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THE FELIX

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Student Newspaper of Imperial College

BSE - CJD link.

Researchers are close to a BSE and CJD link. *Felix* explores the ramifications for us and Europe.

1997 and all that.

Hong Kong - exotic city of the Orient, but for how much longer? A local look at the city and its future.



In Something for the Weekend this week: Creepy Crawlies, the Big Bang, Salad and As You Like It at the RSC.

Medics' forum angered by College

KENT YIP

Last Friday, students from St Mary's Hospital Medical School and Charing Cross and Westminster Medical School, the two founding members of the new Imperial College School of Medicine, came together for a briefing on their future.

The purpose of this 'Away Day', organised by the student unions of both medical schools, had been to introduce students to the new medical curriculum and to obtain feedback from them. The Medics voiced their concerns about the transition to the new course. Whilst it has been decided that the present BSc and 2nd MB students will continue with the old clinical course next year, the current freshers, on completing their 2nd MB in 1998, will be transferred to the new course; prior to their clinical training, they will have to undertake a short course designed to overcome their lack of knowledge in certain clinical matters.

One of the main feature of the new syllabus is its emphasis on early clinical experience. Some students were sceptical about the attractiveness of the new course to potential medical applicant, who might regard themselves as guinea pigs. Dr Rory Shaw, who was in charge of the new curriculum, disagreed, voicing that many would see this as a new opportunity, and he would be worried if sixth formers were not prepared to take it up.

The possible shortage of College accommodation for medical students due to the sale of one the hall of resi-

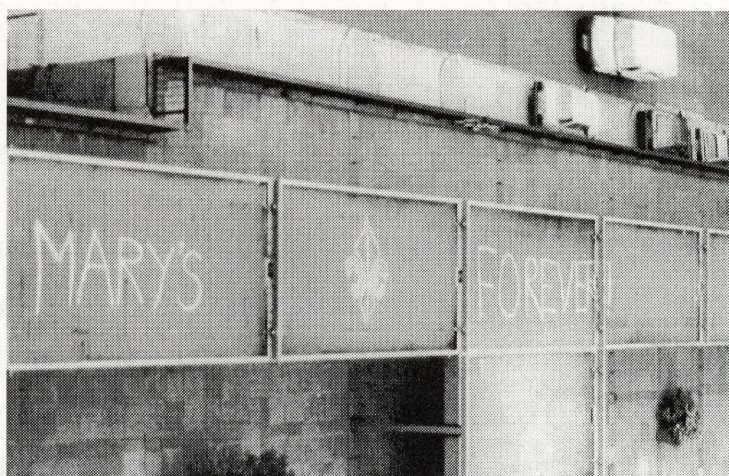


PHOTO: IVAN CHAN

A previous reaction by the students of St Mary's to the College's plans for the medical school. New signs, put up by the Estates Division at St Mary's as part of the Campus Renaissance, have also been vandalised.

dence of CXWMS was another issue that caused concern among the student body. Sami Ansari, president of Mary's Student Union, questioned whether final year clinical students would still be guaranteed a place at Wilson House. Ian Caldwell, Director of Estate, assured him that "any promise made in the prospectus will be fully abided by"; he did, however, emphasised that at present only students new to the College were guaranteed a place in the halls of residence.

Questions about the sporting activities of medical students after the merger were also raised, particularly the time involved in inter-campus travelling (as dissection will take place at Charing Cross Hospital) would not only increase the expenditure of future medics at ICSM, but also leave little time for participation

in extra-curricular activities, especially in sports. Heated debate ensued after it had been announced by Eric Allsop, the president of IC Student Union, that the medics would no longer have their own team in BUSA competitions. The possible sale of Teddington, currently St Mary's sports ground, caused uproar among the medics from Mary's. The problem was further compacted by the lack of solid funding for the new sports hall promised by the College.

The lack of social space in the new BMS building was, as expected, heavily criticised. The suggestion by some that the building was constructed primarily for the purpose of holding international conferences was forcefully refuted by Mr Caldwell. Demands were made to recognise the special needs of the medics, particularly their close-knit social structure.

This has been a common concern throughout the BMS negotiations. Worries about whether the number of bars currently on the South Kensington campus could cope with the massive influx of new customers were evident. Mr Caldwell, in reply, stated that "the College is keen to promote intergration, and there is no reason why there should be a separate medical body." He also cited that the bars in South Ken were currently under-used.

The general feeling among the students after the meeting was that of uncertainty. The impression perceived by some was that the College had rushed things through too quickly, and that they had not listen enough to the students. Sarah Edwards, former president of SMHMS Union, commented that the early departure of Professor Edwards (Principal of ICSM) from the meeting was symptomatic, and did not inspire confidence in the College.

Mary's sports, pages 3 and 14

Inside

NEW SPORTS HALL

College designs for a new sports hall are emerging with a planning application due to be in the second half of November. The original intention of building underneath the recently purchased Prince's Gate Gardens has been abandoned in favour of a facility beneath Prince's Gardens.

College change of heart, and funding plans. page 3

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Arthur D Little

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IC sports going underground

College designs for a new sports hall are emerging with a planning application due to be in the second half of November. The original intention of building underneath the recently purchased Prince's Gate Gardens has been abandoned in favour of a facility beneath Prince's Gardens.

Nick Black, College Estate's Manager, has confirmed that the number of trees in the Northside Gardens means that the Prince's Gardens option is 'technically easier'. The College's million pound purchase will not go to waste though as it will be opened up to all members of College for 'quiet contemplation and study.' College authorities are eager not to antagonise the local residents around the Square since their goodwill is needed for the planned development of the Garden Hall area.

The formal application to Westminster Council Planning Authority follows regular meetings with their town planners and local residents. With the majority of the



Anyone for tennis? The new courts could be six feet under if College plans for a subterranean sports centre come to fruition.

centre due to be built underground the planning implications are less substantial than other College projects. Mr Frank Murray, College's Sport and Leisure Manager, is 'satisfied that we are coming up with a design that will meet the requirement of planners and local residents.'

The National Lottery application, which is being prepared for the capital cost of this multi-million pound project, requires the planning process to be fully completed. The deadline for National Lottery sports applications is 30 April 1997 but College admits that there is no guarantee that

funding will be secured though they are attempting to fill all the criteria.

With public funding dependent on 'community use', College points to the high external usage of the current Sports Centre as proof of its commitment to openness. The fact that over one third of visitors to existing facilities are either local residents or come from local schools will be of assistance in highlighting the difference between IC's application and those by other institutions jumping on the National Lottery bandwagon.

Mr Murray concedes that current indoor sports facilities are not up to scratch, "Whether you look at it now or after the 1998 arrivals, College is very badly off for indoor sports." Since his arrival at College** he has been impressed by the 'real determination' of senior members of the college to make 'decent provision.'

As well as the planning application for the new sports facilities proceeding with designs for new residences to be located beside Linstead Hall.



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IRC Restricted

SARAH EWEN

The Internet Relay Chat software used by staff and students to chat with other users on the Internet all over the world has recently been put under restriction, pending an investigation by the Department of Computing. It appears that allegations of misuse regarding the software have been made against students at Imperial College. Upon logging in to use IRC software, users are informed that due to an investigation into pornographic material being downloaded from the Internet, restrictions have been put in place.

The length of the restriction, or whether it may be permanent, is currently unknown. The topic was discussed at a recent CISSC meeting, however members of staff were unavailable for comment.

UCL Union - Licence Revoked

MARIA IOANNOU

UCL's extended licensing hours were cancelled in early October, after complaints to the police from local residents about rowdy students and street crowds.

The extremely popular Thursday Cocktails Night has already had limits put on it, with a no-guests policy being imposed. Initially, the late-license ban was put on all UCL sites but this has since been modified and the Gordon Street Union building is now allowed to stay open until midnight.

