid Show: 15-16 March  
Daffodil Festival: 15-16 March





## Film

Film Editor – Alex Casey

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**Alex Casey**  
 Film Editor

This is actually the second column that I've written for Felix this week, the first being some stupid awards crap that you might get next week if nothing exciting happens before then. And then Heath Ledger died, and it showed the whole awards fiasco for the trivial bollocks that it is.

To be fair, given the prevalence of death in the media - young boys shot down by teenage gunmen, exchange students gang-raped and stabbed, x-number of soldiers killed in a Baghdad car bomb attack - a 21st century was-it-suicide-or-was-it-accidental passing of a Hollywood actor, albeit one who tried to do things differently, is a poor indicator of injustice in the world, but there is still something haunting about the news.

I heard about it on Tuesday night, just after the BBC website found the story and a friend called to tell me. Stopping short of professing massive swathes of grief that overcame me, I'll simply say that it was a shock. I can't say I was a massive fan - I've certainly never hidden my dislike of *Brokeback* in particular, not least his inaudible mutterings that meant I only ever got Jake's half of the conversation - but only in the past month I had a respect for him as one of those actors, alongside Cate Blanchett or Christian Bale, who did something slightly different.

It is all the more shocking in that he didn't seem sensationalist in his private life at all. This isn't an iconic figure on the lines of Marilyn Monroe, but someone who maintained a very closed private life, only to have the unfortunate circumstances of an untimely death beamed out worldwide. I imagine it would be quite embarrassing if he were around to see it, suicide or not. After all, he couldn't even watch his own films without being self-critical.

We don't know him. Those who do can pay proper tribute to something more than characters he created. For those that can't, though, there is still something to feel there. I won't comment on what that is, but the questions surrounding it should be something more respectful than "So what happens to Batman now?"



Heath Ledger (1979-2008)

# Elah, Elah, Elah, Ay, Ay, Ay

Paul Haggis's take on the human cost of the Iraq War. For the Americans, of course

**In the Valley of Elah** ★★★★★

*Director:* Paul Haggis  
*Writer:* Paul Haggis  
*Cast:* Tommy Lee Jones, Charlize Theron, Susan Sarandon

**Alex Casey**

The analogy of the Valley of Elah in the title here is destined, probably against the wishes of the filmmakers, to be the largest talking point of this film. This, the latest in a series of Iraq-centric films has chosen the location for David's biblical confrontation with the giant Goliath as a metaphor for the deployment of young heroes into Iraq in a somewhat oversimplified, misguided metaphor, assuming as it does that this war was (a) won, (b) justified (seemingly contradicting the film's central message) and (c) as swift as the launch of a stone from a catapult. Oh dear.

The story follows Vietnam vet Hank (Jones) searching for his son, a soldier who has gone missing following his squad's return from duty in Iraq. The events leading up to his disappearance slowly unwind with the 'help' of the inept local police, fronted by the Detective Emily Sanders (Theron), who simultaneously seems to be getting a bit of stick for being a woman. Why? Just because.

With *Lions for Lambs*, *The Kingdom* and *Rendition* released over the last year to lukewarm box office figures, *Elah* has tried to sex up its image by giving Charlize a gun on the poster. This is mournful talkie, not gun-toting action flick. More honest would be a



It's going to take more than just a book (or indeed a film) to sort this mess out

sign saying "Hypocritical lecture, this way", but I can see the advertisers re-thinking that one.

*Elah* is of the award fodder breed: deftly crafted but lacking soul. In this case, it loses out because it's so well made. There is nothing outstandingly original about it, but what Haggis has developed in narrative ability since *Crash*, has been countered by loss of charm. The naivety with which *Crash* was constructed seemed to lend itself well to the black-and-white picture of racism it was trying to dispell. Here,

every shot recalls an acceptance speech to Oscar, and its no surprise that it hasn't exactly made the buzz list.

The acting is the star here, with Jones at his best (better than *No Country*) and most wearisome, leading every frame. Susan Sarandon is almost a cameo as his wife and seems to have jumped on board just to espouse the liberal cause, while Charlize Theron seems to have picked a pretty slim role with some pointless feminist squabbling to be had, *North Country*-style. Yawn.

*Elah* probably doesn't deserve to be

savaged. It's a good film, albeit with a slightly dubious message. The human cost of war is very real, but the innocent Iraqi children who have died didn't get their own film. Surely they should have been higher on the agenda than a soldier nicknamed "Doc" for his penchant for poking the exposed wounds of Iraqi soldiers. *Elah* makes it look like all soldiers have a labotomy of common decency on entering the battlefield, a message I'm sure wasn't intended. This is simply soap box Hollywood; too little, too late.

## Bittersweet laughs and comedic tears from The Savages

**The Savages** ★★★★★

*Director:* Tamara Jenkins  
*Writer:* Tamara Jenkins  
*Cast:* Laura Linney, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Philip Bosco

**Alex Casey**

The sight of Laura Linney on screen is always enough to make me leave a cinema smiling. Her unique style and talent convey a knowledge of her craft beyond that of her peers, and her *Speechless* ad in favour of the Writers' Guild Strike made me question why they do need writers with Linney on the books. Not the point it set out to make, but with a script like *The Savages*, Linney can really pull it out of the bag.

*The Savages* is not a slasher movie as its strange title would suggest, but the story of a brother-sister pair who suddenly are left to look after their aged father. Given director Jenkins' young age, making a picture about the depressing realities of old age would seem to be a dare, but *The Savages* manages to keep a spring in its step.

From its *Blue Velvet*-esque opening, *The Savages* never quite panders to simple expectations, and with two

of Hollywood's finest character actors taking on the idiosyncratic siblings there's enough to keep you intrigued.

Hoffman doesn't shy away from roles in which he may not be exactly likeable and this would be one of those ones: a Brecht scholar seemingly more interested in his work than his father or sister, but an idealised version of the characters would render the whole picture pretty pointless. Old life sucks is the message, deal with it.

The film itself does seem to slow down towards the end, however. Its bittersweet look on life has a depressing tinge of reality involved, although not to the same shattering effect as *4 Months, 3 Weeks, 2 Days*. Its dark comic stylings are an inviting prospect, but there are times when it all seems a bit convoluted. The central storyline is intriguing, yet the creation of baggage for the two siblings in the form of two characters implanted in the script to assumedly give us a further vantage point to see into their lives weighs the pace down slightly.

*The Savages* was never seen as one of the films of the year. For a starter, neither of the leads seem interested in those kind of pictures. Instead it is an interesting, sometimes comedic, look at an issue that does require real emotion. The moniker "Savage" may be a bit extreme, but the film itself is a nicely understated family story.



Laura Linney, bless



## Music

Music Editor of the Week – **Jemil Salami**

music.felix@imperial.ac.uk

# Jacko turns 50 and Thriller clocks 25

**Jemil Salami**  
Music Guru

Matty's not here this week, so the Felix music page is free to let loose and turn into the dirty mainstream where it really wants to be. I don't have the deep introspective banter that Matt usually fills his column with and you're in the wrong section if you're looking for answers to those puzzling questions that have been plaguing your mind recently like, 'what is the meaning of life?' (Although I suggest you try Az's fantabulous games section for that one. I'm pretty sure there are pages and pages of it and I hear it's really good) or, 'would the US economy be brought to a standstill if reporters were no longer allowed to print news about Britney Spears?' (I vote yes). I do, however, have some good old music reviews and news for you to sink your Nescafe-stained teeth into. Enjoy. And remember, it's music, bitches!

In music news, Jacko is having a double whammy this year. Not only is he approaching the big 5-0 (although you probably couldn't tell by looking at him) but his classic best-selling album, *Thriller*, is turning twenty-five. Michael therefore has two aims this year 1) To show us it is possible to be sexy, happy, relevant free-spirited at 50 and 2) To remind us why he is hailed as the King of Pop.

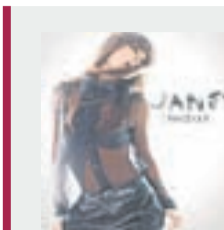
To ~~cash-in~~ celebrate, *Thriller* is being recycled re-released with 7 bonus tracks and artists set to feature include Kanye West, Akon, Fergie and will.i.am. You should be shot if you don't already own a copy of *Thriller* so it just remains to be seen if the new tracks justify buying the album. Keep checking Felix music for a review once the album drops in February.

In more Jackson news, Janet is preparing to make her umpteenth comeback. She is set to release her 10th studio album, titled *Discipline*, next month and has already shot a video for lead single *Feedback* (See opposite for a review). The music video is awesome, in case you were wondering, so YouTube it now. Peace.



Jackson Cover Art: MJ's *Thriller 25* (top) and Janet's *Discipline*

## Single Review: Feedback



**Janet Jackson**  
*Feedback*  
(Mercury)  
★★★★☆

to admire her though. She's right back up on that horse and is set to release studio album number ten, titled *Discipline*, in February.

*Feedback*, the first single taken from the album, doesn't quite come close in brilliance to her hit singles of yesteryear like 'Got 'Til It's Gone' or even 'Someone to Call My Lover' but it's definitely her best work in quite a while. Co-produced by Rodney Jerkins (Brandy's *What About Us?*, Destiny's Child's *Lose My Breath*), it has a futuristic giddiness to it and coupled with the super-catchy hook it is the perfect track to embarrass yourself on the dance floor to.

It's been quite a while since Janet has had a hit album. Her previous two efforts, *Damita Jo* and *20 Y.O.* both underperformed commercially. It would be very easy to put her lacklustre sales down to patriotic Americans still being mad at her after the Super Bowl stunt, and to be fair, MTV and TRL refusing to play her videos would undeniably have had an effect on her record sales, but the bottom line is that both fell short in content. That's the only way to explain why they also bombed in the European music markets and why the 'wardrobe malfunction' hasn't slowed Justin's attempt at world domination. You've got

The most exciting thing about this track, though, is the video. It's artistic and quite slow for the first half but once Janet lands in the milky stuff and begins her choreography, she kills it. It's so good that MTV has been forced to scratch her name from the blacklist and jump right back on the we-love-you-Ms-Jackson bandwagon.

History tells us that this by no means indicates a good album but things do seem to be looking up for Janet and she seems to know what she has got to do this time around so don't rule her out just yet. Janet is set to perform *Feedback* at the Grammys next month.

**Jemil Salami**



Do you like my style? A fan-made replica of *Feedback*'s cover art

## Album Review: Mario's 3rd studio LP is finally released. Check it out



**Mario**  
*Go!*  
(J Records)  
★★★★☆

Before achieving mainstream success with the Ne-Yo-penned *Let Me Love You*, Mario was annoying. I mean it was obvious he could sing his ass off but he could never seem to get his hands on the right material. This is probably why his debut album, despite being marketed to teen-

age girls (and we all know they'll buy anything if it has a half-decent looking guy on the cover), sold so poorly.

It looked like Mario would disappear into the abyss that swallowed the likes of Mario Winans (still have nightmares) and Eamon (remember him? Man did he suck). But fortunately, not just for Mario but for us too, he had what is in all honesty an urban classic dropped on his doorstep, and the rest is history.

There was always going to be pressure on his next release. It would give people a chance to see if he's an artist worth watching or just another flash in the one-hit-wonder pan. It was pretty obvious that there were only two ways this could go: 1) He'd recruit Ne-Yo again to make an album of rehashes of *Let Me Love You*s or 2) He'd be so eager to stray away from the image that he'd end up doing something wildly differ-

ent. Fans were dying to know which direction he'd pick and then the release date finally arrived. But there was no album.

*Go!* is finally going to be released an entire year after it was initially supposed to drop and you can't help but wonder why it was shelved for so long. With Ne-Yo's name not appearing once in the credits, it became clear that Mario has traded his clean-cut *Let Me Love You* image for a more grown-up and overtly-sexual persona and nowhere is this more evident than on the hyperactive Neptunes-produced title track *Go!* on which he uses enough expletives to make Lil' Kim blush. It's very different, works surprisingly well and doesn't overstay its welcome.

The rest of *Go!* (the album) is more laid back and consists of well-crafted ballads like *Why*, a worthy cover of Keith Sweat's *Right and a Wrong Way*

and of course the single *Crying Out For Me* all of which showcase his vocal ability brilliantly. He even manages to shine on the Stargate-produced *How Do I Breathe* despite it sounding uncomfortably similar to some of the production team's other recent projects (Rihanna's *Hate That I Love You* and Beyoncé's *Irreplaceable*).

Other notable tracks include *Kryptonite*, which features a rap from the up-and-coming Rich Boy and sees Mario comparing his weakness for other girls to Superman's weakness to the green stuff, and the Akon-produced *Do Right* – a song about his mother's drug addiction. *Go!* is easily his best album to date and is a must-have for lovers of contemporary R&B who find the likes of Beyoncé a little too pop-ish to handle. A new video for *Do Right* can now be viewed online.

**Jemil Salami**



Mario in the studio



# A fashion forward February

A veritable smorgasbord of accessories and fashions to inspire you this February 2008



Kirsten Dunst starring in the latest **Miu Miu** ad. Beautiful..!

Topshop, Tiered mini



YSL Biarritz Sandal, hypercute



Mooka Kinney, totally adorable vintage aesthetic clothing



Gap RED Giles Deacon T-shirt



Chanel vintage, so pop!

## Spring Summer '08 Catwalk Sounds

Here be tracklistings of songs played during the Spring/Summer '08 catwalks. Whet your appetite for Autumn/Winter '08 London Fashion Week!

Fashion and music go together like Andy Warhol and money. Listen to the essence of Karl Lagerfeld and Miu Miu, Prada and Missoni, and maybe you will *be* it. But you probably won't.

