

THE FELIX

est. 1949

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Student Newspaper of Imperial College

Christmas Issue:
The next issue of Felix will be on the 18th December with a packed SftW and a preview of next year's news.

pop and politics:
are today's popstars following their sixties counterparts and lining up on the political stage? Pages 7 and 8.



In Something for the Weekend:
Star Wars, Scooby Doo and t-shirts

Meningitis claims two students

SIMON WISTOW

This week saw an outbreak of meningitis, a virulent disease that affects the brain, in a hall of residence of the University of Wales in Cardiff.

The five students affected were all from University Hall in the Cyncoed area of Cardiff, yet were not close friends, a fact which is puzzling medical experts. Another disturbing fact uncovered by the investigation was that there have been cases of meningitis in the hall before. Just five weeks ago a twenty year old woman staying at the hall was taken ill with the disease and this time last year a student contracted meningococcal septicaemia, blood poisoning caused by the bacteria.

The President of the Student Union, Dot Hodge, said that the deaths of the two students had been traumatic "...most students of this age are not accustomed to dealing with this sort of grief. Our priority is to do everything we can to help them cope." Telephone hot-lines set up by the University and the SU have been

The campus bar has been closed but more than 1,000 undergraduates attended a rave at the Great Hall in the SU building last Saturday night.

Fears are growing, however, with the news that meningitis has now spread to other universities. As well as the thirty-two students who have been admitted for care in Cardiff, a further four serious cases have been reported; two at the Southampton Institute and two American students at York university. There have also been cases at Sussex, Portsmouth, Bournemouth and Brighton.

UWC authorities are being tight-lipped about the scare. It is known that this is the group C bacterial strain of meningitis, which accounts for about 30% of all bacterial cases, with the majority caused by group B.

The vaccine which is being used to inoculate students is short-acting and does not offer full protection. As yet, there is no vaccine for strain B although both groups can be treated with antibiotics if caught early enough. Bacterial meningitis is spread by coughs, sneezes and kiss-

swamped by calls, mainly from anxious parents and worried students.

Social life in the campus has ground to a halt as, after the first death, Bill Smith, Director of the Public Health Authority, called for the cancellation of discos and parties saying that intimate contact, especially the transfer of saliva, could spread the disease.

The symptoms to watch out for are...
Fever
Severe headache
Nausea and vomiting
Dislike of light
Stiffness of neck
Unfortunately, in viral meningitis these symptoms are mild and may resemble influenza. In bacterial meningitis, the symptoms develop rapidly, often accompanied by a red blotchy skin rash followed by drowsiness and loss of consciousness within about eight hours.

ing. Each year there are about 1000 cases of bacterial meningitis, 1 in 4 of which prove fatal. The other, more common form of meningitis is the viral kind, which cannot be cured with antibiotics. There are about 500 cases reported annually in the UK, although the incidence is probably much higher.

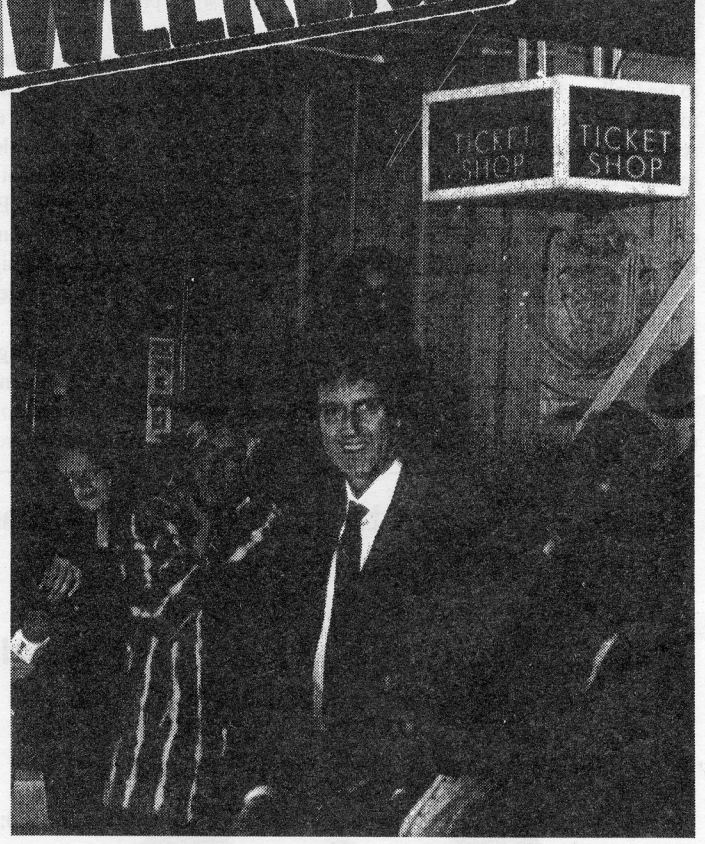


PHOTO: ALDOUS BIRCHALL

IC Alumnus Brian May arriving at the Royal Albert Hall premiere of Disney's remake of 101 Dalmations on Wednesday night. The gala performance was attended by a number of celebrities and the general public. Another performance outside the Hall, by PETA, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, featured a man dressed as a dalmation.