UCL sabbatical Ian Cairns, spoke on the methods that UCL Union have employed to rectify the situation; "We have had a heavy advertising campaign to make students more aware of their attitudes and behav-

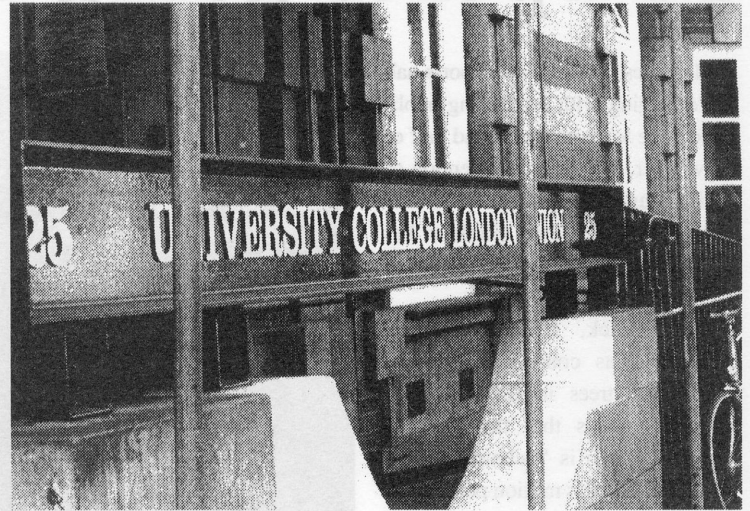


PHOTO: IVAN CHAN

Barred! University College London Union have had their late licence revoked after a flurry of protest from neighbours over noise levels.

Since this step was taken, we residents and the police are very, have had far less complaints from very happy with the situation."

Strikes to paralyse Imperial

AUT ballot and SWSS EGM soon

NEWSTEAM

With balloting on industrial action due to be completed by the 6th November, it appears that a proposed 'day of action' will go ahead as planned. The 19th November is the likely date for a nation-wide higher education strike which would cripple Imperial.

A pay offer of just 1.5% for academic, technical, clerical and academic related staff has been rejected by all the major trade unions associated with higher education. The postal ballot of all union members has included more than 1,000 members of Imperial College staff currently affiliated to the eight unions involved. Local Union officials have suggested to *Felix* that a decision in favour of industrial action is extremely likely with one suggesting that his members will probably "go for it."

While the National Union of Students has offered full support for the action, Imperial College Students Union has been more reticent. Eric Allsop, ICU President, has indicated that it will be up to each individual student to decide whether they want to "continue their education or stay in bed." He went on to emphasise that ICU is an "apolitical organisation" and that support for a staff strike would be a matter of personal choice.

Imperial College Union looks set to enter the debate, despite the attempt by sabbaticals to stay out, with Socialist Student Workers Society expressing an intention to call an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Union. Although it is expected that the one hundred signatures needed to call an EGM will be found, ICU officials feel that the two hundred students needed to make the meeting quorate are unlikely to materialise.

Despite the current attitude of ICU, local officials of the Association of University Teachers are still hoping for student support. They emphasise that the dispute concerns the national underfunding of higher education as well as their own pay deal. It is expected that liaison with ICU will follow today's planned meeting of all Imperial's trade unions.

Both Unison and MSF have over three hundred members currently working at Imperial College, with one MSF official expecting that around two-thirds will vote in the postal ballot. The 19th November is almost certain to see the first strike held at Imperial since the 4th December 1991, when industrial action over plans to privatise Security received widespread support.

Residence finances under scrutiny

JACKIE SKEATE

The controversy surrounding the security situation at the College's Clayponds residential estate has been put in a new light this week with accounts showing that College residences produced a net surplus of over £1.5 million. This money, mostly profits from conference lettings over the summer, has gone into the residences' short to medium term maintenance and renovations fund.

As reported in last week's *Felix*, residents have been complaining about the amount of money being spent on proper security at the estate. However, though the introduction of extra security patrols since then has decreased the number of burglaries at Clayponds, they have not stopped completely - a bike was stolen from inside a building there only a few days ago.

At Clayponds, College Estates still insist that deadlocks and window bars, one of the proposed solutions, would constitute a fire risk. Also, they still suffer from ridicule over their suggestion that students were not able to use the locks on their doors and windows properly. The cost of fixing these devices is just £33,400 for the entire estate, yet other more expensive and less urgent improvements seem to have priority.

One of the residents who had his room broken into earlier in the term commented on the attitude the Estates Division seemed to have had

towards the whole business: "It seems to take ages for anything to be done. They were also very patronising... implying that students couldn't understand how to use a door lock. It's the cleaners who leave the doors open." Another resident commented on the new floor coverings "If they're so keen on replacing carpets, they should have started at Southside."

Minor renovations are being considered in other halls, though with the aid of external funding. It is thought that some time dependent funding is being sought from local councils for essential "sanitary and kitchen improvements" in Evelyn Gardens, though Kensington & Chelsea officials would not confirm this. If this work goes ahead, it could cause substantial disruption to students.

Elsewhere, criticism about the closure of Montpelier hall does not seem to have deterred College from recently spending over a million pounds on the purchase of the freehold of 47 Princes Gate, a building already occupied by College personnel but earmarked for further expansion of administrative personnel according to one College source.

The finances of the College residences have often been questioned by students, though it is well known that surpluses from summer letting subsidise room rents. However, such a large surplus maybe unjustifiable.

Arts Graduate and Government science minister speaks

ANDREW SMITH

The Government Minister responsible for Science and Technology spoke on Wednesday to just over twenty Imperial College students about his work in overseeing a budget of £1,300,000,000. The junior minister insisted that he has one of the largest portfolios of any Government Minister, and that his work is "very exciting."

While previous political speakers have been vilified for expressing positive views toward Europe, Mr Ian Taylor, MBE, MP, forcefully expressed support for the European Union and the European Court of Justice. The MP for Esher, in Surrey, went as far as suggesting that some eurosceptics should be banished into space for their activities.

As the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Science and Technology, he followed the Government line on Europe, insisting that a referendum would only be needed in the event of a Cabinet decision in favour of a single European currency. Mr Taylor went further by



PHOTO: WEI LEE

Trust me, I'm a politician. Ian Taylor, Minister for Science and Technology, speaks to a reduced Conservative Society audience.

dismissing James Goldsmith's of leaving the European Union would be mind-boggling" and that the single market of 360 million people is essential to the UK. Establishing himself as a complete Europhile, Mr Taylor went on to express his support for a stronger Commission, an expansion of the Court of Justice and a European

Rubbishing calls from other Tories to leave Europe completely, the Junior Minister insisted that "the cost

Parliament with more power to scrutinise Brussels.

Concentrating on his current Government responsibility, Mr Taylor explained how he regularly travels the world promoting British science and innovations. Recent trips abroad have persuaded him that this country's 'science base' is in a healthy state, despite others 'focusing only on the negative.' The Science Minister insisted that spending has increased by 10% in real terms in recent years, and that British scientists are amongst the most successful in the world.

The low level of R&D spending by industry in this country does worry the Government, with Mr Taylor suggesting that investment in R&D directly affects the future profitability of a company. The telecom giant Ericsson was praised for spending 15% of sales on research, but Mr Taylor slammed the Chairman of GEC, Lord Weinstock, for spending only 1.5% on research saying that he is "one of the worst managers Britain has ever seen."

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Imperial Discovers New Human – BSE Link

BY JESSICA SHERINGHAM

Researchers at St Mary's, led by our own Professor Collinge, have come up with the strongest evidence yet that eating infected meat products in the 1980s could have caused some cases of Creutzfeld-Jacob Disease (CJD), the human equivalent of BSE. The research seems to vindicate the view across Europe, especially in Germany, that the British beef ban should remain, at least until Britain takes stronger action to eradicate BSE. Furthermore, it is expected to delay the British Government's request that the EU start lifting the ban from certified BSE-free herds in Northern Ireland.

The European Parliament has extended their investigation (into the alleged mis-handling of the matter by Britain and the Commission) in the light of the new findings. The Ministry of Agriculture, however, does not see the evidence of humans appearing to have caught CJD from eating infected beef as confirmation that the Government handling of BSE was at fault. Sarah Atwell, a spokesperson for the Ministry, said that, although these findings are the strongest evidence so far supporting this link, the Collinge research was not totally conclusive.

The development of the new test could be a mixed blessing for the British beef farmers; Philip Saunders, spokesperson for the Meat and Livestock commission, commented that the test could allow a quick diagnosis of BSE and therefore would alleviate the need for unnecessary culling of cattle suspected of having the disease. While this could be the answer for restoring public confidence in beef, it could also reveal more BSE-like diseases in other livestock, such as sheep.