### Paris

KARL LAGERFELD  
LCD Soundsystem, The Boys  
Sohodolls, Prince Harry

MIU MIU  
DJ Blaqstarr, Shake It To The Ground  
Justice, D.A.N.C.E  
Princess Superstar & Richard X, A Song We Left  
Daft Punk, Technologic  
Louberbach, Reflected  
Louberbach, Scattered From

### New York

MISS SIXTY  
New Young Pony Club, The Bomb  
CSS Vs Tom Tom Club, Let's Make Love  
Roisin Murphy, Overpowered  
New Young Pony Club, Jerk Me  
Electronicat, Lost Gigabyte  
Beck, Timebomb  
Kudu, Magic Touch  
Crazy Girl, Cocaine Talk

LACOSTE  
Cheval fou, Sunset Laser  
Flying lizzards, Steam Away  
Fern Kinney, Baby Let Me Kiss You  
The honeymoon killers, Decollage  
Holger Czukay, Cool In The Pool

### Milan

GUCCI  
Benard Herrmann, Marnie  
Bernard Herrman, Psycho  
Blondie, Rifle Range  
The Cure, The Lovecats  
The Go! Team, Keys To The City  
Roisin Murphy, Overpowered  
Marc Almond, Strangers in In The Night

MISSIONI  
Patricia Kaas, It's A Man's World  
Joss Stone, It's A Man's World  
Renee Geyer, It's A Man's World  
James Brown, It's A Man's World

PRADA  
Death in June, The Only Good Neighbour  
Death in June, Passion ! Power ! Purge !  
Herbert Von Karajan, Prelude a l'apres midi d'un faune  
Brian Eno, Mountain Of Needles  
Eric Satie, Parade

### London

AQUASCUTUM  
Mogwi, Autorock  
Mogwai, Hunted By A Freak  
The Jesus and Mary Chain, Just Like Honey

COOL



### Deerstalker hat

I was considering not putting this in because I've seen a few unattractive old (over 30) people wearing them. But then I thought, how superficial would that be?



### Pixie Geldof

Quite amusing in a nihilistic way. Her sister Peaches looks derriere-garde in comparison.



### Horn-rimmed glasses

In an All The President's men style. Johnny Depp wears them. Of course you could never hope to look as beautiful as he.



### Yelle

I have no idea what she sings about (her being french), but it makes my ears smile.

COOL

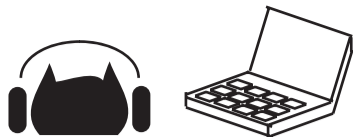


**Picture of the Week**

**Black Eyed Blues**, by Quentin Behaghel  
Second Year Aeronautical Engineering

We want to exhibit your art. Send in your photographs.  
[felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:felix@imperial.ac.uk)





## Technology

Technology Editor – James Finnerty

felix@imperial.ac.uk



**James Finnerty**  
Technology Editor

**S**o what happened this week? The tech world seems to have taken a bit of a break after all the releases at the events from the last issue.

So as I sit here in the Felix office struggling to fill up this column with who-knows-what I'll begin with an intro to what's sprawled across the next two pages.

We have the promised phone reviews comparing some of the big sellers and top-end models in the phone market. Some of the phone reviews are written by owners and others are written based on opinions we got off of people who do use them but were too lazy to write about it.

Also, to fill up a little bit more space, Andrew Slater has written about tablet PC's. Watch as he tries to justify the money that these things cost.

Now let's try and find out if anything significant happened in the last seven days. The whole of the Hull lost access to the internet, now whether or not you feel this is good or bad news is up to you but the phrase "nothing of value was lost" springs to mind.

Microsoft has decided to rush out another new version of Windows that will replace the void which was Vista's intended sales. Windows 7, as it is currently creatively dubbed, is planned for release at the end of 2009. So if past records are any indicator we'll be lucky if we start seeing an ad campaign at the London Olympics.

The ex-boss of Gizmondo has been released from an American prison and is being deported back to Sweden. He was jailed after admitting to embezzlement and some charges relating to totalling his Ferrari Enzo.

The army of people against mobile phones has had new fuel added to their fire this week. Apparently, using a mobile phone in the hours before you go to bed will cause a bad night's sleep. I wonder if someone could argue the case that not having the conversation just before bed would have caused a worse night's sleep?

Internet social networking sites are being blamed for glorifying suicide. The argument is that after people witness the affection someone receives online after suicide they begin to crave the same attention. Arguably this has been happening for years but sites like Facebook and MySpace just amplify the scale.

In more news more red tape is blocking the widespread use of the \$100 laptop in developing countries. It goes to show that even the most humanitarian of projects can be brought to a halt by the actions of a few.

What a cheerful week it's been. After that depressing revelation let's hope that reading about some of the world's most popular hand-held gadgets will put you in a better mood.

P.S. I know I'm kind of stealing this from Azfar's section but EA are breaking down some boundaries in digital video game distribution. The next title in the Battlefield franchise, 'Battlefield Heroes', will be released for free online. It's been designed to run on older machines and is being targeted at the large Asian online gaming community.

# Got more cash than sense?

Andrew Lyle, Andrew Slater and James Finnerty find out what to spend it on

**W**ith people going nuts over the recent release of the Apple iPhone, we thought it would be just to compare it to the products of more experienced phone manufacturers. Who will win? A company famed for product design and user experience? Or the team of companies who created the mobile phone market in the first place?

Now aside from the iPhone there are several stand-out phones on the market. I've tracked down as many people who own these little guys as I could so we can get some authentic user feedback and put together a proper comparison.

Let's start with the popular N95 from Nokia. Now I'm going to try and set my bias to one side as I own one of these amazing little gadgets.

Due to its popularity this phone has now become very affordable for what it offers. You can expect to get it free on a £30 a month, 18 month contract with a decent plan, pretty good for a handset valued between £300 and £400. There is also a newer version which has a slightly larger screen, more user RAM and 8Gb's of flash storage built in. However, this version is limited to Vodafone and as such is difficult to get hold of for good value.

A phone like this is what we call a smart phone, basically meaning the user can add applications to the phone's roster. This comes with heaps of benefits and an equally daunting pile of problems. The phone is very powerful and has tonnes of cool features such as a 5 megapixel camera, high resolution decent size screen, loud speakers, 3g, WiFi and Bluetooth to name a few. What do these accessories have in common though? They all eat batteries for breakfast. I am lucky to get a day's worth of battery if I use the N95 as an mp3 whilst I walk to and from college and then as a phone throughout the day.

A cool little feature is that this phone can be plugged into a TV. So you can put films onto it and play them in your living room or anyone's living room. Also, with some of the console emulators that have been developed for this phone, you can even play games on the TV.

So overall it's clear that this phone's popularity is very well justified and Nokia have really kept their reputation as premier phone designers.

The other big boy in the market is obvious. The dreaded iPhone. Now I think practically everyone has heard of it by now but not everyone will know why it is so popular. Well, a portion of its popularity is rooted in the army of loyal Apple consumers, but this only explains why people pay over the odds for it.

In a lot of areas the iPhone is dwarfed by other phones. Its camera is reasonably dated, no swappable storage and no 3G but the beauty comes in what Apple always strive for. An enjoyable user experience. The biggest tool that allowed this was the new multi-touch screen. Now touch screens have been around for years but they have only ever been able to accept a single input. You can see them get confused if you put two fingers on the screen in different places. The iPhone, however, can recognize these as separate in-



**Nokia N95 - Anything you can do I can do better**



**Apple iPhone - Don't really need to point this out but it's the best selling phone model in the world**

puts, allowing you to do cool stuff like pinching your fingers together to make things smaller. Getting all this together into the polished version that was released was a fantastic piece of work as it is pretty much glitch-free.

This phone definitely ain't cheap. A one-off payment of £269 and a compulsory £35 a month 24 month contract is the price you pay. This makes it one of the most expensive contracts there is and this is solely down to branding.

I'm gonna cut the coverage of the iPhone a little short as so much information of it is readily available. Ultimately it is a very impressive device but it's very hard to justify its cost.

We now move onto the LG Viewty. In many ways this phone is the only thing that competes directly with the iPhone in terms of user experience. It has a similar-sized touchscreen, but it's only single input, and has a menu system that is as easy to use.

It does surpass almost all other phones in one area, though. If you

fancy yourself as a photographer, this phone takes some of the highest quality pictures available to a camera phone. At 5 megapixels it seems on a par with the N95 but in reality it produces much better results.

The big con of this phone is that it has no WiFi functionality. So if you want any internet access on it you're going to have to go through the hefty price tags of your network provider. This is a real shame as if this has been included we could have seen a serious direct competitor to the iPhone.

The next phone to cover is the brick like e90. This phone was originally going to have its own article but we decided to attach it to this one, so apologies for its far more in-depth coverage. Oh; and this is the bit written by Andrew Lyle.

It's that time of year again when all your mates whip out their sleek new phones. The new iPhone, the LG Viewty - both undeniably sexy pieces of kit; the acclaimed Nokia N95 with its huge

feature set or perhaps the new Sony-Ericsson K850i 'Cyber-Shot' camera phone. I get asked what my new phone is and amid looks of utter disbelief, I take out this asymmetrical, dirty brick. Go back to the early 90's and this phone would fit right in. So why, you may ask, was I so overjoyed to finally get my hands on one?

Well, this phone is more than it first appears; open it up and what greets you is a miniature laptop complete with a gorgeous wide-screen display and full qwerty keyboard. If I went back again to the 90's or even to a few years ago, this phone could put a lot of home PCs to shame. With an obscene amount of RAM it'll multi-task better than your mum and it has a processor to match, keeping all the applications you could wish to run whizzing around at top speed.

It is termed a 'Business Communicator' and rightly so - with a full suite of office-esque editing applications you can flick through your lecture note



LG Viewty - Similar to the iPhone but with a sensible price

PDFs on the tube, create a last minute presentation or even finish off a lab report in the word or spreadsheet apps. Checking up on the latest goings on in Facebook or MySpace is a breeze thanks to the Safari based web browser and a full range of connectivity options, including WiFi, HSDPA (3.5G) and GPRS. Viewing these sites is no trouble thanks to the 800x352 pixel screen, showing me the full width of the webpage. Email is also a painless experience - where a normal phone would show an inbox for texts, I also get a list of emails to peruse at my leisure.

However, despite this being a business device, Nokia have thoughtfully included a wide range of multimedia features more akin to what one would find on their N-series devices. I've got

my music player (with 2.5mm headphone jack) for MP3's, AAC's, WMA's and most other compression acronyms you care to mention. I can also play the podcasts I found whilst browsing the web, or an audio book detailing the ins and outs of speed-dating for dummies... or whatever takes your fancy. There's a 3.2 megapixel auto focus camera for those spur-of-the-moment snaps, which can incidentally also take 'DVD quality' (read TV resolution) videos, so you can make your own home movie - perhaps after a successful speed dating session... and finally, there is what has to be one of my favorite uses for this device - a video player. Whether by chance or on purpose, Nokia have created a screen the exact shape of most Hollywood blockbusters. In other



Nokia e90 - Just look at it. It's huge. At least no one will steal it

er words, this beast will play videos at a higher resolution than your TV and with a pixel density greater than any HDTV, movies will look and playback flawlessly thanks to the inbuilt video card. I defy you to find a media player on the market to outperform it.

The thing is, I'm still stuck with an enormous phone and a laptop too small to type on with any more than two fingers per hand. Nokia have made appalling use of the space on the outside of the phone and the shortcuts on the inner keyboard are obscure to say the least. There is also no denying that this is a fat, heavy, metal-cased brick... but then on the off chance that I get kidnapped walking home from college, I can knock my assailant out with it and in true Imperial fashion find the opti-

mum route home with the built-in GPS and mapping software; and you know, despite the drawbacks, should I choose to I can leave my laptop at home, take this massive phone into lectures, open it up and make my mate's tiny EEEPC look, well...rather large.

So how do you pick which phone to buy, not just from the tiny handful here but from the whole phone market? Well the best way seems to be to figure what kind of contract you want. For example, how much do you want to pay a month and what volume of calls and texts do you want. Once you've got all that together, decide what features you want from the phone, none of them have everything, and see which of the models available on your contract best suits your needs.

# Is it supposed to do that?

Andrew Slater explains why some people's laptops bend the wrong way

The Tablet PC brought us a step closer to that futuristic world we see on Star-Trek. With the ability to use your PC as a sheet of paper a whole wealth of options are suddenly opened up. Midnight deadlines on mathematics can be handed in, hand-written, hours after the submissions office has closed without having to contemplate who designed Microsoft Equation Editor and work out what their grudge against the scientific community was.

I've got a fairly old model of Tablet PC; none the less, it still comes with all the features needed from a PC. A 1.7Ghz Pentium Mobile, 512MB of RAM (upgraded to 1GB for Vista) and, for the time-generous, a 60GB hard-drive with a 14.1" screen. Day to day it's your standard laptop with keyboard and annoying trackpad, but obviously it all changes in Tablet PC mode.

With a special pen that comes with the PC, the monitor can detect where you are pointing on the screen, so you can use it instead of that trackpad. My laptop came pre-loaded with XP Tablet PC Edition with built-in handwriting recognition, as do all flavours of Vista, and this can be used to input text into any area. Simply waggle the pen above the screen and you'll activate the input-panel. Anything you write in this will be translated into standard text with impressive accuracy. Windows takes the shape drawn and the path taken to draw it to guess the word you're writing. It will then compare this to the sentence that you've written and

choose the most probable word that's grammatically correct. By combining these with ongoing learning from daily use it quickly becomes smooth enough to use for fast-response areas such as online messaging.

There's also a variety of tools available for Tablet PC users. Office comes with the ability to annotate documents with ink, Windows provides Journal as a basic (paper-style) notepad and there are many downloadable applications such as PDF Annotator which allows you to scribble on your lecturer's notes in PDF form, so you can always make corrections later. There are also arty tools available which can take into account the pressure that you press onto the screen for smudge effects and such. I now find that I don't carry around paper or a pen, if I need to scribble I flip it into Tablet mode. Drawing diagrams and embedding them into work without a scanner, the ability to correct things drawn in pen or even copy-paste a long equation to the next line are all things I've come to use often.

So why don't we all have Tablet PCs? Most Tablets are at least £100 more than their normal brothers, if not up to £200 more for functionality that many just won't use. Then there's the size of the screen itself, with some nifty engineering to get the screen to pivot and collapse back onto its own keyboard, however this can be a weak point and may be prone to break with prolonged use. Lastly, there's the size. Everyone with this tech in Sci-Fi is using super-thin screens which weigh nothing and have huge functionality. Unfortunately

that's not the case today, however the situation is improving, with smaller and lighter tablets that you would happily rest on your arm whilst writing on them, just like a notebook or clipboard. A MacBook Air style Tablet would be perfect, wireless functionality and extremely portable, let's hope the rumours of a Mac Tablet are true! And who knows, we get lucky and not have a Mac pricetag to weigh the thing down.

On a side-note, tablets are increasingly being used as a tool in the creative media. Greater software support is being produced allowing you to emulate pencil sketching and oil paint-

ing with surprising realism. Graphic designers also depend upon this little tools to make their jobs possible.

To those that frequently have to scan notes into a document, include hand-drawn diagrams or even help a mate with maths work over MSN, a Tablet PC is perfect providing quick and easy access to scribble on your PC. There are even some gimmicky but fun games that have been developed for tablets.

If you think these features would be kinda cool, but ultimately would never use them, then stick with a standard laptop and save yourself a few hundred pounds. Or maybe just blow it all on something else.



Honestly, it's meant to look like someone broke it

## Headlines we couldn't fit in

*Nintendo sells 5 million Wiis in Japan*

*HD DVD sales drop dramatically*

*Major HTML update revealed*

*RIAA website hacked*

*Dells to go on sale in PC World*

*BT Home Hub open to VoIP hacking*

*Tiscali removes download throttling*

*MoD admits to losing three laptops not one*

*UK homes to get fibre optic internet*

*European probe heads for Mercury*

*ID cards delayed till 2012*

*Japanese to launch paper plane from the ISS*

*Swedes investigate bovine methane problem*



## Games

Games Editors – Azfarul Islam and Sebastian Nordgren

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**Sebastian Nordgren**  
Games Editor

**G**reetings, fine folk of Imperial! You may not know me, though my name has graced the top row of this page for the entirety of the year, and so I feel introductions are in order. I am the mysterious Sebastian Nordgren, and though I have not addressed you directly before, that is an imbalance that I hope to correct during the remainder of the year.

This week, we find ourselves firmly in the middle of the post-Christmas dry spell, with most holiday releases already played through during the holidays and nary a worthy title coming out in a long time. In other words, the perfect time to dig into those game collections and uncover a forgotten gem. Recently, I did exactly that and found, buried under too many sequels and mediocre games, a great game indeed: *System Shock 2*.

It was a game that I remember well from the time before ESRB ratings, playing it as a mere 14-year old (against all industry recommendations to the contrary). I remember delving into the world, progressing further and further into the ship – and as the ambient noises of monsters unknown got louder and more terrifying, I finally caved in and set it aside to gather dust until I become more courageous. So it was with great excitement that I played through the game for the first time, enjoying the experience thoroughly. Most interesting, though, was having played it only shortly after finishing *BioShock*, a bonafide spiritual successor to the *System Shock* series.

And with this experience still fresh in my mind, this week we bring you a roundup of the most well-known spiritual successors of recent times, making our English teachers proud by comparing and contrasting the original and the successor. Though the quality of these successors varies across the board, and the links are sometimes tenuous from one to the other – I for one am glad that good game concepts don't get completely lost in the quagmires of intellectual property laws.

This week in *Byte* we also bring you two very different rhythm games, the electronic and rather psychaedealic *Synaesthete*; and the thoroughly rock *Frets on Fire*. Both require a bit more than a browser to get working, but all but the most rhythmically challenged among you should put in the effort and give them a twirl. It's refreshing to see that the rhythm genre has branched so far from its popular origins in *Dance Dance Revolution*.

Going with the succession theme, we've decided to talk some smack to counteract the love. That's right: *Flamebait* is back and this time it's Samir Talwar who's drawn his katana and prepared to make sushi out of sequels that have almost driven great franchises to te ground. That's the secret behind a trilogy: the third game needs to be the saviour.

I hope you enjoy the issue! As always, please feel free to mail your musings to [felix.games@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:felix.games@imperial.ac.uk).



# Flamebait: More is less

Samir Talwar runs over sequels and then doubles back to make sure they're dead

**P**layed a sequel lately? I have, and I'm bitter. It's like returning to a theme park: you're full of wide-eyed wonder as you walk in, but you soon realise you've seen it all before, the queues are longer and the rides aren't as fun as they were last time around. Add to the fact that at some point a fifteen-year old ape-child with far too many spots will step on your foot and crush three bones, and a little girl will drop her ice cream on you and then start howling as if it's your fault, and

you may as well have stayed at home. Frickin' kids...

But I digress. Only slightly, of course... many sequels do make you feel like this. *Metal Gear Solid 2* springs to mind, introducing perhaps the most hated protagonist since Macbeth (who spends far too much time running around sans undergarments), a story more confusing and boring than my ex-girlfriend, completely disregarding my preferred ending to the first game and adding cut-scenes as if removing the gameplay for far too long will make it all better.

Thankfully, I still had the first game, so after forcing myself through the second out of sheer loyalty (read: stupidity) to Hideo Kojima's genius, I sacrificed it to the heathen Gods, stuck the battered disc of the original into my *PlayStation* and purified my soul.

It may interest you to know (or not... to be honest, I don't care) that *Deus Ex: Invisible War* is the sequel to my favourite game. It got glowing reviews and was generally regarded as a must-buy... unless you played the prequel. The reason? While it's good, the first one was better. The story was more engaging, the weapons and gizmos were a damn sight cooler and to be honest, the game was just more fun. But why? Surely the design team, with a bigger budget, more staff and a loyal fan base, have all the right wooden blocks in their slots? Not only that, but with a killer game under their belt, coders, artists and lackeys a-plenty were clamouring to work for them... so what went wrong?

Everything, apparently. The designers suffered from visionary conflicts, which is basically a fancy way of saying they argued a lot and generally the idiots won. In addition, the programmers were no doubt missing a few bolts, choosing to develop a game that barely worked on the Xbox and assuming it would run amazingly on the PC without any real work at all. The result was a half-finished product that, in comparison to its big brother, looked like it had been run through the *Texture Crippler* a few too many times and played about as well as a three-legged dog with no lungs.

There are many problems that plague any developer looking to make a few quid quickly and quietly by creating sequels. A huge one is a lack of motivation, often brought on by the parent company (we love you really, EA) bullying their friendly neighbourhood subsidiaries into milking the public for all they're worth, but it's definitely not the only one. It's hard to create something fresh and exciting while still staying true to the original game's roots – just ask Nintendo what the hell they were thinking of when they released *Super Mario Bros 2: The Vegetable Throwing Contest*. Often, designers will attempt to bring in new features – such as the 3D environment in the case of *Worms 3D* – even if it actually worsens the gameplay.

Sequels don't just have to be good. As *Deus Ex* proved, they need to be better than the original, or you've wasted your time. Valve figured this one out with their *Half-Life* series: they beefed up the graphics tremendously, tweaked the gameplay just enough to keep it fresh without ruining everyone's per-

ception of the first game and added a cool new widget that blows stuff up in style. The only problem was that goddamn Steam thingy that refuses to let me play until I've given it my credit card and let it fondle me a little, but it seems to be getting slightly better (though not faster – it's still a pig on older systems) with every iteration.

A bit of research (or searching on Wikipedia, which passes for research as far as my assignments are concerned) shows that *Halo 2* came out just a week before *Half-Life 2*. Now there's some polar opposites if I ever saw them: while both were big successes based almost solely on their prequels, *Half-Life 2* was brilliant in every way. Not so much for *Halo*... while many think the multiplayer far surpasses the first game, for many, the single-player was the reason they bought it. Of course, their expectations were dashed when they found out Bungie had been snorting crack until the last possible second and then thrown in what amounts to long, drawn out bullshit scattered across a dark room so you can't see it (or anything else) clearly... which incidentally was what a lot of the levels were like. There were good moments... and then you had to shoot yet another grunt who got too happy and started firing his pistol at his partner like a trigger-happy US marine. Moments of real action were few and far between, with most of the game following the exact same story arc as the first game but with less actual plot and more funny-shaped aliens with big heads and annoying voices. To this day, I still don't know what the game was about, but I'm going to assume it's not worth playing again to find out.

Thinking about it while my subconscious rattles off a list of reasons why you're wrong and I'm right, there is one reason above any other why sequels have a tendency to fail: it's your own nostalgic brain. Your memory has finite space, and is much better at storing those moments you really treasure, as opposed to the ones where you were pretty much indifferent to the entire situation.

As such, if you liked a game when you were seven years old, there's a high probability you're looking back on it fondly right at this moment... apologies for bursting your bubble, but *Double Dragon* really wasn't that good compared to its younger siblings. Go back and play it, assuming you can find that bloody NES – it may still retain its charm and revel in its glory as your love for it blossoms... but on the other hand, it may tank under your petrifying stare as you realise that even *Peggle* gloriously storms past it in the Fun charts.



*Deus Ex: The Invisible War* – bigger, prettier... but better?



*NFS* has made visual strides since *NFSIII* ('98); gameplay, not so much



I wonder if the BBFC actually played the game before deeming it a 15

# Spiritual Heir apparents

Azfarul Islam & Co unearth the latent links between these gaming brethren

Sequels sell. Fact. You can write whatever you want about continuations being unimaginative, repetitious and plain grating at times,

but they're the ones that unfortunately rake in the monies.

So, it's always encouraging in situations when sequels are usually rather excellent and maintain a certain level

of quality and distinction. Of course, sometimes you don't just want to just continue the mythos but rather build on what was brilliant and then retain the soul as you prepare to transfer to a

new vessel.

Such games aren't strictly sequels but neither are they wholly celibate, original titles. Join us as we take a look at some of more inspiring ones.



**Sebastian Nordgren**  
Games Editor

*System Shock 2* was the landmark title of an era. One of the most open-ended and atmospheric first-person games to be released, it combined RPG and FPS elements far more successfully than all previous attempts at it (in *Ultima Underworld*, no less) and had compelling storytelling throughout. Better yet, it was terrifying. While *System Shock 1* had been a success, it was *System Shock 2* that really put Looking Glass Studios on the map. The game can be seen as the main source of inspiration for *Deus Ex* and, more recently, *BioShock* – forming a trio of games that appear on almost everyone's "Best.Games.Evar!" lists.

While *System Shock's* gameplay was good, it was its writing that set it apart from the rest of the pack, most significantly *Half-Life* (with which it was in direct competition at the time of its release). Where *System Shock* opted for expositions by long-dead crew members through audio logs scattered across the game world (sound familiar?), most other FPS games opted for having non-player characters reveal most of the storyline. In many ways, it was the complete absence of other (sane) characters on-board the Rickbacker and Von Braun that made

the game feel so eerie. Every creak of a door hinge, every footstep, every agonized groan was hostile – and with rapidly degrading weapons and scarce ammunition supplies, every hostile had the potential to be lethal.

And if that didn't scare you, the nature of the hostiles would. To start with they were all soulless, mutated people, still wearing the remains of their shredded trousers, pierced through the neck by a 5-foot parasitic worm. As they stalked the corridors of the deserted spaceship, you never knew when you were going to turn the corner and face a wrench swinging towards your face. As you moved closer to the source of the infestation the mutations grew worse, birthing hunch-backed monstrosities, all flesh and sharp teeth, that had somehow all been human at some point. It was the kind of thing that put *Half-Life's* zombies to shame.

The similarities between *System Shock 2* and *BioShock* should be obvious – from the method of storytelling to the story of a society in extreme circumstances being destroyed from within. The former inhabitants' consciousness reduced to the most primal instincts, driven by a will not their own. Both games recognized the haunting nature of such a story and embraced it fully, leaving you to wander the desolate halls, paranoid and on

edge throughout.

The differences between the two are mainly cosmetic, but do make a great difference. *System Shock 2* is set on a spaceship, lightyears away from anything resembling home – *BioShock* thousands of feet below the sea in a utopic city: a place just as alien. The other difference, though, is one of choice. *System Shock 2* made you select a branch of the military, with each of the three choices affecting the way you do combat and the resources available to you. *BioShock* made the choices more streamlined – every player could use *Psi* pow..., I mean plasmids, with the allocation of cybernetic, err, ADAM limited to these skills and a few minor passive upgrades. In a big way, *System Shock 2* was more open-ended than *BioShock*, featuring a greater degree of replayability than its successor.

However, that's not to say that *BioShock* isn't an excellent game – it is. Its art sets the bar far higher than any game before it, and really, recycling a few (great) ideas from *System Shock 2* is hardly a bad idea. *BioShock* is a very fitting continuation to the legacy of *System Shock*, and gamers are better off to have two such fine games exist. It is a shame, however, that both games feature a completely throw-away boss encounter – a final reminder that the games truly are of the same heritage.

## Similarities

Story is told through voice recordings of dead characters

Player is guided by a seemingly benevolent character  
Player has supernatural powers

RPG elements of inventory management and upgrades

Enemies are formerly humans

## Differences

Greater choice of playing style in *System Shock*

Settings and environment

*BioShock* has a faster pace than *System Shock*

*BioShock* has the finest game art ever, *System Shock* is (and yes, was) a bit meh

Higher emphasis on supernatural abilities in *BioShock*

## Byte

Frets on Fire



<http://fretsonfire.sourceforge.net/>

Playing *Frets on Fire* is as easy as starting the game, picking a song and picking up your keyboard. That's right, go on. Pick it up. Now hold the F1-F5 keys for your left hand and Enter for your right. Got it? Good, now you too can experience the dizzying sense of failure unique to rhythm games! It's also a great workout – my pinky hasn't been this sore since my first girlfriend!

While not a perfect analogue to a guitar, the keyboard-as-a-guitar idea is the type of off-the-wall idea that makes this Guitar Hero-lookalike work.