Although scrapie, the sheep form of BSE, has never crossed the species barrier to humans, there is a chance that a cross between BSE and scrapie could be transmissible to humans. In response to a query on testing sheep for a new variant form of scrapie, Mr Saunders replied that "sheep have had scrapie for two-and-a-half centuries with no problems of the disease appearing in humans" and saw it as unlikely that the test on

sheep would reveal any danger to humans.

There have been twelve cases over the last two years of a new strain of CJD, which has new symptoms and seems to target younger people than other, previously characterised, types of the disease. The results of the research show the molecular characteristics of various forms of CJD and BSE-infected brains. Surprisingly, the new variant CJD (nvCJD) was of a different type to other forms of CJD – yet very similar to the disease particles found in the brains of cats and other animals with BSE caught from eating infected beef products.

The link between eating BSE-infected food and developing CJD was already considered plausible. This is due to evidence that animals such as cats can contract a BSE-like disease from eating infected products. The new study strengthens that link by highlighting the similarity between CJD and BSE, suggesting that these new cases of CJD have indeed arisen from eating infected beef products.

The development of a new technique by Professor Collinge and co-workers allows the characterisation of different CJD and BSE strains in days, rather than the years which are needed for conventional studies. At present the technique needs to use brain tissue for testing, though the Collinge team are hoping to extend the technique for use on other tissues in the body, and eventually develop it as a blood test.

This could not only diagnose CJD, but could offer opportunities for determining the cause of the disease and help to find a cure.

The Collinge study has provided definitive findings on the possible causes of the nvCJD, a rapid way to diagnose the disease and in addition has opened up opportunities to discover a cure. However, the underlying message from the research seems clear. As commented in *Suddeutsche Zeitung* (a German newspaper) last week: "there is not the slightest reason to ease up the fight against BSE....Perhaps London will listen at last to serious researchers in its own country".

Professor Collinge declined to comment on the political situation.

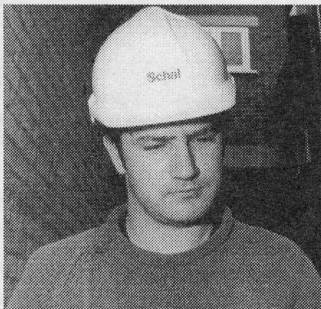


I must apologise if my rapier wit (?) appears somewhat blunted this week. This is because of a very bad headache that has afflicted me these last few days. Not due to alcohol, mind, but a result of repeatedly hitting my head against a brick wall ever since reading the excellent front page lead from last week's Felix (wonder where that idea came from, Jackie!). I now fully understand the frustration of the Clayponds' residents when I read fatuous comments from Messrs Leeson (no relation), Daniels and, last but not least, Caldwell. Paul Leeson saide that break-ins only occur through ground floor windows. Funny that, I always thought that when burglars cased a joint, they sought the most difficult route into a building through the point of highest security. Of course they're not going through the doors

when they can jemmy the windows. Comments about deadlocks making escape in a fire difficult are ridiculous. When did a Chief Fire Officer say that lives would have been saved in a fire if deadlocks had not been fitted? We could

Ian Caldwell 'resigned attitude' about the persistence of criminals to its logical conclusion and sack the entire staff of College Security and scrap swipe cards on the basis that 'they would find a way [to break in].' Fortunately the Police and, unfortunately for the residents, insurance companies do not agree with this crazy attitude. As

Simon Baker



Voice of Reason

for hotel rooms with bars on the windows, the only ones that I have heard of are run for the pleasure of Her Majesty, but since my lawyer has just told me not pursue this point, I won't.

As for most galling comment, it's a toss-up between Mr Caldwell reassuring us that the money for the carpets come out of a different fund from Security, and the corker from Leeson that these carpets 'will last for a good 10-15 years' even though the previous one has barely seen out five. On reflection, the former just wins. The subject of budgets and the way that they are used here to provide a

veneer of credibility to a system that is scandalously profligate is one that one day, dear reader, I shall cover at length, making no apology for sending you to sleep in the process, such is the importance of this issue. Ever keen to help, I shall offer this mighty trio a bit of advice. You are on a slippery slope if you persist in treating some of the finest minds of their respective generations like silly little children whenever they challenge you. All your points have been readily demolished. Theirs haven't.

With all this accommodation malarkey of late, regular readers may have thought that my love affair with Southside Bar was waning. Not on your nelly, missus. After the refurbishment over the summer of the cellar, the range and quality is better than ever. You only have to look at my bank balance to see that.

Why are you here? In an ideal world, when asked that question the entire student body of Imperial should clamour in unison "I am here to learn!", because Imperial is after all an educational establishment and the reason why students come here is to be educated. Thankfully though it is not an ideal world; if it were, it would be very boring. Instead, everyone knows that students come here for a vast range of different reasons - maybe to learn, probably to gain a qualification (Felix 1066), often to have a good time, often to avoid having to do any work. So inevitably a significant proportion of the student body have motivations other than those the college would wish: they miss lectures, hand in work late (if at all), devote their time to drink, drugs, women, men, the internet, sports, clubbing, whatever pleases them.

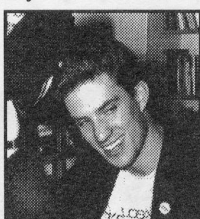
I have nothing against this; after all, Imperial would be an extremely dead place without such a variety of different attitudes.

Not only that but

undergraduates are supposed to be self motivating. It is for them and nobody else to decide if they should work or not, and what they should do with their time. As far as I can see, it is nobody else's business. If they choose not to work it is their prerogative. Similarly if college decides to kick them out for doing no work, that is the college's prerogative. It is simple, straightforward, and it works - the students who should be here stay, those who shouldn't leave. At least that is how it should be.

Sadly though, it doesn't seem to work like that. For some reason the academic staff see things differently. As far as they are concerned, students have to work, whether they want to or not. Distractions may be allowed (if one is

lucky) but only when they are officially sanctioned. Students not wishing to work are not removed from the system as they should be, but are pampered, cosseted and nannied all the way through a degree that they themselves do not wish to be doing. And all the while they are treating us like five year olds, the authorities chant that 'you are all adults, it is your responsibility now' with a surprising lack of irony to their words. A case in point: a few years ago, the Department of Computing kept its facilities open 24 hours a day. They stopped this, their justification being that it had an 'adverse effect on some of the students'. Well, as far as I am concerned anyone who does not have the self



discipline required to go to sleep now and then should not be at Imperial, full stop. There is no justification for the college to punish the majority simply on the grounds that there are a few people who cannot deal with their own freedom - people who cannot look after themselves to that

level do not deserve the degree at all.

So why is it that so much effort is devoted to nannying students who should not be here at all? There is no logical reason for it in terms of the college and its aims. It simply makes no sense at all - those who do not want to be here, or are not capable of being here, should not be here; but instead they are forced to stay even if it means restricting the 'adult' freedom of the rest of the student body.

Is there an explanation? Of course there is. Students bring in money. More students equals more money. Seeing as losing money is fundamentally bad, IC needs as many students as it can possibly accomodate, and stuff the other consequences.

adim

THE WEEKLY POEM

supplied by PoetIC

MY DREAM

Hiding underneath my shadow, behind my reflection,
I hunger for protection, I thirst for comfort.
Sticking my head out from my shell from time to time,
I see the slime, the sickness known as humankind.
Opening my ears, I hear the agonising moans,
Societies sickening groans, and pleas for peace
From people dying slowly, wounded with the strife,
Cut open with a sharpened knife, no mercy shown
By this villain known as life.

But sometimes when I sleep, I'm free to dream
And then it seems that there is more than this.
Our villian meets his match, and cannot spread
His conquering dread, and we are led
Away by greatness, to a world where shadows hide,
Thirst subsides, hunger is a memory,
All shells are cast away, and laughing drowns
Unhappy sounds, and I am now at peace
With this hope that I have found.

Keith

PoetIC is the creative writing society of Imperial College. Workshops are held every fortnight on a Monday evening and other events are held on alternate weeks. For more information, contact Keith McNulty, PG Mathematics (k.mculty@ic.ac.uk) or Ed Sexton, UG Biology (e.sexton@ic.ac.uk).

Hong Kong '97 : Stairway to Heaven or Hell?

IVAN CHAN

Although I have been travelling in and out of Hong Kong at least twice a year for the past 11 years, I still enjoy the final descent down into Hong Kong. Landing in Hong Kong can be considered to be spectacular and dangerous; you have to admire both the pilot as well as how much modern technology can do nowadays. If the aircraft is coming in across the land it will fly only a few metres from the tops of buildings, and before touch down an accurate right turn has to be made so that several hills and a mountain in the northern part of Kowloon are narrowly avoided.