If you've never played the original, this free game is a perfect introduction to the genre. It only comes with a slim 3 songs, but a bit of googling should quickly find you the numerous song packs floating around the interwebs.

Sebastian Nordgren

Synaesthete



<https://typo3.digipen.edu/index.php?id=986>

*Synaesthete*, nominated for this year's Independent Games Festival, is Darwinia's and Dance Dance Revolution illegitimate offspring, combining the graphics of the former with the rhythm game aspects of the latter in a quirky third-person shooter. With an ever-changing trance/house/drum'n'bass track in the background, your avatar (the Zaikman, a three-dimensional stick figure) destroys swarms of enemies by matching three buttons to the background beat, all while moving around from a third-person view.

It's all sparkly blurred neon, with striking similarities to Tron's early visions of cyberspace. It's definitely a different take on the rhythm game genre, being fresh, psychedelic, beautiful and fun. If you want to try something different, I highly recommend sitting down for the hour it takes to beat the game. Har har har.

Sebastian Nordgren



### Azfarul Islam Games Editor

Unlike the usual relations between spiritual brethren, the couple Ico and Shadow of the Colossus share an evocative, unusual symbiosis that extends far beyond the superficialities.

The key theme that binds these two perspicuously is that of rescue. The segue lies not in thematic similarities but rather in a sense of dichotomy.

In *Ico*, you find yourself a prisoner of archaic, superstitious circumstances. As per village tradition, the kid with the horns sprouting out of his head must be locked away before calamity befalls the people. Incarcerated in a gargantuan castle hewn of stone, a freak earthquake releases you from your cell and upon exploration you wander upon a pallid, almost-luminous woman trapped in a cage. Fueled by a mixture of bravado and curiosity, you set about releasing her and pay the price for your heroism. From then on, for your entire journey you are dogged by sinister spectral shadows that will do anything to capture the girl.

The combat is simple and hardly the focus; even the shades aren't a true enemy of sorts. Rather, it's the castle that you must contend with. The design is equally sublime and subliminal. The bleak darkness of each massive room is accentuated by tiny shafts of light that trickle through, creating strong ebbs of

isolation. The harsh cries of seagulls and the staccato-esque crashing of waves outside enhances the longing to be free. The puzzles are of an organic, seamless nature that are ingrained into the mechanistic workings of the castle itself. While these brain-teasers are laterally gratifying by their own rights, another oblique and unique level of challenge is proffered upon your success.

Being impaired of mobility, the girl Yorda, can only join you once you've set out an easier path for you. This is where the game achieves something that no blurb will ever boast about: a genuine sense of attachment, of affinity. There's a latent yet ever-nurtured sentience to Yorda that's somewhat intangible, but still there. It's the way she refuses to listen to you if you put her in any danger, it's the way she'll look curiously around and point out a possible solution to the conundrums, it's the way she eventually trusts you and takes certain leaps of faith and more importantly, it's the gentle way the controller vibrates whenever you're leading her by hand, turning those tugs a little bit more real.

In *Shadow of the Colossus*, the protagonist Wander has taken it upon himself to enter a forbidden realm from which there is no escape. His motivation lies in his arms: the lifeless figure of his love, Mona. Legend has it that whosoever slays the ancient Colossi intrin-

sically bound to this desecrated land will be gifted with the power of gods. His trusty steed Agro now in check, Wander brandishes an arcane sword which has the power to defeat the beings. The land surrounding you is an expanse that stretches as far as the eye can see and you can definitely find no Colossi. Holding up your blade to the sun reveals a shaft of light focused into the distance and that's where you find your quarries. The land, despite being seemingly sparse, is a character in and of itself. Quiet rivers are deafened by rushing waterfalls, the winds from barren wastelands blow into lush copses.

There is far more to see and throughout your journey you will witness sights that ensnare the senses. This sense of scale creates a dizzying aura of insignificance and loneliness that is punctuated by the antics of your horse. As you ride onto each battle, you'll learn not only to control your equestrian comrade but to care for it and respect it because it truly embodies a spirit of its own. There's a beautiful sense of camaraderie that is both unusual and somewhat unsettling if you think about it.

However, at sixteen junctures you won't have time to think about such things since you'll be in heated battle with the Colossi. Coming across in all manner of shapes, sizes and countenance, the Colossi brim with originality and unfettered creativity. The same applies to methods in which you

need to defeat them. It's not just about discovering the weak point(s), but rather how you get there. The Colossi, despite being mostly large and cumbersome, will make every attempt to protect themselves, often leading to a battle of attrition. When the final blow is administered, there's almost a need to stand at attention to respect and mourn at the fall of something rather magnificent.

Visually, both games embody the same Impressionistic art styles and subtleties in animation. A minimalist approach to music is used to evoke deeper emotion and there is always this overarching thought of a girl dressed in white who wants to be free. Even in terms of the rather elusive stories of each lie hints and vestiges of embodying the same world. Similarly, both games are equally quite divergent. One focuses on combat and exploration over a vastness littered with minutiae whereas the other is about escape from an enclosed fortress.

Where these games achieve union is something that no hardcoding could achieve: an illusion so convincing that it goes beyond palpable and into the transcendental. Whether it's the uncanny evocation of isolation or the genuine relationship between the only two characters existing in the world, both games offer an ethereal experience that's almost dream-like in nature.



## Similarities

Similar styles in visual presentation

The themes of isolation and escape

Evocation of a tangible world

Stories that are almost evanescent yet existent

The need to rescue a pale young girl dressed in simple white

The sense that the more you proceed, the further you are from the end

Puzzle elements that are organic and lateral

An emotive segue with the only other sentient character

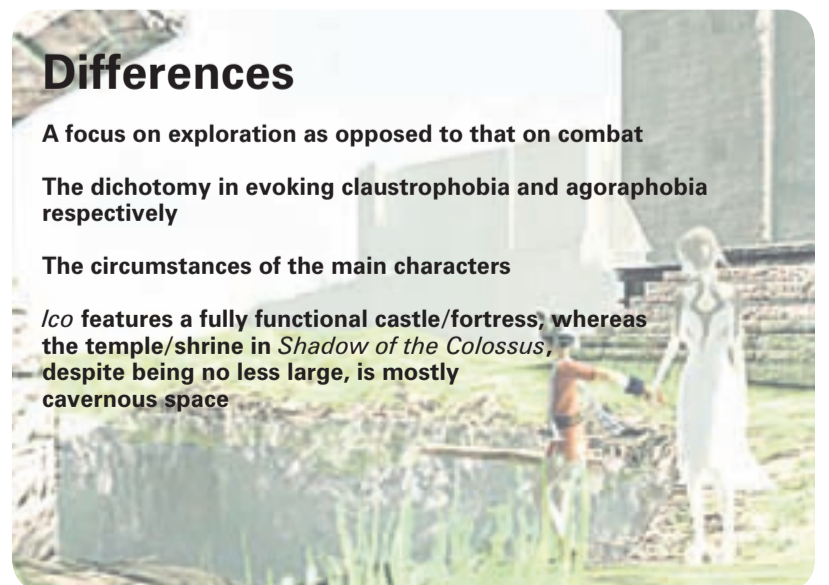
## Differences

A focus on exploration as opposed to that on combat

The dichotomy in evoking claustrophobia and agoraphobia respectively

The circumstances of the main characters

*Ico* features a fully functional castle/fortress, whereas the temple/shrine in *Shadow of the Colossus*, despite being no less large, is mostly cavernous space





### Alex Stublely

Many a moon ago there was a game that people hailed as ahead of its time; its name is Total Annihilation (TA). The game featured so many radical additions that many would consider to be standard in modern games like terrain blocking line of sight, as well as intelligent skirmish AI. Fans of the game were left disappointed when the developers disbanded and rights to the game were sold off, leaving them without a hope for a true sequel. However the light shone upon humanity and the lead developer of the original TA, Chris Taylor, started work on his latest project, which he dubbed Supreme Commander.

Using TA as a starting point and upping the scale the battles are fought on is the first line to say about Supreme Commander. Everything about the game has been streamlined and tweaks to the control systems allows the controlling of several armies numbering in the hundreds which are scattered all over the map. One my personal favourite additions is called the "strategic zoom", as in Supreme Commander the normal view may be zoomed out until the whole map is visible and each unit is simply displayed by a little coloured token. Other more minor changes to the control system includes things like coordinated attacks, where one army can wait for another to move into position before making its move and repeating build queues have been fleshed out a lot. The overall control system allows full control over both your epic army that spans miles across while still

keeping an eye on your airforce that would make the Spartans fight in the shade.

The economy system from TA has also returned for its successor, SupCom. There are simply two resources in the game mass (TA has metal instead) and energy, and each one has a different resource deposit on the map (mass/metal deposits and hydrocarbon/geothermal vents). One of the major features of SupCom and TA is that resources don't run out as the game goes on, the resource deposits just keep on generating funds to finance rebuilding your army. Coupling this with the fact that half of your economy doesn't rely on these deposits but instead on standard power generators and mass fabricators means that as the game goes on rather than players becoming more and more careful with money they instead start to build larger and larger armies, and those armies don't stop becoming larger and more dangerous until someone takes a hefty hit to their economy which normally pushes them out of the game. However, do not be fooled into thinking that both resources are of relatively equal value like wood/gold in WarcraftIII and minerals/vespene in Starcraft, energy in Supreme Commander is more like power in C&C games, as things like shield generators, radars and turrets require it to carry on running.

So Supreme Commander allows armies far larger than the ones seen in Total Annihilation to be built and managed with any sort of effectiveness, its worth mentioning some of the things that make lots of difference in small



numbers. First up is the Commanders themselves still return in all of their base building glory. At the start of each game each player only starts off with a single commander which in turn is used to produce factories and an economy, and the final victory condition in the game is to kill off your opponents commander. The commanders themselves have had a few tweaks, as they start out weaker than their TA counterparts but can be upgraded to further specialise at a particular role, such as becoming a dedicated combat unit or perhaps an engineering powerhouse capable of building a wall of turrets in a minute. The other units that make a difference even in small numbers are a call back to the TA expansion, the Core Contingency, which brought in the Core Krogoth. For those who haven't played TA:CC the Krogoth is a massive unit, magnitudes above all others in terms of armour, size and firepower, and capable of taking out small armies even without support. Supreme Commander takes this single unit a step further and adds 3 experimental units to each race, each one unique in its battlefield role and capable of taking a small army if its fighting on its own battlefield. Some of the experimentals further the epic numbers strategy despite only being a single unit, as they can function as a mobile factories, setting up mobile command posts and pushing out units in the field to further fortify themselves.

With such a focus on economy, Supreme Commander still keeps the powerful base defences of TA to stop errant harassment of your base. However, like

in TA they can still be brought down with a suitable application of force, whether its launching 5 nukes at his lines to overwhelm his missile defence systems, or doing a quick strike by a large bombing fleet to disable his shield generators. Also worth mentioning is the effectiveness of artillery, which puts the ranges displayed in other games to shame. A single artillery cannon often has minimum ranges similar to a normal units maximum ranges, with shells flying between bases or onto oncoming armies a common sight.

The unit strategy has been subtly altered since TA, as now there is a fixed divide between anti-air and anti-ground attacks so now you have to remember to bring AA flak guns or fighter support with your army. On a more personal note I miss seeing the sight when a scout flies above my army and I see rockets and artillery shells fly everywhere as my units try in vain to land a hit on the agile aircraft (just because everything can attack everything doesn't mean its any good at it).

So overall Supreme Commander holds everything that TA holds dear, while still upping the ante and tightening the control system. The fact that all the cool stuff returns, even if it may have been renamed or altered slightly, with a whole host of new features added makes Supreme Commander a worthy successor to Total Annihilation. For those who haven't played total annihilation, it probably wouldn't hurt to think of Supreme Commander as a cross between C&C Generals and the tactical combat on the Total War games.

## Similarities

- Imperishable resource system
- Emphasis on macromanagement rather than micromanagement
- The commanders return to the fray
- Fantastic orchestral soundtrack by Jeremy Soule
- Economy is your lifeline, protect it
- Ditto for your commander, protect him/her

## Differences

- Now anti-air guns can't fire on ground units and vice-versa
- Three races rather than two
- Base management system has been made more complicated and detailed
- Scale [in Supreme Commander] is even more epic
- More in-depth technology trees



# Volunteering in rural Kenya

Volunteering for one month in mobile health clinics in rural Kenya, 4th year Medic **Ammar Waraich** shares his experience of 'field medicine incarnate'. Non-medics amongst us need not necessarily look away

**O**n the western border of Kenya, many kilometres from the nearest town, I enter a mud-hut set on a sugar cane plantation to the backdrop of intense tropical rainfall.

These are my first few days in Africa and I look forward to, as they say, 'making a difference' and 'getting away from it all'. As I put my corpulent rucksack down, I let out a sigh of relief, having just travelled for over 10 hours on a rattling bus across possibly the worst road in the world.

I can make out many new faces huddling around me in this hut; I am told they are my colleagues in volunteering. There is no electricity and so no light, so I give up on making eye contact and swiftly proceed to engage them in some friendly chit-chat. Devoid of any freshness or originality, I say "hi". They all say "hi" back and introduce themselves. So far, so banal, but amongst the many polite Canadian, American and Kenyan accents I hear, I pick up a British one which comforts me a little, being so far away from SW7 and mercifully opens up a natural avenue for me to progress in my predictable banter. I ask the Brit her name, and she replies telling me it's Heather.

"Are you from the UK?" I ask. "Yes" she replies. "Where from in the UK?" I ask back. "London" she replies. Cool I think, a fellow Londoner! It turns out

**"So, here in the middle of Eastern Africa, of all places and times, I run into a fellow 3rd year Medic that I hadn't even had the chance to talk to back home"**

that she lives in Hammersmith. "...you don't go to Uni in London, do you?" I enquire cautiously. "Yes. I go to Imperial" she answers. Ugh, not that place... "Oh really, me too!" I exclaim, "What do you study at Imperial?" I go on to quiz courteously. "Medicine" she retorts. This is too close for comfort. "Oh really, me too!" I yawp, excitedly. "What year are you in?" I ask, expecting the worst. "Third" she discloses, "What, really! No way! Me too!!"