This spectacular landing will be experienced by many people next year, especially during the last 2 weeks of June before the 'change over' of sovereignty on the 1st July. All the hotels in Hong Kong are fully booked, according to some rumours even Baroness Thatcher made her booking a couple of years ago. While Vancouver has the highest number of air ticket bookings for the last two weeks of June, with 54 aircraft fully booked, Sydney and London come a close second

and third respectively.

Most of these bookings have been made by Hong Kongese, who have immigrated to another country. There has been a rumour going around recently that if a Hong Kong born citizen would like to retain his or her permanent status after 1997, he or she must be in Hong Kong on 1st July '97 to witness the change over. Rumours like these are very common in Hong Kong; many people speculate and try to predict what will happen, and quite often some of these predictions become rumours, which become part of life in Hong Kong.

During the past fifteen years, many negotiations between the British and Chinese Governments have taken place. The sino-British Joint declaration in the early 80's and the Chinese Basic Law in the mid-late 80's are the major stepping stones of the future. The Chinese Government has also attempted to reassure the general public in Hong Kong. 'Fifty years of unchange', 'horses can continue to race, people could continue to dance' are just two of many quota-

tions. Other political agendas and events are well underway and ready for the change over period. Just simply looking at the one dollar coins in Hong Kong, the old coins with Her Majesty's head are becoming more difficult to find, and are being slowly replaced with new coins bearing the flower of Hong Kong. Another example is The 'Royal' Hong Kong Jockey Club which is no longer 'Royal' - just simply 'Hong Kong Jockey Club'.

The number of people expressing concern for their future is easily seen by listening to the political talk shows on the radio. At any one time there is at least one radio station broadcasting a political talk show. Chris Patten, the governor of Hong Kong, has had his fair share of problems; being called 'Fat Pat' by the public and 'the man with thousand years of sin' by senior Chinese officials doesn't really make his job any easier.

There is a mixed reaction towards to lead up to the change over. Take my Hong Kongese friends from the Mechanical Engineering department, for example: we fin-

ished our exam in early June. Mark 'landed' and immigrated to Canada in late June, Esther immigrated to Singapore in early July. Some of my friends (like me) possess one or more nationalities, such as Canadian, Portuguese and British - (British, not British Hong Kong). Of course, some of us remain at IC to face 4th year in Mech Eng, and some of us are working in Hong Kong.

Many Hong Kongese have, like me, immigrated to another country during the 'exodus' period of 89-92. The 1989 Tiananmen square incident had a vast impact on many Hong Kongese. In 1992, when the 'exodus' hit the highest point, 66,000 people were leaving Hong Kong in a single year. A very recent survey also suggests that in an office environment of 100 people, 1 person has planned and been granted a visa for immigration.

How do people feel about '97 and how much confidence do they have in the Chinese Government? Again using my friends around

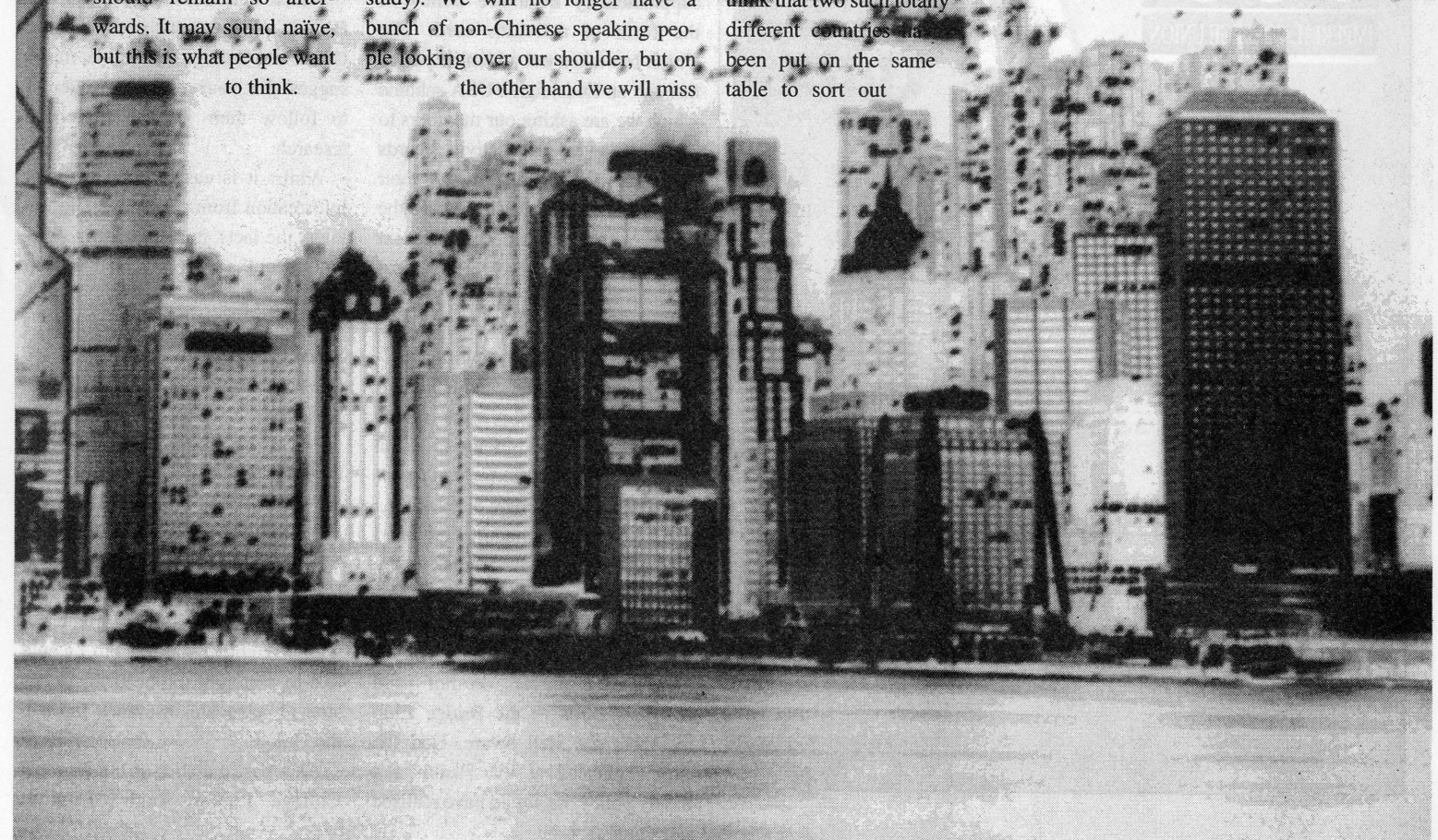
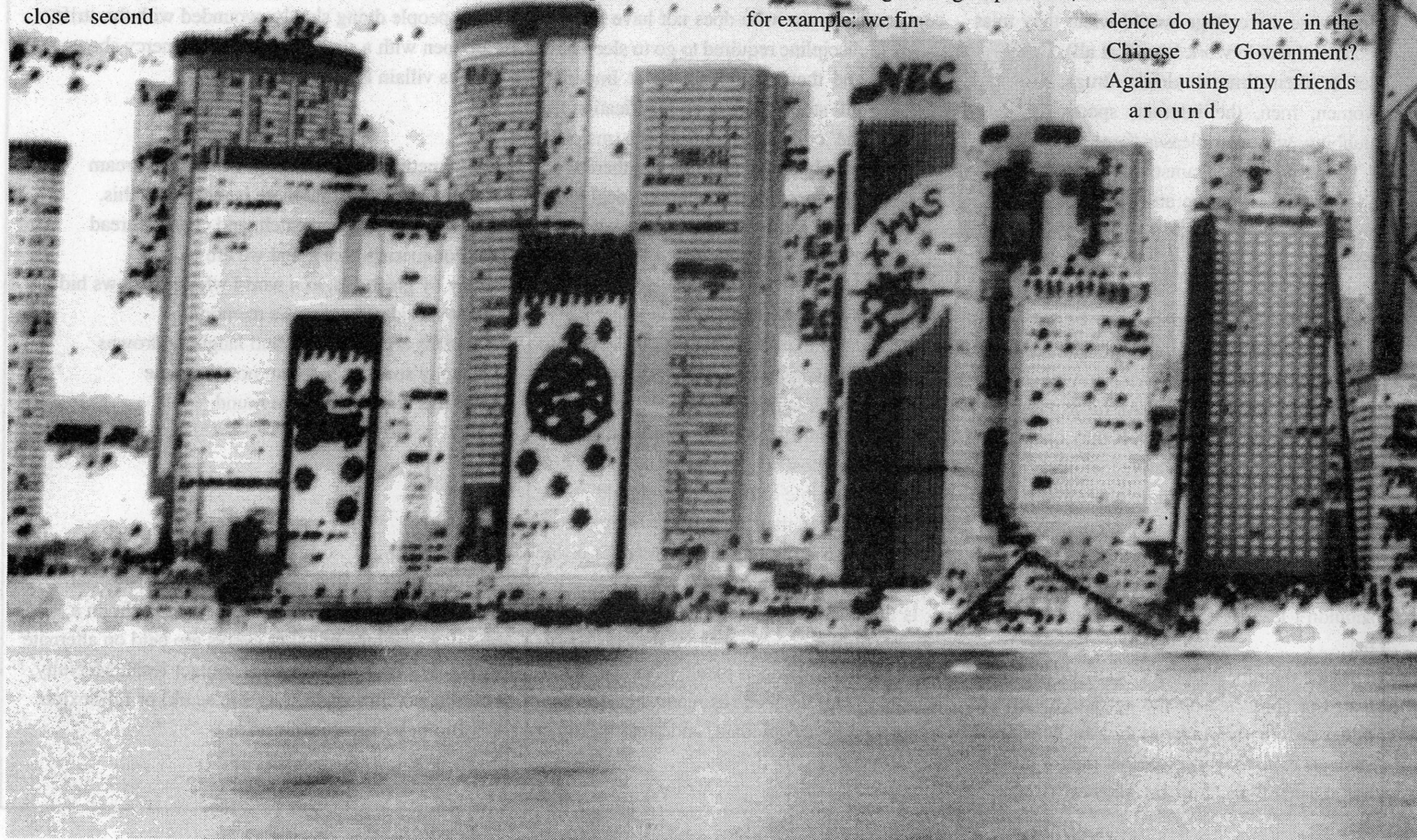
me as an example, YY, who is in my year, has found a job with a main contractor firm in Hong Kong. Her company has great investment and is running a large project in China. On the other hand another friend of mine, (her initials being MM, strangely enough), still has two years to go in her degree. I asked her what she will do after her degree, and she told me that she is definitely not going back to Hong Kong after her graduation. I suppose the general public in Hong Kong are quite unsure about where their confidence lies. The corruption within the Chinese government and the law and order of mainland do make people in Hong Kong doubt about their future. At this moment in time the confidence of the majority of Hong Kongese is placed in the stability of the stock market and real estate. Many of us think that Hong Kong is still stable 200 days before the change over, and that it should remain so afterwards. It may sound naïve, but this is what people want to think.