So, here in the middle of Eastern Africa, of all places and times, I run into a fellow 3rd year Medic that I hadn't even had the chance to talk to back home, and it makes for a splendid, albeit weird, way to start everything. So much for getting away from it all!

My new Canadian friends plead with me to repeat the conversation once more for the entertainment of a few newcomers into the hut, but I didn't really see much need.



Malnutrition is a serious problem in the young

Anyway, back to the topic at hand. I was to be based at this sugar cane plantation for one month, residing with the family of a local reverend by the suave name of Reuben Lubanga and my accommodation here was to be a simple mud hut shared with other volunteers, with no running water, electricity or gas.

The organisation I was working for, called ICODEI, ran the mobile clinic programme I volunteered in as just one facet of its operations, with programmes in micro-enterprise development; micro-financing; teaching and HIV awareness also running. While I was there, it was also looking to set up a cheap HIV testing scheme and a cheap ceramic water-filter project.

The situation that we operated in was a sad one. Funds were limited, volunteers short in supply and the objectives to be achieved huge. We went out to set up and run a mobile clinic

in the rural areas everyday, hours from the few tarmacked roads to be found and accessible only by a bumpy, muddy 4x4 ride. Since this was field medicine incarnate, we had no access to labs for tests, no imaging and no beds. Actually, the list of no's could be indefinitely longer but our biggest problem was that due to the numerous localities we took responsibility for, we could not arrange for any 'follow up appointments'. This implied that any treatments had to be administered on the spot, empirically fashioned, basing them on history and physical exams alone.

People we saw all across the area were, as expected, struggling with health or economic problems and livelihoods carved out of subsistence farming equating to no stable income. For people needing healthcare in Kenya, transport is a significant limiting factor with medical facilities dotted around the country at great distances, up to



Discussing cheap testing with a HIV support group



Various skin symptoms were often the main presenting complaint



Appeasing our little patient



My desk at the office



This man needed an amputation we could not provide



An AIDS patient



Fungal infection gone septic



Simple problem, no solution

four hours away from some villages we saw, via a 30-60 Kenyan shilling matatu journey. Most of these facilities were being run by one or two nurses, without the support of any qualified doctors and one such clinic I visited, to try and learn about local diseases, made so many errors that even as a medical student, I could see they were practicing atrocious medicine. What's more, they were charging 300 Kenyan shillings plus per sub-standard basic consultation and treatment! Compared to that, our mobile clinic was a steal at 50 shillings for the same thing, and it was much easier for us to take a mobile clinic to them rather than they come to us. But with so many people to help, where could one jeep go to make a lasting difference?

The majority of patients we saw were young adults or children suffering from fever. Fever implies many things: mostly malaria, but also dispersed amongst these were typhoid, respiratory tract

infection, pneumonia, TB, cellulites, infectious diarrhoea, UTI and even an insidious presentation of AIDS. Malnutrition, dehydration and worms were a huge problem in the young, and

**"claiming that his family had decided to insert batteries under his skin to 'recharge' him"**

other than this we saw many varied and interesting surgical and medical problems.

One gentleman, who flummoxed me during my second week of clinics, came in complaining of pain in his wrists from

excessive digging. But as I finished my questioning, he pulled his trousers up to reveal an enormous 2 year-old hole in his leg as a final niggling problem! Apparently, it had happened due to a pickaxe accident and was now infected, needing amputation. Another man came in with two massive lumps under the skin of his chest claiming that his family had decided to insert batteries under his skin to 'recharge' him after pneumonia had made him feel 'very tired'. He was deadly serious. The sad thing in both cases was that we could not do anything for them, as our clinic could not conduct surgery.

For me, this is also where the frustrations started. We saw many cases where we could have done so much had we the right resources and our hands were not tied by our situation. Yet at times, there were patients coming in declaring every symptom known to man in the pursuit of cheap medical treatment or in the lust of dear drugs. For example, one lady complained of a headache on hearing bad news and would not leave until she was given "something at least", as she put it. There was also a craze for needles with many people believing that an injection, no matter what the content of the syringe, was a cure for any illness and a protection against further disease. Add to this the disorganised management of ICODEI and the concept of 'African timing' and you get closer to understanding the feeling of defunctness that sometimes overcame me.

One mother came to clinic with a severely malnourished toddler; evident by his swollen belly. She said that she was feeding him "ugali, beans and porridge" day in, day out. There was no meat or even milk in the diet, and hearing this really angered me. I was quick to make judgements on her poor maternal skills and not surprised that the child was in this state going by his

diet of pure starch. I made it clear to the translator that the mother should be told how angry I felt and be asked why she was not feeding the child any protein- "...because we can't afford to

**"...because we can't afford to feed him anything else,' came the reply. This was truly a heartbreaking thing to hear"**

feed him anything else" came the reply. This was truly a heartbreaking thing to hear, especially considering the state of the child, and it made me very annoyed at myself for a long time after she had left. Needless to say, poverty is at the root of the health situation people here face.

And then we obviously have the AIDS catastrophe. Kenya faces a very high prevalence of the disease and many patients we saw had several terrible infections ensuing from their positive HIV status. One such patient whom we set out to visit at her home, died as our jeep approached her house; this left the whole team visibly depressed considering we had just talked to her that very morning.

In my humble and inexperienced opinion, what Kenya needs to improve its health situation is a strong education plan to dispel the strongly-held, incorrect health beliefs (where, for example, kids with wet malnutrition are thought to be healthy because of

their swollen bellies and faces) and an education plan on germ theory, to annul the rampant misuse of antibiotics responsible for the rising bacterial resistance. Basic health and nutritional needs should also be addressed and the international community has to act to help Kenya alleviate poverty, in order to let the locals move beyond purely subsistence farming. Furthermore, HIV awareness needs to take a surge, as people still have a shockingly low level of awareness by western standards and some unreal beliefs on the spread and control of HIV which I won't mention here. All of these ideas are obviously easier said than done.

Upon my return, a friend was quick to point out that my visit sounded like a "glamorous" one, but in reality it is anything but. It is a saddening and frustrating experience that opens your eyes to the world's indifference as you ultimately realise that you can try your best but not make any lasting difference. To achieve such change requires far more than the individual.



The team. My flies are sadly undone



A patient with varicose veins



# Hidden depths: down the rat hole

Jarvist Frost provides us with the riveting report of a Caving Club expedition underground

**W**e stagger our way up the path weighed down with bags of rope and metalwork, passing the toddlers being carried to see Father Christmas at the Ingleborough Cave, our comedy yellow PVC suits cracking in the sub-zero temperature. The sky is a perfect blue from horizon to horizon, the bog frozen beneath our feet.

It was the first caving day of our Winter Tour and this was our plan: To split into two groups and rig separate ways down into the enormous Gaping Gill cave system, meeting in the main chamber and swapping routes - going out on each other's ropes. The others set out across the moor on a compass bearing, while we hop over a fence to protect the unwary from the stunning 110m waterfall.

A last recheck of our gear, a few nervous grins, and we dive in. We start by crawling down an old dry entrance, a distant roar becoming a thud pounding through the limestone as we approach the underground stream. We regroup perched in the middle of this torrent and I attach our bags with 150m of rope between them to my harness.

A few short pieces and soon we approach the monster. Swinging from ceiling bolt to ceiling bolt, judging lengths and tying rope as I go. Finally out above the main drop, below is an utter maelstrom. The river pours over a jagged lip and unravels into disordered streams, ricocheting off the walls as it plunges down. To go straight down would be suicide - the hurtling water would first batter and freeze and then drown you. Through the spray is a view of pure blackness - the ninety-odd metre drop to the floor.

And so our way is to traverse, abseiling down a little, carefully holding steady and then throwing ourselves across the shaft towards where we hope the next bolt will be, bouncing



I think I can see the light at the end of the tunnel... if it's not someone's flash

off the walls and scrambling along with whatever holds can be grabbed. With the rope safely tied off, I kneel against the wall and contemplate the next obstacle - a traverse between two overhanging walls a little over two metres apart, with tiny footholds, to gain the next bolt and place of safety. There is a crack of a ledge on one side, and a few graspable bumps on the other. The climbing wall does not prepare you for

moments like this.

I pull the necessary slack through my descender - no chance of being able to self-belay as I climb, and set off - bridged across from one wall on tip-toes standing in the crack on one side whilst pushing with my fingertips on the other. I don't remember what moves I used to get across, or how I stepped from one side to the other when the ledges ran out. My only

memory is being in the middle and looking down, feeling the strain in my tendons, watching the drips plunge to the floor.

On and drifting down on a 9mm spindle of rope, lassoing the walls to swing in to the bolts finally landing on

'The Amphitheater', a scallop shaped ledge with the waterfall-powered winds whistling past. One hundred metres of rope used so far. The view from here is amazing - looking down into the enormous main chamber. Downing my light, I can just make out the daylight filtering down from above, so dim and speckled from bouncing off the rocks that it could as well have been the Northern lights.

I set off again, knots tied to bolts, karabiners clicking in to hold the soft rope away from the jagged rock. The walls blossom out and I am left in free space, dangling between two waterfalls. The weave of the rope sets me gently spinning as I drop to the floor, my descender purring to itself as my height is turned into puffs of steam freed from the wet rope.

Down on the cobbled floor, I dodge the other seven waterfalls as I stumble across a chamber big enough to happily host the Albert Hall, blowing my whistle till I am out of breath to signal the others. Eventually (after a lot of blowing!) they get the message and a pinprick of light appears a long way up above and starts to drift down as slowly as a feather.

With perfect timing, the other party arrives. We share a wee dram and a sip of hot chocolate, and make our separate ways out. Passages and chambers and climbs and rope: finally we were back on the surface, nearly eight hours underground.

Starlight glinted from the crystal clear sky, lighting the white beards of frost on the heather. To think a day ago I had been walking home under the orange glow of South Kensington! We walked the long path back to the minibus, the ropes dangling from our belts stiffening into rods as they froze solid.



Don't you wish you were there?



In the name of the Father, the Son and into the Hole he goes



# Coffee Break

with Chuck Norris

coffee.felix@imperial.ac.uk

## Play against Chuck Norris (and lose)

Coffee Break is back. Hoff's gone, Chuck's in meaning there's even more opportunities to get your ass kicked

Chuck Norris went to university to get a degree in Chuck Norris. Chuck Norris is unsatisfied. Chuck Norris is back to get with the young ladies, so beware. Just the other day his good friend The Hoff was telling Chuck that back in his day, there used to be an IC Virgins club, but The Hoff took care of that. Speaking of virgins, did you know that Chuck Norris once visited The Virgin Islands? Yeah, they're now called The Islands.

That's right, 52 degrees are not enough for Chuck. The 27th degree he received for counting to infinity (the 29th for counting to infinity again), and the 38th because he knows the last number of  $\pi$ .

As some of you may or may not know, Felix use Macs in their office, which always poses a problem for Chuck because his computer doesn't have a control button. He is always in control. These Macs not only have a control button, but the alt key is in the wrong place. By the way, Apple pay Chuck Norris 99 pence every time he listens to a song off iTunes.

Chuck Norris heard there's a Science Challenge on. He was going to enter, but then he remembered how when he was in middle school, his English teacher set him an essay titled "What is Carnage?" Chuck wrote his name on the page and got an A+. Speaking of challenges, tarded is what you become when you challenge Chuck Norris. Retarded is what happens if you live to try it again.

Did you know that Chuck Norris is the reason that Wally is hiding? If you can spot him somewhere in this newspaper before 3pm on Friday, you will get you a 10 point head start in CNUT.

Chuck was very pleased by the carnage on Wednesday night in the Union, especially the amount of vomit in the toilets. Chuck Norris was displeased by the toilet paper though. This is what Chuck Norris uses:



Time to go drink more beer. Chuck has a second year biology test in immunology tomorrow, but on his last test, he put down "violence" as every one of the answers and aced the test. Chuck Norris solves all his problems with violence. The blood test is another test that Chuck Norris always acs.

## Oh sweet, sweet CNUT

Welcome to the first issue of CNUT (the Chuck Norris Ultimate Trivia). If you think you're better than Chuck Norris (you're not, not only can Chuck Norris divide by zero, but he can count to 20 using only 12 numbers), have a go.

Chuck Norris has taken the role of the lead actors in some famous movies. Seven points for guessing the

movie correctly, and another five if you can name the character Chuck Norris is playing.

Answers that make Chuck Norris chuckle with glee will also get you points (but not quite as many as the right answer).

Send your answers with your team name to [coffee.felix@ic.ac.uk](mailto:coffee.felix@ic.ac.uk) or texts to 07864076057 if you're in a lecture

theatre or not bothered to email.

First team to reply gets a bonus five points just for being awesome. The team with the most points at the end of the year will receive a super duper roundhouse kick in the face from Chuck Norris himself (just kidding, there is an actual awesome prize for the winning team, and maybe even the runners up, depending on interest). As

this is the first week and it's more of an interest-gauge, most are pretty easy, but since you're not as good as Chuck Norris, I'll give you a hint: two of these are from the same movie. Also, don't forget to look for Wally. He's hiding somewhere in this newspaper.

To finish off: a fireman runs into a classroom holding a screwdriver and shouts: "This is not a drill!"