In a way the approach of the change-over brings joy and uncertainty for most Hong Kongese, after all, 'Hong Kongese' is really Chinese, but with a British passport (which requires a visa for entry into the UK to study). We will no longer have a bunch of non-Chinese speaking people looking over our shoulder, but on the other hand we will miss

the democratic and well established justice system which the British Government provides. You could say that the future of Hong Kong is like landing an aeroplane at the present Hong Kong airport. In a sense it's quite amazing to think that two such totally different countries have been put on the same table to sort out

one of the most internationally well known cities, and it could be very dangerous should anything go wrong. Not only would six million people suffer, but the world economy would face a serious impact.



ICU OPT OUT

Students who wish to exercise their right under the Education Act 1994 formally to opt out of ICU and CCU membership, may now visit their local Registry to record their decision. Students are advised that the only practical effect of opting out will be that they cannot stand for elected office or take part in Union elections and referenda.

CAREERS DIRECT 96

Important news for students with disabilities: Careers Direct 96, the third national graduate recruitment fair for students and graduates with disabilities, is due to take place at Wembley on Friday November 8th. The event offers a unique opportunity for disabled students and graduates to meet with some of the country's top employers who will be there to recruit and give advice about the training schemes and job opportunities they offer. The event is planned specifically for those with disabilities: the venue is wheelchair accessible and services on offer include sign language interpreters and information in Braille.

In the past Careers Direct has attracted students from throughout the country and from all disciplines. At this year's event the exhibitors will include Midland Bank, Marks & Spencer, Unilever, Boots, Ford, (GCHQ, Kingfisher, The Employment Service, MBNA, Lloyds, Local Government Opportunities, The NHS and BT. There will also be workshops on job skills and a CV Surgery run by expert careers advisers. Careers Direct 96, the only national event of its kind, will be open from 10am - 4pm at Wembley Conference Centre on Friday November 8th. Entry is FREE!

ICU HANDBOOK AMENDMENT

On page 43 of the 96-97 Handbook, the telephone number for Barclays Bank's Gloucester Road branch should read 0171 441 3516. ICU Publications Board would like to apologise for any inconvenience this might have caused.

LETTERS TO FELIX

Felix, Beit Quad, Prince Consort Road, SW7 2BB. felix@ic.ac.uk

Red Card for article

Dear Alex,

The article printed in your last edition of *Felix*, regarding the Union's (not the College's) Health and Safety Policy for its Clubs and Societies, was a classic example of a collection of misleading half truths. Not only does this undermine the Union's Duty of Care to its members but it also indicates some dubious practice in the methods of research that your reporters use. Had the author bothered to speak to myself for more than two minutes, to my predecessor, to any of the major Sub Committee Chairs, or to the Clubs and Societies themselves, he would have discovered why this policy has been implemented.

As for the article, I would like to correct the blinding errors and explain at this point the reasons behind the Health and Safety Policy.

1. The members of ICU are not being conned. Through the various Major Sub Committees, Clubs have been requesting extra cover for several years. In cases of temporary disablement, dental repairs etc. students are now provided with some financial support which, in the past, they would not have been given.

2. College have not instituted a supplementary insurance policy in the form of activities card. The Union has taken out a blanket policy through an Endsleigh/BUSA scheme which we are asking our members to pay for this year. The activities cards prove that individuals pay for their insurance, and they also provide the Union with Contact details for next of kin etc. in case there is an accident or emergency.

3. The view the author takes with regards to the policy being unnecessary for our mountaineers/ table tennis players/ rugby players seems ridiculous. If he had thought for one minute about the suffering and financial difficulty caused by dislocating a knee, severing a tendon in the hand (yes by playing table tennis), or by breaking an ankle climbing, his attitude would probably have been very different.

4. Bridge players do not need activities cards as the Bridge Club members are well aware. Had the author glanced at the Health and Safety policy, he would have realised

this.

5. You do have to have an activities card to play sport as a member of ICU, it is detailed in the Clubs and Societies Health and Safety Policy passed at the first Council meeting of this year.

6. Frank Murray, the Sports and Leisure Manager of IC was only made aware of the details of our Health and Safety policy at the Athletics Committee meeting held on the 24th of October, and the information he had before was incomplete and therefore unfortunately inaccurate.

7. I presume, when talking about the Finance Office, that the author had talked to someone over in the Sherfield Administration. The Union manages its own finances, and therefore, had he talked to any of our financial staff about the insurance policy, he would have been presented with a large amount of information.

8. I was in fact the author of the Health and Safety policy, so if the author of the terribly researched article, would like to get his facts straight, I suggest he interviews me before he writes anything else about this policy as he said he would before he wrote his last effort.

Whilst it is obviously the job of *Felix* to question what goes on in the Union and College as a whole, may I suggest that your researchers attempt to follow their job description ie research.

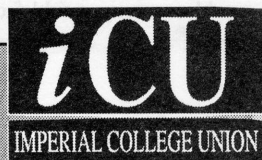
Whilst it is easy to get incorrect information from people who do not know the facts, it is not exactly difficult to get the right information from those who do.

So please in the future, just ask,
Sarah Corneille
Deputy President, Clubs and Societies.

Dear Mr Feakes,

I am writing in response to the appallingly inaccurate account of 'superfluous insurance' reported in last week's *Felix*. No doubt the policy correctness will be commented upon from other sources, but I would like to highlight the need for provision of adequate insurance through the Union.

As a past member of the Imperial College Ladies Rugby Club, I



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incurred a severe knee injury earlier in the year during a game whilst representing Imperial College.

Although the ICLRFC is affiliated to the WRFU, I received no compensation or help from that side as the cover offered by them was too minimal. Also, the College cover would not have included travel costs to hospital and the subsequent physiotherapy departments, or the associated cost of being temporarily disabled. The travel costs alone amounted to £200, a substantial sum when compared to the £1.50 for the insurance cover that the Union now offers.

Fortunately, I am covered by my parent's insurance, and this then covered my travel expenses, operation and hospital stay. Had my financial situation been any different, the implications to myself could have been disastrous.

By issuing Activities Cards, students are made aware that the Union is committed to its Duty of Care and operates an advantageous insurance policy. Speaking as ACC Chair, I now know where to go if an accident happens through any of the ACC Sporting Clubs. I also know that the cover is more comprehensive than that offered by most governing bodies and College.

My wish is that should clarification about the policy, or the insurance be needed, that students come to the Union Office or see the Chair of their Major Sub Committee and not believe the drivel that was reported last week.

Yours,
Caroline J Deetjen
ACC Chair.

Dear Alex,

A few points worth raising about Activities Cards:

College has always had and still has an insurance policy covering all club activities in IC, this has worked fine for x years and will work fine for another xxx years. So what do we need the BUSA policy for? Nothing, the two policies are virtually identical => waste of money.

The cost of each individual policy is only 95p. So what about the other 55p? —> The official answer is 'card laminating costs'. The Union is mak-

ing a profit out of it too!

Name withheld by request

I have received a lot of feedback over this particular article, and I apologise for any factual inaccuracies that were present. Unfortunately, I am not able to verify the research of each and every article that is contributed, however much I would like to.

The important point to come out of this issue is that the new policy and the associated cards are not properly understood; there is confusion amongst the clubs and their members. I understand that Sarah has released a note fully explaining the matter, particularly the costs of the scheme, and I hope that this will clarify it for everyone.

Dunblane answer

Dear Felix,

I totally disagree with the views expressed by the Rifle and Pistol Club. No doubt the current law should have stopped Hamilton owning a gun. But it didn't - the law failed. Human minds are complex and laws that attempt to label them as either 'A' or 'B' - 'safe' or 'unsafe' with a gun - are bound to fail sometimes. Dunblane proves this: it was one police officer's opinion that Hamilton was a B but another officer thought he was an A. We can never say that someone is 100% safe and we certainly can't tell whether or not someone will commit a crime in future.

I agree that there is no point banning handguns if we forget about those that are already illegally owned. However, with a total clampdown on illegal weapons, Dunblane would still have happened. I think you need both: a ban on handguns and a clampdown on illegal weapons. In the article, the RPC seems to think more should be done about illegal weapons. I agree, and if the RPC can offer any practical suggestions, I'm sure they'll be gratefully received.

Richard Sandiford.

Sandwich crisis

Dear Felix,

I would like to bring to the attention of IC students the fact that the sandwiches sold in QT are of both poorer quality and higher price than the sandwiches sold outside the college. I did some research last week, mostly on Gloucester Road:-

Monday Egg mayonnaise with cress 89p Boots (1.10 QT)

Tuesday Tuna and cucumber 1.00 The Sandwich Shop (1.10 QT)

Wednesday Prawn mayonnaise 1.19 Boots (1.50 QT)

Thursday Egg and bacon 1.40 The Sandwich Shop (1.50 QT)

Friday Avocado, chicken & bacon 1.39 Harts the Grocer, Old Brompton Road (with free can of Irn Bru), (not available in QT).

This shows that the sandwiches sold in QT are on average 15% more expensive than outside the college. Surely the college should be subsidising the students rather than making a profit out of them.

Linda Hart

IRC for Semiconductor Materials.

Some valid points here I think. Why are the sandwiches in QT so expensive Mr Foster?

Careers clarification

Dear Editor,

Your correspondent Ben Weir (25 October) makes some important points about the Careers Service.

First he says that the Careers Office is not large enough. During the first weeks of the Autumn Term the office is particularly crowded, however at other times of the year we usually have adequate space for the needs of our customers. We try to meet the varying demands during the day by having a Duty Careers Adviser available from 1.00 to 2.00 pm to assist with queries.

The timing of the lunch time Careers Talks on Tuesdays and Thursdays is certainly a problem if students have other events to attend. Suggestions for alternative times would be welcome, bearing in mind that employers are holding presentations on most evenings during the autumn term.

We have had considerable demand for our Wednesday afternoon Workshops this year. One solution to

this problem is for us to put on extra workshops in Departments and we would be delighted to receive more invitations to do so.

We shall be asking for comments about the Careers Service from users by means of a questionnaire later this academic year, but in the meantime I would welcome any suggestions about improving our service.

Yours sincerely,

John Simpson

Director, Careers Service.

Clayponds security

Dear Editor

I would like to correct some of the impressions given in the reporting on security at Clayponds:

Firstly, the College is concerned to find a sensible and practicable solution to the security problems. Yes, burglaries were running at about 1 every 10 days, but since the introduction of dog patrols there have been none.

Secondly, at the recent meeting, the College did not rule out any suggestions. Indeed at the meeting there was inevitably a wide range of views on what might be most appropriate. Some students even liked the new carpets!! We did not rule out any measures, but there are obvious economic, operational and fire aspects to be considered. For example, grilles on windows and dead-locks have fire-safety implications.

Thirdly, we are listening to the Clayponds community, and it was agreed that this would be done via normal channels through the Warden and the Hall Committee. The new Hall Committee has obviously only just been set up and I will naturally be meeting with the Warden after their first meeting, at which I'm sure these issues will be discussed.

Yours faithfully

I Caldwell.

Letters may be edited for length.

The guest editor's opinions are not necessarily those of the editor.

Deadline for letters in Felix 1066 is Monday 4th November. Please bring some form of identification.

Letters may be e-mailed to our address: felix@ic.ac.uk

Crossword by Clansman**Across:**

1. Game bird on a bit of a ledge? (9)
6. Step down firmly on a hallmark. (5)
9. Union leader in mid-morning meeting is a madman! (3)
10. Not like the rest. (3,3,3)
11. Journalist has south-eastern head of government taken aback at the sides. (5)
12. Ethiopian appreciatively regards primarily the pole made of soil. (7)
14. The inn Robert first assembled grew narrower. (7)
15. In making the musician's lyrics, he was very shrewd! (3)
17. Gym rendezvous poor Richard organises initially by proxy. (3,3)
20. Hold one's ground concerning South Indian holy man. (6)
21. Politician in 19 gives impetus. (5)
22. Eastern upper-class Greek character - church has a castrated man! (6)
24. Engross one who sobs awkwardly in south-east. (6)
27. Molten topaz oozes around in animal park. (3)
29. Heir and son all at sea even when close to land! (7)
30. Domestic help ran vest under

steam. (7)

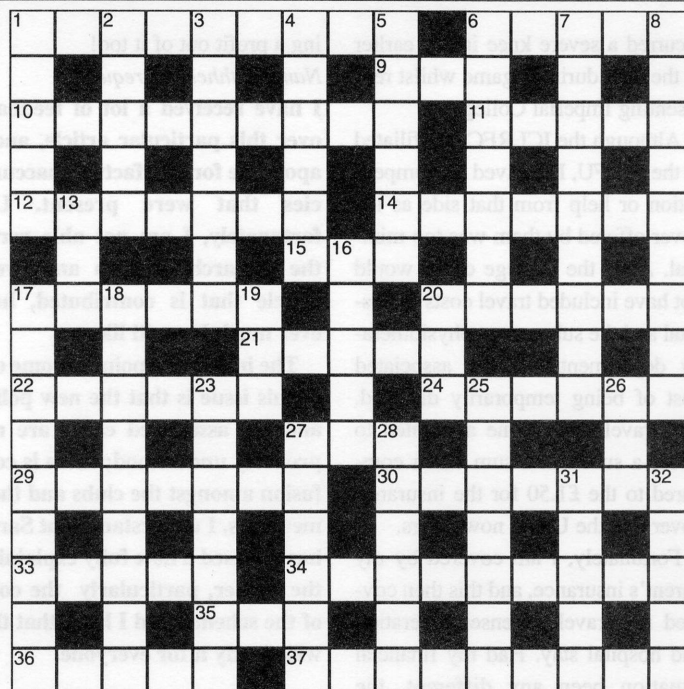
33. Happening in flat time? (5)
34. Omit stair, agitating copy-cats! (9)
35. Allow the French to end breakfast? (3)
36. Designate form of address. (5)
37. European Union leaders hit mail in a frenzy to embarrass. (9)