# Wordoku 1,393

G	E			H				
H			I					
		N			G	H	E	
I			O				H	
E	H	G				M	T	O
	M				H			G
	S	E	M			G		
					O			N
				S			M	E

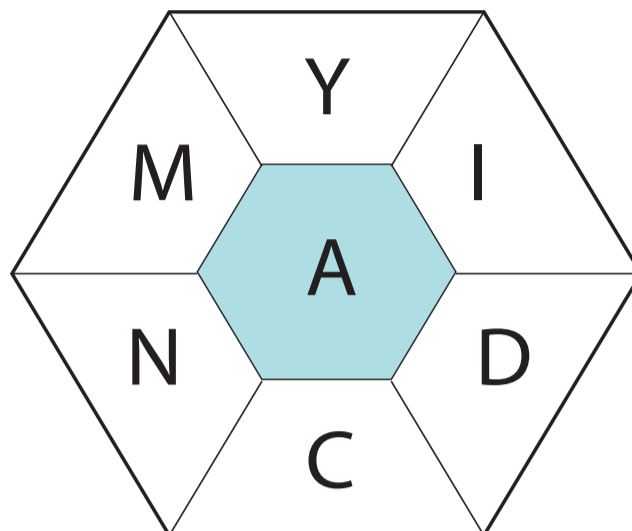
**Solution to 1,392**

T	I	O	S	R	N	A	E	C
S	A	N	O	E	C	T	I	R
C	R	E	A	T	I	O	N	S
E	S	A	R	I	O	N	C	T
N	O	C	T	S	A	E	R	I
I	T	R	C	N	E	S	O	A
R	N	T	I	O	S	C	A	E
A	E	S	N	C	R	I	T	O
O	C	I	E	A	T	R	S	N

Wordoku is identical to sudoku; we've just replaced the numbers with letters. Once you've completed the puzzle, there is a hidden word or phrase to find. Email in your answers to [sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk).

The lucky, lucky winner of Wordoku 1,392 was **Sam Sharpe**. The hidden phrase was "creations".

# The Polygon of Geodesic Giraffes



**How to rate yourself:**

**Under 8 words:** You make me believe in reincarnation. Nobody can be as stupid as you in one lifetime!

**8 - 13 words:** If your brain was chocolate it wouldn't fill an M&M.

**14 - 19 words:** Come on! You've got the general idea but you still need to improve just a little itty bit to get full marks.

**20 plus words:** My god, you've cracked it. Now go do some work. Fly my pretty, fly!

**Last week's solution:**

The seven letter word was:

**MISTAKE**

Congratulations if you got mistake, cos you didn't make one!

Other words included: aims, aits, amie, amies, amis, ates, east, eats, etas, ikat, ikats, kaes, kame, kames, kami, kats, maes, maist, make, makes, mask, mast, mate, mates, mats, meat, meats, mesa, meta, misate, miseat, sake, saki, same, samek,

samite, sate, satem, sati, seam, seat, seta, sika, sima, skat, skate, stake, steak, steam, take, takes, tame, tames, tamis, tams, task, teak, teaks, team, teams, teas.

**How to play**

Using the letters given, not more than once, make as many words as possible. They must be at least four or more letters long and each word you come up with must include the central letter.

Capitalised words, conjugated verbs (past tense etc), adverbs ending in "-ly", comparatives and superlatives are disallowed.

# H to the o, r, o, sizzle copes – it's the Horoscopes



**Aquarius**

The doctor shoves his endoscope forcefully down your throat, causing you to gag quite violently. After a

brief and sarcastic apology, Dr McGough peels off his name badge revealing his true identity: Dr Wibblechunder! DUN DUN DUUN! The worm inside you is forced deeper and deeper until your big toe becomes a third (some might say fourth! ZOMG!) eye.



**Pisces**

That itch? Get it sorted. NOW. Here's 2 ccs of Shut Up Solution – take it now and come back a week later and I'll

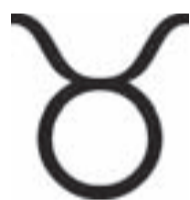
administer you with some Silence Solution. Swallow this: it'll sort out that horrible rash all over your face. What do you mean it's not a rash? Oh. Well, here's the number of the finest surgeon this side of the Mekong Delta. Tell him your affliction and he'll rip you up.



**Aries**

Your local is selling a neat variety of tipple that drinks itself for you, thus reducing crime in your region, because

let's face it: alcohol + piracy + global warming + smacking children + not recycling + lollipop ladies + taking two penny sweets and only paying for one penny sweet = terrorism



**Taurus**

This week your every move is accompanied by a soundtrack, just to the rear left of your ear. Cycling

to university, Eye of the Tiger spurs you on. In lectures, Twinkle Twinkle sends you into a soft slumber and talking to the lady who works behind Union reception, Al Green serenades both your ears' with his soulful tunes and blissful words.



**Gemini**

This week you crash out on your girlfriend's sofa, naked and covered in broken silicon chips. Upon waking

in the morning, you find your girlfriend savagely deformed, strung up by her tendons on the nearest curtain rail. Police lights throw the room into a red-blue sea of muffled colours. Do you, A: hide in the chimney, B: Eat any traces of your girlfriend, or C: implode.



**Cancer**

Haggis becomes a worldwide phenomenon overnight. Critics call it a "snowballing success of gigantic

proportions." The Daily Sausage Roll proclaims it the most significant "work since Gandhi himself devoured a Cornish Pasty. Scotland's coming for you. Be afraid.



**Leo**

Version 6.1 of Bilgepump 2000 turns up just in time for your dinner. Sneakily, whilst your mammy isn't

looking, you whip it out and turn your plate of food into a banquet fit for Jady Goody. Your cruel trick isn't helping your mother though, is it? Be honest. Tell her that her cooking sucks balls. Watch her world shatter in front of you It's for the best. The bitch'll get through it. Ho.



**Virgo**

This week you're accused of being an "infiltrating philistine" by the National Government of

International Art Critics Anonymous. The accusation leads to several High Court appearances and also a Petty Claims Court appearance after you lose a suit button in a brief scuffle with your opponent's lawyer George Awe-Ell Van Goff.



**Libra**

Blud, I can hear them sirens coming. BRAP. I can here them sirens coming. BRAP. FIX UP LOOK SHARP,

you don' wanna see me get up in the hills and shizzle you with a thunderous parp. I'm just a bizzle in the corner learnin' me A-Levels in Maths, English and Sciences. BRAP.



**Scorpio**

"Excuse me?" "What's that?" "W-What?" "That..." "W-w-this? Er... Well, you know. I

stumbled." "Stumbled? How in blue jebus?" "You know, member... on vacuum. Shit happens. Minor accident, nothing to see here." "You bloody sexual deviant you. WINK. WINK."



**Sagittarius**

This is a SUPER horoscope. SUPER in the sense of capitalised letter, SUPER Mario mushrooms and SUPED up TVR

automobiles. If you consume this horoscope, you'll be dancing on fire for the rest of the day, shooting hoops and going for the GOAL! Now, GO! Be young, free, frivolous and enjoy yourself whilst you can before your SUPERpower runs out! Huzzah!



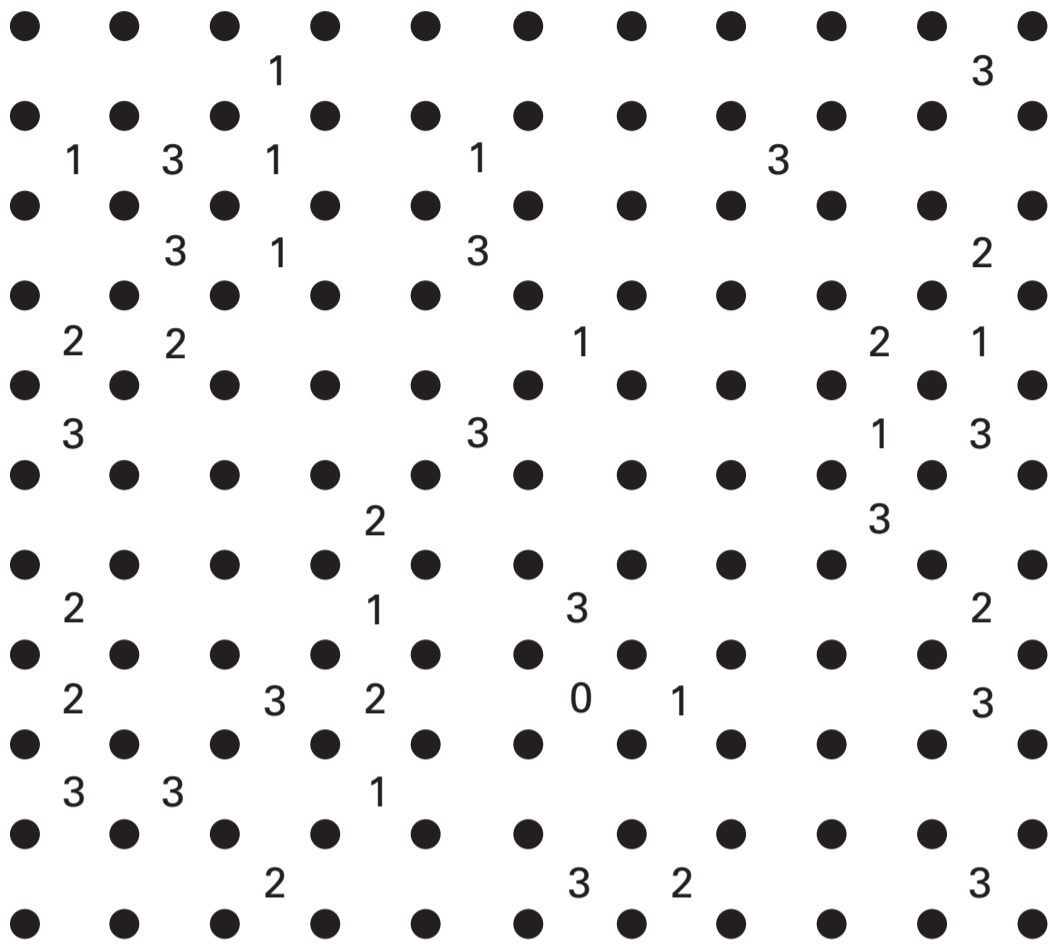
**Capricorn**

Smegma. It's been suggested that the next horoscope be written about the word in question, however I'm going

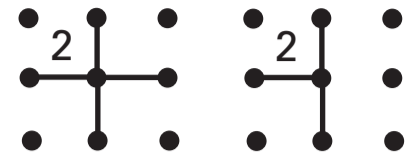
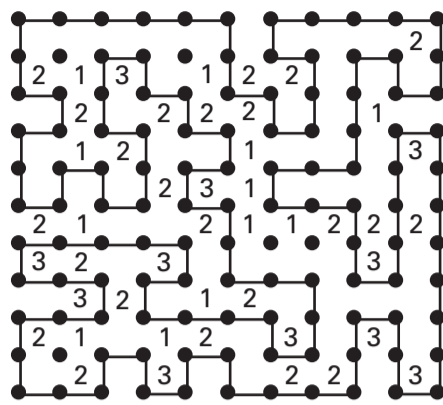
to flat out deny this opportunity by casting my Editorial Powers of Jupiter spell. 9 beats 6. HA! Come back for more when you think you've got enough hair on your chest.

# Slitherlink 1,393

## Slitherlink 13 – Hard

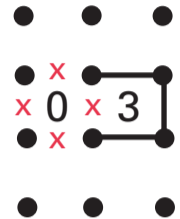


## Answer for Slitherlink 12

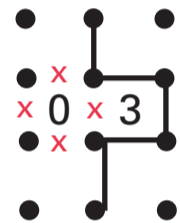


Squares are not allowed either. There are never cells containing the number 4 in Slitherlink.

So, where do you start? The most common place to start on a Slitherlink grid is by drawing crosses around any zeros. Drawing crosses is purely done to so that you know where there can't possibly be a line. So, take the pattern below as an example. Begin by drawing crosses, then by filling in some lines:



Now the lines can only continue in the following directions:



## How to play:

Crudely speaking, Slitherlink is similar to Minesweeper mixed with a dash of Sudoku.

The object of the game is to draw lines between the dots to create one long, and most importantly, looping line. It should have no start or finish; just like an elastic band.

Each number indicates how many lines should be drawn around it, for example:



Cells which don't contain a number can be surrounded by any number of lines.

Remember, the line must form a loop, so the line cannot branch. The following situations are not allowed:

Yeah, we realised that we printed the answer to last week's Slitherlink in the same issue.

# Logic Puzzle: Southside Sardines

Using the clues and logical deduction alone, work out how all the people involved in the match relate to each other. The puzzle can be solved without guesswork. Make use of the grid to mark the combinations that you know.

Ensure that you read the clues carefully. They can sometimes reveal multiple hints! Remember that elimination of alternatives is a key method. That is where the grid is so important - it allows you to see the possibilities left.

What is the number and floor of the room occupied by each student and how long will their course last.

2. Jane will be at uni for twice as long as the student in room number 19.

4. Daniel will be at uni for three years longer than Louisa. Daniel is on the fourth floor and Louisa is in room 5.

Read through each clue and make any obvious or stated deductions. Find the corresponding row and column on the grid and place a tick for 'Yes' in the box, and a cross for 'No' in the cells next to this one vertically and horizontally.

Five students from Imperial live in a newly rebuilt halls of residence near college. There are twenty rooms per floor (they really stuff them in!), so anyone in a flat with a "higher number than" isn't necessarily on a higher floor.

1. Jane's flat is on the floor below Brian's.

3. Brian won't be at university for nine years. His room has a number eight lower than the occupied by the student who lives on the seventh floor.

5. The student in room number 13 will be in uni for fewer than six years.

(Any similarities to persons living or dead are purely coincidental!)

	ROOM 3	ROOM 5	ROOM 11	ROOM 13	ROOM 19	THIRD	FOURTH	FIFTH	SIXTH	SEVENTH	1 YEAR	2 YEARS	3 YEARS	6 YEARS	9 YEARS
BRIAN															
DANIEL															
IAGO															
JANE															
LOUISA															
1 YEAR															
2 YEARS															
3 YEARS															
6 YEARS															
9 YEARS															
THIRD															
FOURTH															
FIFTH															
SIXTH															
SEVENTH															

### Last time's Solution:

Name	Job	Salary	Reason for Quitting
Henry	Hedgefund	£46k	Nervous Breakdown
Alex	Actuary	£50k	Pockets full of money
John	Broker	£42k	Lost company £12m
Akira	Accountant	£65k	Killed boss
Pablo	Trading Analyst	£39k	Lost all his hair



**This week's texts:**

"I am your father - Reg."