Down:

1. In favour of superb eye-opening essay. (5)
2. Opinionated addition to verdict on bus traveller? (5)
3. Cattle-farm queen is a cowboy? (7)
4. Muffles out floods. (6)
5. Frequent it yearly in substance? (6)
6. Let rise to rights is unproductive.
7. South American gasman in England. (9)
8. Hand over tariffs on proportion of people succeeding in exams? (4,5)
13. A good serve gets a high card. (3)
16. In a state of uncertainty over how low one can go in a dance! (5)
17. Repent - Di's indiscretion with head of state! (9)
18. Note sodium smell springing up anew. (9)
19. Exclamation of surprise in finding igloo hospitable? (3)
20. Greek character in Russian ambassador's house. (3)
23. Work around Tory left primarily for a laugh! (7)
25. Reveal everything concerning Austrian leader in social gathering. (4,3)
26. Star in the movies uninvited. (3)

27. High noon - the crowning achievement? (6)
28. Very large motorway first undertaking military element. (6)
31. Motoring organisation embraces memory of distinctive smell! (5)
32. Flavour that is to one's liking? (5)

The solution to last week's elimination will appear next week.



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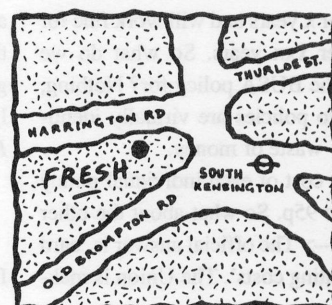
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LOSSES ALL ROUND - A BAD WEEK FOR IC RUGBY

Titanic struggle sees Firsts squeezed out by St. George's

D. CAMPESE
FELIX RUGBY
CORRESPONDENT

IC's winning run came to a temporary halt with a spirited loss to the well drilled medics of St. George's Hospital.

5-0 down within five minutes was not an auspicious start, but after a tightening of the defence, IC started making life difficult for St. George's with some storming rugby.

A succession of quick penalties saw Jack Peart go ram-paging over the line under the posts, to open IC's account. The conversion was taken with aplomb by Gareth Williams.

Despite some stiff resistance, St. George's managed to breach the IC

defence more than once before the interval, to leave the score 22-7 at half time.

With work to do in the second half, IC came out and gave it their best

shot. Ollie Lyttelton and Dan Doherty were in storming form for the forwards, and Chris Mutter was as safe as houses at full-back. However, there was simply not quite

enough fire-power to turn the tide IC's way. IC's fitness told in the dying minutes, as a length of the field move culminated in Trefor Beynan sweeping over to round off the days scoring - though not the day's entertainment, as a hotly contested boat race, vocal renditions and an enticement of cheap beer were just a small warm-up for the evenings activities. The final result was 29-12, but defeat was no shame, and the nucleus of a very talented side has started to emerge. Tremendous prospects exist, for both the short- and long-term future of the club.



VACANCY:WARDEN WEEKS/GARDEN HALL

Applications are invited for the post of Warden of Weeks and Garden Halls, which is available from January 1997.

Weeks Hall is a modern, purpose-built hall housing about 68 students in single study-bedrooms. Garden Hall, in a group of Victorian houses, accommodates about 82 students in a mix of single and shared rooms. Both are on the North side of Princes Gardens.

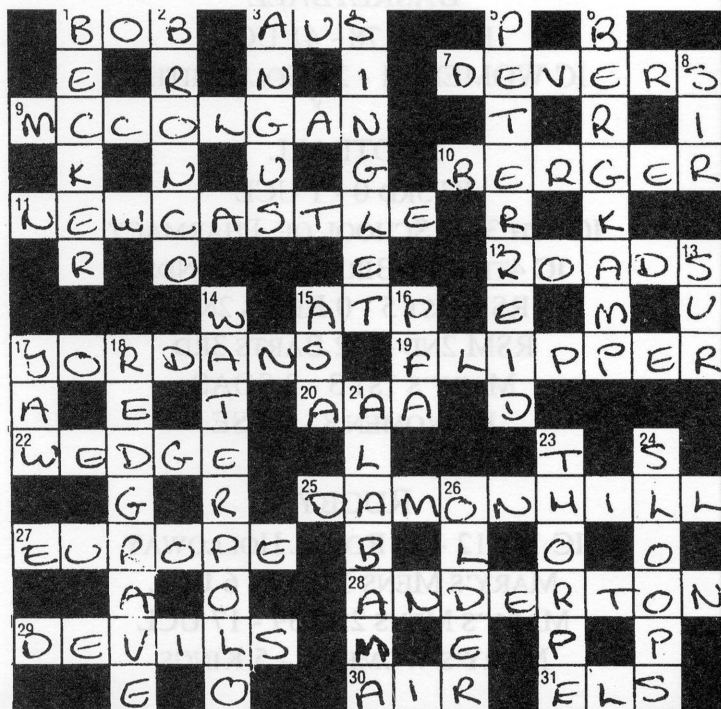
The Warden is responsible for all aspects of pastoral care and discipline of the students in these two halls. In return, rent-free accommodation is provided within Weeks Hall. The Warden is supported in these duties by an Assistant Warden resident in Garden Hall, and by two sub-wardens.

Any non-undergraduate member of the College may apply for the wardenship, but preference will be given to those with experience of pastoral care of students. Further details and application forms may be obtained from Janet Jones, Room 512, Sherfield Building, extension 45536. The final date for receipt of applications is Friday 15th November 1996 and shortlisted candidates will be interviewed on Monday afternoon, 2nd December 1996.

The Daily Telegraph Sports Crossword

- Solution from issue 1064

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNER, DAVID CLARK, AND THE RUNNER-UP, MATT CHONG.



Hockey Seconds find only moments of brilliance

IC started the match as normal, playing very badly, and holding out for fifteen minutes, defending like rabid dogs. Bill made the clumsiest tackle of his life to earn a green card. Moments later, UCL stroked the ball into the net to make the score 1-0.

IC improved, creating chances, but were unable to find touch - a repeat of last week's performance against Holloway. As the half drew to a close, IC were finally on top.

The second-half started with more UCL pressure. Again UCL scored on the fifteen minute mark, this time from a well taken short-corner.

The game now began to see-saw, with attacks from both sides. In the dying seconds, Shaggy grabbed yet another goal - and some pride for the IC seconds - after a sustained period of pressure.

IC Footballers discover that attitude alone is not enough

MENS THIRD XI

The match commenced at the middle of the first-half, after, sportingly as ever, we volunteered a 3-0 head start to the UC boyz.

Jesus instigated a resurrection of IC spirits when he slammed home an edge of the seat thriller, which on it's path towards it's eventual goal hit both (yes, both) posts!

Despite the UC boyz lip, bad attitude and disagreeable refereeing it was universally accepted that the IC posse kicked ass in the second-half. Top defending by international athlete Steve Cram, and the newly dis-

covered skills of Jesus proved entirely irrelevant to the final result.

Barney Army march on!

WOMENS XI

IC started off well against Barts, and were unlucky to concede a goal in the first twenty minutes. However, in the second-half IC played stunningly with the play mostly in the attacking half.

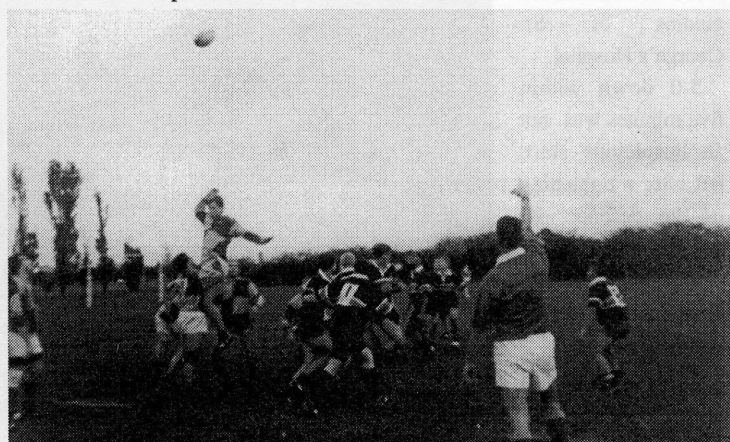
The final score - a 2-0 defeat, after Barts scored in the last minute - clearly doesn't reflect our teamwork and positive attitude.