"To the person in Room No 5313 please stop humping at 1 am in the morning. The whole corridor can hear you!"

"I know where Davy is! from CC"

"Borja, encuentro su acento muy sexual. ¡Quisiera atarle para arriba y lamarse el dedo del pie!"

"My senior tutor sucks balls and blows goats and I'd really like to make him eat my textbook: Young and Freedman University Physics!"

"I just fell off my bike texting you! Bastards!"

"Aero 4th years have finished all their exams - congratulations to you all, no more exams EVER!! Love from SL xxx"

**07980 148 785**

**TEXT US!**

**WE'RE LONELY**

**IN OUR**

**BASEMENT!**

## News in brief

### Hyde Park Relays

Tom Ward

It's the time of year for you to dig out your running shoes, get back into shape and get ready for the best race of the year, the Hyde Park Relays. This year is the 60th anniversary so it will be bigger and better than ever before, not only because the standard there will be an even bigger range of standards (first-time runners to future internationals) and the party at DB's will be a blur in your memory but also because instead of boring baguettes with jam, there will be a scrumptious curry with jacket potatoes to look forward to, as you huff and puff your way around the scenic Hyde Park course.

If that hasn't whetted your appetite there are prizes for the first internal Men's and Women's teams, so you can show your rival department/sports team/mum who's boss. However if you can't quite manage this, there is always booby prizes for the last team in!

800 runners will be coming from all over the country as well as France, Holland, Germany, Italy and Poland to name just a few. It's a great chance

to test yourself and to meet some new people. The night afterwards is probably the only time in the year you will see the Union full and all the crazy foreign teams will make it unmissable.

So get some friends together and put your names down for the Hyde Park Relays. The Women's race will consist of 4 runners, running 3k each and the Men's will consist of 6 runners running 5k each. Mixed teams (any combination) can also participate in the Men's race. The races kick off at 2pm on 9th February by the bandstand in Hyde Park. Registration is from 10:30-12:00noon in Beit where you get your numbers and maps of the course. More details, along with the entry form, can be found on the event website: <http://www.union.ic.ac.uk/acc/hpr>

The entry deadline is 2nd February, so don't delay! Get your form filled in and take it to the Union reception (first floor of Union Building, on the left) with an accompanying cheque. Forms are also available in the reception and in the Student Activities Centre. So get prepared: Hyde Park Relays, 9th February 2008.

# Determined IC ladies progress to Quarter Finals!

## Hockey

Imperial Ladies 2nd	3
Kings Medicals 3rd	2

Amanda Cheung

Sunday 20th January marked the start of the IC Ladies' 2nds' campaign in the ULU Reserve Cup competition. It was to be a busy day at Harlington with two IC Medics' teams, four IC teams and one RSM team playing in ULU Hockey Cup matches. With the IC Men's 2nds scaring the opposition away and taking an early walkover, the rest of ICHC travelled by luxury coach to Harlington. The return of Spanner in goal, who incidentally has never lost a Cup match, meant that the ladies were in high spirits and ready to face GKT 3rds, who are currently bottom of the league above us in BUSA.

The game went underway with both teams making positive starts. It was clear from the beginning that this was to be a close match, with both teams playing a similar level of hockey. IC had a few close chances early on, with AA, Isabel and Brownie all seeing op-

portunities to score. Before long, some good, smooth stick passing down the right by Hoover and Isabel resulted in IC drawing first blood, with a goal neatly slotted in by Captain Ghostbuster. GKT worked their way back with some good play through midfield but Spanner's deadly habit of charging and diving prevented them from scoring. IC had another good period of play and Spandex came close to finding the back of the net. Shortly before half time, GKT rudely secured a goal from a short corner having just injured our very own Unicycle from a previous unsuccessful short corner routine.

After some inspiring team talk at half time, IC started the second half on fire, bursting out of the blocks with some slick two-touch hockey and concentrating on moving the ball early as well as taking advantage of the whole width of the pitch to bypass the opposition's midfield. Both teams made good chances to score but it was IC who broke the deadlock, with Brownie scoring a goal which originated from a perfectly executed short corner routine. IC held on to the lead for a while but with 15 minutes to go, GKT equalised after a period of sustained pressure, despite the best efforts of Span-

ner in the IC goal.

The battling spirit of the IC Ladies came through, with a rallying call from 3 Times a Lady in defence, spurring the whole team on. IC kept their heads up and after numerous unsuccessful attacks, were finally rewarded a goal, with Brownie scoring her second of the match thanks to some smooth passing through midfield.

Despite several hair-raising moments during the dying minutes of the game, solid defending from Dominator, Thombelina, Unicycle and 3 Times a Lady meant that IC managed to hold on to the lead and prevented the match from reaching penalty flicks, emerging from the final whistle victorious.

Thanks must go to our most vocal supporter of the day, Mountie, for shouting invaluable instructions, making effective substitutions and generally spurring the team on throughout the match.

With the mission accomplished, it was down to the pub for some celebratory drinks. 'Man of the Match' was awarded to Spandex for excellent all round effort. 'Twat of the Match' was Unicycle for injuring her own teammate from a free hit... after the full time whistle was blown!

## Imperial Team of the Week



### Hockey Women's 1st

A great 7 - 0 win this week with only 8 players. Sorry about the picture!



Winding up that dynamo arm before smacking the ball for six

## Fixtures and Results

in association with Sports Partnership



### Saturday 19th January

#### Football – ULU

King's Men's 1st	2
ICU Men's 1st	1

RUMS Men's 1st	N/A
ICU Men's 2nd	N/A

ICU Men's 3rd	0
IC Medics Men's 1st	2

ICU Men's 4th	5
King's Medical Men's 3rd	2

ICU Men's 5th	5
Royal Veterinary Men's 1st	2

ICU Men's 6th	N/A
Imperial Wye Men's 1st	N/A

King's Medical Men's 5th	N/A
ICU Men's 7th	N/A

### Sunday 20th January

#### Football – ULU

ICU Women's 1st	0
UCL Women's 1st	4

#### Hockey – ULU

ICU Men's 3rd	0
St. Barts Men's 3rd	1

ICU Women's 2nd	3
King's Medicals Women's 3rd	2

#### Lacrosse – ULU

ICU Mixed 1st	N/A
LSE Mixed 1st	N/A

### Monday 21st January

#### Basketball – ULU

St. George's Hospital Men's 1st	N/A
ICU Men's 1st	N/A

#### Squash – ULU

RUMS Women's 1st	N/A
ICU Women's 1st	N/A

#### Volleyball – ULU

ICU Mixed 1st	N/A
LSE Mixed 1st	N/A

#### Water Polo – ULU

ICU Men's 1st	N/A
St. Bart's & Royal London Men's 1st	N/A

### Wednesday 23rd January

#### Fencing

Reading Men's 1st	121
ICU Men's 1st	129

#### Football

ICU Men's 2nd	2
King's Medical Men's 1st	5

Queen Mary Men's 3rd (ULU)	4
ICU Men's 5th (ULU)	0

ICU Men's 7th (ULU)	N/A
RUMS Men's 4th (ULU)	N/A

Portsmouth Women's 2nd	Cancelled
ICU Women's 1st	Cancelled

#### Hockey – ULU

ICU Men's 1st	N/A
St. George's Men's 1st	N/A

Royal Veterinary Men's 1st	N/A
ICU Men's 2nd	N/A

Goldsmith's Men's 1st	4
ICU Men's 3rd	3

St. George's Men's 3rd	N/A
ICU Men's 4th	N/A

ICU Women's 1st (BUSA)	7
University of Sussex Women's 1st (BUSA)	0

University of Sussex Women's 2nd (BUSA)	0
ICU Women's 2nd (BUSA)	0

#### Netball

ICU 1st (ULU)	50
Royal Veterinary 1st (ULU)	16

ICU 2nd	N/A
St. Bart's and the Royal 2nd	N/A

#### Rugby Union

ICU Women's 1st	Walkover to IMPERIAL
Queen Mary Women's 1st	

#### Table Tennis

University of Portsmouth Men's 1st	0
ICU Men's 1st	10

#### Tennis

Kingston University Men's 1st	4
ICU Men's 2nd	6

ICU Women's 1st	10
Reading Women's 1st	0

#### Volleyball

UCL Men's 1st	N/A
ICU Men's 1st	N/A

ICU Women's 1st	3
LSE Women's 1st	0

### Saturday 26th January

#### Football – ULU

ICU Men's 1st vs Royal Holloway Men's 2nd	
Queen Mary Men's 1st vs ICU Men's 2nd	

ICU Men's 3rd vs Goldsmiths Men's 1st	
Royal Holloway Men's 4th vs ICU Men's 5th	

ICU Men's 6th vs St Barts & Royal Men's 4th	
UCL Women's 1st vs ICU Women's 1st	

### Monday 28th January

#### Netball – ULU

ICU 2nd vs Queen Mary 3rd	
King's College 4th vs ICU 3rd	

#### Volleyball – ULU

ICU Mixed 1st vs LSE Mixed 1st	
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# Winter sports, without hurt



**Hannah Barr**  
Energia Fitness Instructor

injuries are sprains and strains. That's because your muscles never completely warm up and cold muscles are more prone to injury. Skiing and snowboarding both place heavy demand on the knees, ankles, and feet and these are the three most common areas for sprains. Many winter sports injuries happen at the end of the day, when people over-exert themselves to finish that one last run before allowing themselves to indulge in the après ski activities. The majority of these injuries can easily be prevented if participants prepare for their sport by keeping in good physical condition, staying alert and stopping when they are tired or in pain.

Follow these tips for preventing winter sports injuries:

**Keep in shape and condition muscles before taking part in winter activities**

Pre-training should include aerobic exercise to ensure fitness levels can cope with the intensity during winter sport participation. Make sure you also include a resistance routine to strengthen the muscles in advance of the daily work out they'll be getting. The best thing to do is book in for a sports specific personal programme at the gym. You should expect to cover squats, lunges, core conditioning and flexibility. As well as having programmes of differing intensity set up for you on the CV equipment.

**Warm up thoroughly before starting out. Cold muscles, tendons and ligaments are vulnerable to injury.**

Just because you are off on a sporting holiday does not mean basic procedures you would automatically include in a gym session should be removed. By the way, wearing heavy duty winter attire does not constitute a full warm up!

**Wear appropriate protective gear, including goggles, helmets, gloves and padding.**

**Invest in a lesson or two**

If you're new to the sport (swallow your pride if this is necessary) take a lesson from a qualified instructor before you get started. You will have a much more enjoyable trip (sorry,

hopefully you won't be tripping anywhere) if you take the opportunity to learn the ropes first. Learning how to fall correctly and safely can reduce the risk of injury.

**Wear several layers of light, loose and water- and wind-resistant clothing for warmth and protection.**

Layering allows you to accommodate your body's constantly changing temperature. Wear proper footwear that provides warmth and dryness, as well as ample ankle support.

**Pay attention to warnings about upcoming storms and severe drops in temperature to ensure safety.**

No amount of fitness training will ensure you survive a night in a snow hole!! Although warm clothing will help!

**Seek shelter and medical attention immediately if you, or anyone with you, is experiencing hypothermia or frostbite.**

**Drink plenty of water before, during and after activities.**

Again, do what you would normally do in the gym (those of you who don't hydrate during work outs ignore the 'normal' comment).

**Avoid alcohol consumption.**

Skiing and snowboarding do not mix well with alcohol or drugs. Beware of medicines or drugs that impair the senses or make you drowsy. You can still drink alcohol, just not at the same time, which would be tricky anyway!

**Avoid participating in sports when you are in pain or exhausted.**

If you're tired, stop and rest. Fatigue is a risk factor for injuries. Take this opportunity to watch others, maybe pick up some tips/ideas to try later, and enjoy other aspects of the trip such as socialising!

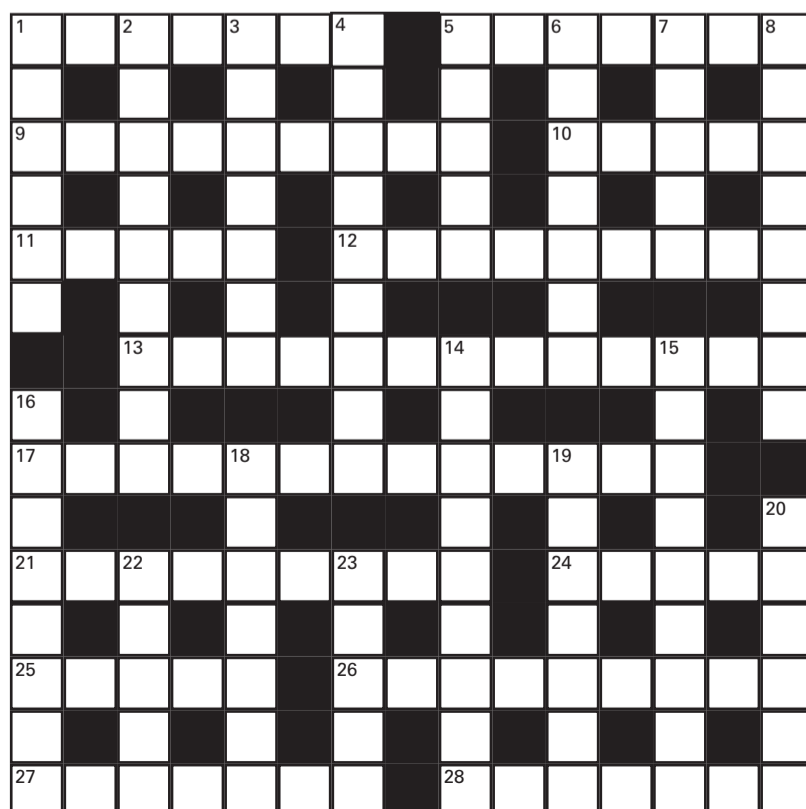
Winter sports are a whole lot of fun and wouldn't you be annoyed if you had to sit the season/holiday out because you sustained an injury? Be smart and be ready for a season of adventure and fun and leave the injuries to someone else. Whether you are skiing or snowboarding, or participating in any other winter sports these common winter sports injuries can be avoided, well some of the time! Good luck.

## Sports league

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	%	FI
1 IC Netball 1st	9	9	0	0	488	254	234	100	45
2 IC Squash Men's 1st	9	9	0	0	45	0	45	100	45
3 IC Tennis Men's 2nd	9	9	0	0	72	18	54	100	45
4 IC Tennis Women's 1st	9	8	1	0	66	23	43	89	42
5 IC Hockey Men's 1st	9	7	1	1	32	15	17	78	33
6 IC Rugby Union Men's 1st	10	8	0	2	244	109	135	80	32
7 IC Squash Men's 2nd	9	7	0	2	30	15	15	78	27
8 IC Fencing Men's 2nd	5	5	0	0	660	525	135	100	25
9 IC Volleyball Women's 1st	5	5	0	0	14	5	9	100	25
10 ICSM Netball 2nd	8	6	0	2	226	147	79	75	22
11 IC Volleyball Men's 1st	6	5	0	1	10	2	8	83	21
12 IC Rugby Union Men's 2nd	9	5	2	2	220	138	82	56	21
13 IC Football Men's 1st	8	3	4	1	14	6	8	38	19
14 IC Fencing Women's 1st	7	5	0	2	899	735	164	71	17
15 ICSM Hockey Women's 1st	9	5	1	3	54	20	34	56	15
16 IC Football Women's 1st	6	3	2	1	7	4	3	50	15
17 ICSM Football Men's 1st	8	3	3	2	13	12	1	38	13
18 IC Hockey Women's 1st	9	4	2	3	34	29	5	44	12
19 ICSM Bad'ton Women's 1st	4	3	0	1	22	10	14	75	11
20 IC Rugby Union Women's 1st	2	2	0	0	50	5	45	100	10
21 ICSM Netball 1st	8	4	1	3	278	279	-1	50	10
22 IC Badminton Men's 1st	9	5	0	4	41	31	10	56	9
23 ICSM Hockey Men's 2nd	9	5	0	4	22	21	1	56	9
24 IC Lacrosse Women's 1st	7	4	0	3	51	49	2	57	8
25 IC Netball 2nd	7	4	0	3	205	165	40	57	8
26 ICSM Rugby Union Men's 3rd	7	4	0	3	197	109	88	57	8
27 IC Table Tennis Women's 1st	5	3	0	2	4	11	-7	60	7
28 IC Waterpolo Men's 1st	2	1	1	0	17	14	3	50	7
29 IC Basketball Men's 1st	3	2	0	1	207	176	31	67	6
30 IC Badminton Men's 2nd	9	4	1	4	35	37	-2	44	6
31 IC Hockey Men's 2nd	9	4	1	4	43	23	20	44	6
32 IC Hockey Men's 3rd	9	4	1	4	17	17	0	44	6
33 IC Table Tennis Men's 1st	8	4	0	4	78	58	20	50	4
34 ICSM Hockey Women's 2nd	9	3	2	4	28	40	-12	33	3
35 IC Squash Men's 3rd	4	2	0	2	8	4	4	50	2
36 IC Rugby Union Men's 3rd	9	4	0	5	165	147	18	44	0
37 ICSM Hockey Men's 3rd	4	1	1	2	12	9	3	25	-1
38 ICSM Hockey Men's 1st	9	3	1	5	20	35	-15	33	-3
39 IC Squash Women's 1st	7	2	1	4	12	16	-4	29	-4
40 IC Fencing Men's 1st	6	2	0	4	682	721	-39	33	-6
41 IC Hockey Women's 2nd	9	2	2	5	11	39	-28	22	-6
42 ICSM Netball 3rd	7	2	0	5	132	178	-46	29	-10
43 ICSM Rugby Men's 2nd	10	3	0	7	152	273	-121	30	-13
44 IC Badminton Women's 1st	7	1	1	5	19	37	-18	14	-13
45 IC Hockey Men's 4th	8	2	0	6	10	22	-12	25	-14
46 ICSM Hockey Women's 3rd	8	2	0	6	7	20	-13	25	-14
47 ICSM Rugby Union Men's 1st	8	2	0	6	133	239	-106	25	-14
48 ICSM Football Men's 2nd	5	0	1	4	9	17	-8	0	-14
49 IC Football Men's 3rd	9	1	1	7	11	31	-20	11	-21
50 IC Tennis Men's 1st	9	1	1	7	26	64	-38	11	-21
51 ICSM Badminton Men's 1st	7	0	0	7	12	44	-32	0	-28
52 IC Football Men's 2nd	9	0	1	8	10	31	-21	0	-30

## Crossword No. 1,393

Answers to: sudoku.felix@imperial.ac.uk



**ACROSS**

- 1 Varied plunger head East (7)
- 5 Bird needs directional permit (7)
- 9 Rejected inheritance without his fruit (9)
- 10 Burnt-out stadium where we aren't let in (5)
- 11 Walk haughtily in East Ruthenia (5)
- 12 Scrap an overdue attempt (9)
- 13 Back-scratching association for elderly children (3,3,7)
- 17 Fear of weird plummy initials (13)
- 21 Consequences following calculations (9)
- 24 Extra in the work of Dorothy Perkins (5)
- 25 Wretch eavesdrops in the church's centre (5)
- 26 Extended organ falls flat (9)
- 27 Italian town holds a peculiar nameless interset (7)
- 28 Endless behind shattered by reprisal (7)

**DOWN**

- 1 Viking sweet (6)
- 2 Parson's debts on behalf of others (9)
- 3 Insulted by hollow doctorates all over the place (7)
- 4 Accusatory author (5,4)
- 5 Endless hate mangled by ancient horse (5)
- 6 Certain about original male insect (7)
- 7 Nothing follows the branch of purgatory (5)
- 8 Kazakh waiters flounder while doing aquatic sports (5,3)
- 14 His plot is similar to yours (9)
- 15 Greek gods have, in mosaic, mainly poise; no eggheads (9)
- 16 Trek Puma designed for wealthier customers (8)
- 18 Big ship displays generosity (7)
- 19 "I'm hot - epidemic" reveals ancient doctor (7)
- 20 Mourn over autopsy of headless caregiver (6)
- 22 Serio- (5)
- 23 Damp lettuce provides more than is needed (5)

Hi there. Just dropping in to say that the last four weeks have posed me a real Di-Emma. Get it? That's what happens to you when you play with words as a hobby. Oh well - long live the competition!

Incidentally, this week's winners weren't Di-Emma I'm afraid. The lucky winner pulled out of the hat this week was in fact a group of friends by the collective name: **The New Jiggers!** Congratulations! Keep those entries coming in everyone.

**Enoch**

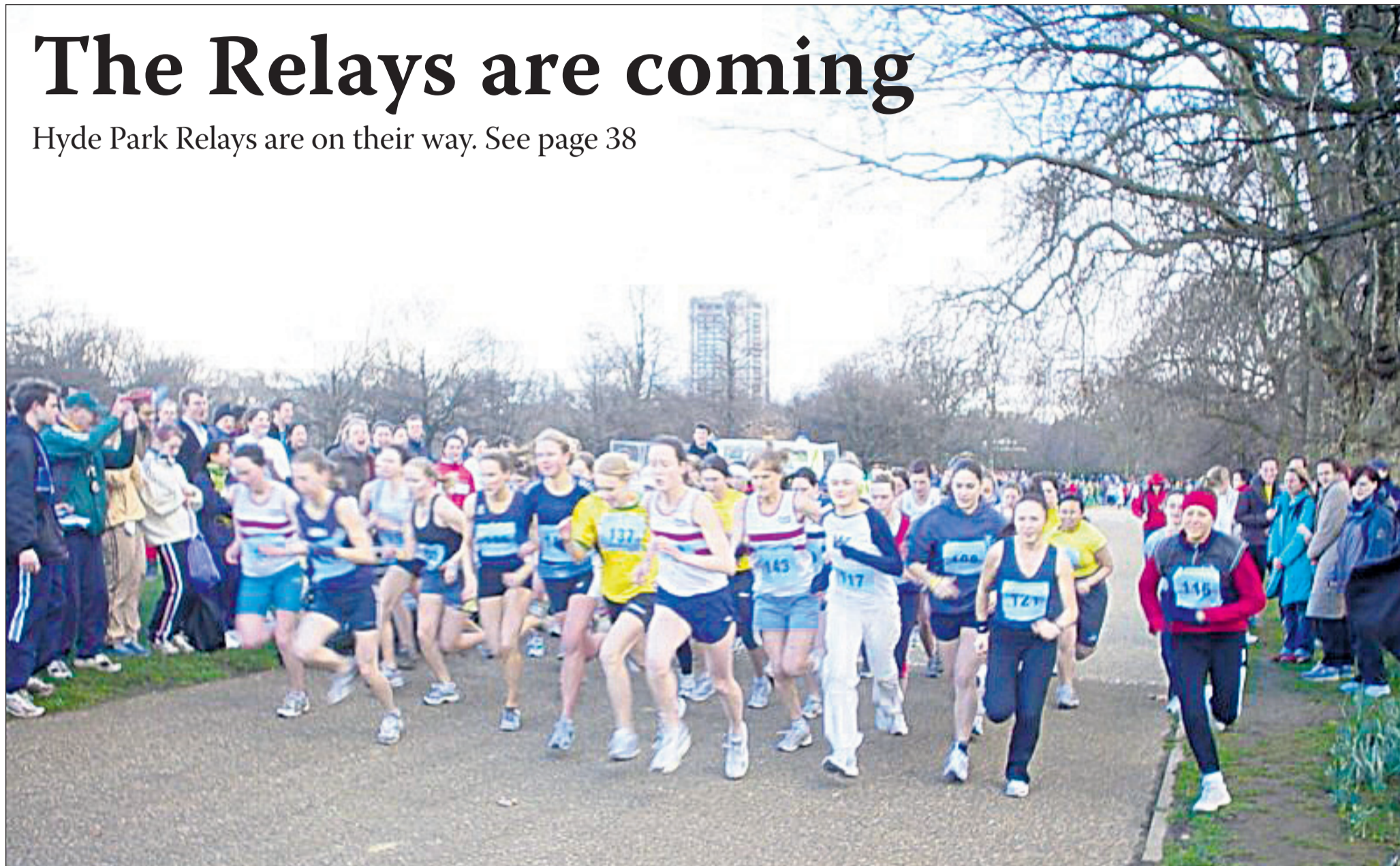
Solution to Crossword 1,392





## The Relays are coming

Hyde Park Relays are on their way. See page 38



## Medicals' weekend team continues good form

Rugby Union  
 London 3NW



Imperial Medicals 1st	39
Hampstead Men's 1st	19

Jeremy Bartosiak-Jentys

The Medicals entertained Hampstead at Twickenham looking to cement 2nd position in the London 3NW table whereas, the visitors, reeling after a 17-7 defeat to the Medicals earlier in the season, arrived fired up and seeking revenge. Skipper Austin Dekker selected a familiar looking side with the exception of fresher Ed Pickles, fresh back from injury, in the front row and hooker Peter Russell, available for the first time this season, on the bench.

Despite the heavy mid-week rain the Teddington pitch was, as ever, in superb condition allowing for the open, running game the Medicals favour. However, the resolute visitors and a referee seemingly gripped with the minutiae of the game meant that the first half was repeatedly punctuated by set pieces and penalties. The referee's whistle was to allow the Medicals their first opportunity to open the scoring when he adjudged the visitor's backline to be offside at the ruck. Directly in front of the posts and 30 metres out

the penalty caused centre Dan Neville little trouble as his sweetly struck effort sailed over the posts. Almost immediately Hampstead were awarded two chances to score penalties, however, the visitor's kicker pulled both penalties wide of the left hand upright.

With both sides unable to string phases together the game deteriorated into an attritional affair with every metre keenly contested as the set piece became increasingly important. In this respect the Medicals were able to hold their own in the scrum and disrupt the visitor's lineout, whilst Ruairidh Crawford and Peter O'Neill kept the Medicals lineout in good order. Proceedings were brought to life by a piece of exceptional Medicals play. From a lineout on the Hampstead ten metre line the ball was taken up by James Saffin and the resulting ruck superbly cleared out by the back row. Quick ball from Tom Maynard allowed the backline to move the ball wide where Martin Borthwick, who had cut a superb line from full-back, was fed by Graham Sidorowicz. Neat interplay between Borthwick, Sam Codrington and Joe Codrington resulted in the fly-half able to power his way over into the corner. Neville masterfully added the extras.

Now more established in the game the home side began exerting more pressure on the Hampstead defence. Using the strong left to right wind Joe

Codrington and Dan Neville kept the visitors pinned in their twenty-two with an accurate kicking game. Chris Hallewell was able to steal a Hampstead lineout 10 metres out from their line. With a huge overlap to his right Francois Tudor chose to go for the line himself. Despite being hauled down just short Tudor was, rather fortuitously, able to shovel the ball back to Borthwick who, making light of a smack to the face, crossed under the posts. Neville again made no mistake with the conversion.

As the half-time whistle blew the Medicals knew they had set a platform on which to build for the second half but were as yet not playing to the standard they are capable of. Kevan Bell implored his charges to string phases together and look to play with more confidence in attack.

The coach's words were clearly taken to heart as the Medicals started the second period in electric form. Immediately from the restart the Medicals become more inventive in attack with forwards and backs alike cutting

imaginative running lines and looking to offload at every opportunity. The home side's play forced the visitors to concede numerous penalties, which when asked to by his captain, Neville steered into the corners or successfully kicked between the posts. Winning quick ruck ball and playing with an air of assurance the Medicals soon crossed the tryline again when Austin Dekker received the ball 5 metres out and dived over to the right of the posts. Neville again made no mistake with the boot.



Superman!