Rugby Seconds flattened by overpowering police

IC seconds sacrificed their easy Royal Holloway game to give the thirds a run around. Instead we took on Imber Court, the top police side in London. In the face of a heavy battering from fat and nimble policemen, the IC team stood stony and resolute, with superb defence from

everyone. Pressure was intense, and we were exceedingly unlucky to come away with only one try, from Kalone Yeung, which was converted by full-back Jushin Lee.

The Man-of-the-match was David Pearce.



Thirds let down by inexperience

BY W. CARLING
FELIX ROYAL
CORRESPONDENT

The match started well, with IC camping in the oppositions half for the opening stages of the match. Their well polished set moves were foiled by our play in the loose. Holloway took advantage of the mis-

takes made, inevitable with untrained players on our team, and after sweating blood and tears, the thirds went down valiantly. All credit to the backs for their ferocious tackling, and to the forwards for coping so well against a larger, more experienced force.

RESULTS

BASKETBALL

IC MEN 78 - 41 UCL

IC WOMEN 31 - 24 GOLDSMITH'S

FOOTBALL

IC 3RD 0 - 1 UCL

IC 4TH 3 - 0 SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

IC 4TH 0 - 1 BIRBECK SECONDS

RSM 1ST 5 - 0 KINGS 2ND

RSM 2ND 4 - 2 BARTS 3RD

MARY'S 1ST 3 - 3 SOAS

IC WOMEN 8 - 0 LSE

RUGBY

IC 1ST 12 - 29 ROYAL HOLLOWAY

MARY'S MENS 1ST 17 - 6 UCL

MARY'S MENS 2ND 39 - 17 UCL

MARY'S WOMEN 5 - 5 KINGS

FENCING

IC MEN 14 - 13 QUEEN MARY'S & WESTFIELD

NETBALL

IC 24 - 17 QUEEN MARY'S AND WESTFIELD

IC 15 - 12 BARTS

MARY'S 1ST 19 - 56 UCL

MARY'S 2ND 23 - 43 UCL

HOCKEY

IC LADIES 1ST 0 - 2 BARTS

IC MENS 2ND 1 - 2 UCL

MARY'S MENS 1ST 3 - 1 ST GEORGES

MARY'S MENS 2ND 4 - 0 LSE

MARY'S WOMENS 1ST 1 - 1 UCL

MARY'S WOMENS 2ND 2 - 0 QMW

SQUASH

MARY'S WOMEN 5 - 0 ROYAL HOLLOWAY

FELIX SPORT

IC Basketball makes a storming start

IN BOTH THE MEN'S....

Despite the lack of preparation time for IC's basketball team, the first match of the season against ULU was a complete triumph. With IC heading off at half-time 39-19, it was just a question of how high the score was going to get. The final whistle found the difference at 37 points, with IC making their easiest victory for four years - and this was supposed to be the most difficult match of the BUSA qualifying round. With Charring Cross and Westminster & Royal Free pulling out of the competition, first place in the group seems booked - especially with Demetriou, San-Miguel and Ioannides playing with the quality they displayed against UCL.

....AND THE WOMENS

IC ladies basketball continued their fine start to the season, with their second away victory in a row, this time overcoming a strong team from Goldsmith's. Indeed, the eventual scoreline, 31-24, could easily have been far higher.

Qualification in the final thirty-two no longer seems like a distant dream, on the showing of the high standard that IC have been able to achieve, such a short way into the season. IC has put together a team that knows how to fight to the end, and includes some very skillful basketball players.

The reward? It remains to be discovered....

IC Ladies FC true to their word

The IC ladies football team was out in full force last Sunday, with a smashing 8-0 victory over LSE. Tension ran high between the two teams after an initial pre-game run-in at Waterloo, where LSE were blatantly told by IC captain Stephanie "You will loose". Proving that her team never lies, "Schmichael" inspired her team to victory from her spot in goal, where she somehow managed to find the time to score one herself, in between dives and blocks.

However, the Ladies' first victory

was a true team effort, with scores from all sides of the field. New-comer Hege started them off, followed by a phenomenal corner kick from the rookie Catherine that ended with a smooth header into the goal by the spirited Juliette, the mysterious hooded striker. Not to be outdone, the invincible defence proved their versatility with a score from the half-way line by Tasmin after two frustrating attempts. In the mid-field, Eleanor and Tracey were a deadly duo, controlling the game with unstoppable fury.

RSM kick-off with 5 - 0 win

Newly promoted to division two of the London University League, RSM started the season with a bang and a sparkling performance. Neil Price was man of the match, thanks to his relentless defence, which let not a shot through.

RSM's international-studded mid-field and attack capitalised on opportunities offered by the overwhelmed King's College side. Magnus opened the scoring, closely followed by two more from Si.

In the second half, Magnus and

Karsten slotted away two more - Karsten from the penalty spot - in true Scandinavian style.

RSM look forward to another great season.

Meanwhile, RSM seconds started the season with a win, thanks to a hat-trick from Edson, a goal from angel, and the general ineptitude of Barts - the game not being helped by a referee whose knowledge of the game did not seem to stretch as far as the offside rule.

Sport in Brief

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

IC started slowly with a low scoring first quarter, with Barts keeping up the pressure. However, with a great defence IC managed to maintain a narrow lead.

The second half saw dramatic changes. One of IC's leading defenders was injured, leaving IC to play the second half one player down. But, with excellent attacking play and hard work, IC put together a run of goals, holding on for a well deserved victory.

SKIING

The first match of the year for IC's ski team involved five eager students piling into a car and driving aimlessly around London, hoping to find Brentwood Park. (Mobile phones

suddenly became very useful).

It was the first race ever on plastic, and some had never raced before. Deprived of appropriate equipment, the team (Amelie, Alex, Daniel, Gilles and Rufina) heroically skied into 15th place - out of 25.

A solid start to the season!

MEN'S FENCING

IC men's fencing squad won their annual grudge match for the second year running. The foil team is easily the best in the country this year, and started us off with an 8-1 victory. We clinched the match with a 6-3 victory in the sabre, which gave us an unassailable position going into the epee, our weakest weapon, which we duly lost 9-0. This gave an overall scoreline of 14-13 to IC.

Eleven Yobs in Shorts? - The up's and downs of a week in the Fourths

OCTOBER 19TH - SCHOOL OF PHARMACY

IC Fourths excellent start to the season continued to demolish all opposition. Proving that their 5-0 thrashing of King's in mid-week wasn't a flash in the pan, IC again looked as if they had been playing together for years, although still only in the first week of the season.

From the kick-off, IC were in control of the game, with their fluid passing repeatedly breaking down SOP's defenses. The man of the match had to be Darren "Brawler" Boland, who scored all three goals, showing the

strikers arty of being in the right place at the right time. David dazzled the awed seven fans with his ball control, but was able to continue after medical treatment.

The defence kept their second consecutive clean sheet, helped by captain Cook, whose prowess has finally come to the fore, having in the past been hidden so well.

Although only early doors (and we know it's a marathon not a sprint), the Fourths are over the moon with their start, and hopefully if the team sticks together, some silverware can be on show at the end of the season.

OCTOBER 26TH - BIRBECK SECONDS

This day will be marked as a disaster for IC football. Although only the third and fourth teams were playing, IC fourths were forced to break up their unbeaten squad, to loan two players to the Thirds. Result: IC Thirds continue their losing run, beaten by a team who the fourths had comfortably beaten in mid-week - and the fourths loose for the first time this season, to a team two divisions lower than them.

Both sides have now been knocked out of the London

University Cup, a competition in which the Fourths were among the favourites. With a full team, we would have won comfortably.

The IC football hierarchy should not have ordered the break-up of the team, especially on such an important cup weekend. Individually the Fourth team are not superstars, but they play as a team - "one for all and all for one" seeing them through many tough games.

All the players want to continue to play together. The future will either see two week teams, or at least one successful and social Fourth team.

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