Question time for Dean

MUHUNTHAN THILLAI

In just under two years time the medical students of St Mary's and Charing Cross will be migrating to South Kensington. They will make up 25% of the total student body at Imperial College and the new Imperial College School of Medicine will receive 50% of the overall research budget of Imperial College. These huge changes will affect not only the medics but also those currently at Imperial. It is vital that everything runs as smoothly as possible. With this in mind a Dean's ques-

tion time was held at St Mary's last Tuesday evening.

The Dean, John Caldwell, had cancelled two of his previous question times and even failed to turn up for his own tea party at the beginning of term, so the question and answer session was eagerly awaited by students.

Many of the questions revolved around the merger of the medical schools and the formation of the new Imperial College School of Medicine. One of the first was to do
continued on page 4

Tender decision in store

NEWSTEAM

Student officers and staff of Imperial College Union may have to wait until the new year before learning if they have been successful in their bid to run IC's new bookstore, currently under construction beneath the library.

A team from ICU's executive, consisting Eric Allsop (President), Piers Williams (Deputy President Finance & Services), Mandy Hurford (Union Manager), Louise Van der Straeten (Finance Manager) and Brian Roscoe (Bookstore Manager) made their formal presentation to the College last Friday. In addition to the tender document itself, the presentation incorporated a short speech by Mr Allsop and computer animations showing the proposed interior of the new bookstore, followed by a question and answer session.

Four external companies are known to have bid for the tender; high street bookstores Dillons and Waterstones, academic booksellers Blackwells and The Modern Book Company, which currently runs a

store for medical students near St Mary's on Praed Street. Despite this strong competition, Piers Williams was in a buoyant mood as he spoke to *Felix* on Wednesday: "I think it comes down to the Union persuading the College that we're a good risk... we know what level of trade there's going to be, we've done our research very carefully."

The Union's chief advantage over its competitors may be the benefit it can bring to the College community by re-investing profits from a new bookstore into student services. The surplus from the Union's current bookstore, situated on the Sheffield walkway, is used to fund clubs and societies as well as new developments such as the refurbishment of the Entertainments lounge in Beit Quad. Conversely, were the Union to lose the tender, these facilities might face funding cuts and future projects would be under threat.

A decision by the College is eagerly awaited by all those concerned. The new bookstore is planned to be fully operational by Easter next year.

Fish toxin eases prostates

MATTHEW BENNETT

Researchers at Imperial College's Biology Department have developed a new technique that could save thousands of men with prostate cancer the need for distressing and potentially fatal surgery with the unlikely discovery of an link with puffer fish.

Prostate cancer is caused by tumours in the prostate gland, but is only lethal if the tumours start forming in other parts of the body. This happens when the cancer cells become 'metastatic'. The difficulty in the past has always been differentiating between benign tumours and malignant ones, which contain the metastatic cells.

The team of researchers, working in collaboration with scientists from the Royal Postgraduate Medical School and the University of Liverpool, found that by measuring the ion currents flowing in a cell, it was possible to distinguish between benign and malignant cells. The technique is used normally in the study of nervous and muscle cells, which are highly electrically active. To the researchers' surprise the

metastatic cells contained a current of sodium ions, something never before seen in cancer cells.

This means that men with prostate cancer could have tissue samples tested for the malignant tumours, to evaluate the future behaviour of a given tumour. There has, up to now, been no way of making such a prediction and hence deciding what treatment should be administered. Surgery carries with it a high risk of incontinence, impotency and even death from infection.

The discovery of the sodium current promises a possible non-invasive therapy with the use of a substance known as tetrodotoxin, or puffer fish poison. This poison has been known to block the action of sodium channels in the nervous system and the discovery of similar channels in tumourous cells lead to the suggestion that it could be used to treat cancer. Although the precise action of the sodium channels on the cells' ability to move around the body is not known, preliminary studies suggest that the toxin suppresses the cells' capacity to invade other tissues and form secondary tumours.

Claim your right to vote in the General Election by filling in the form below, tearing it out and returning it to the Felix Office. They will then be forwarded to the electoral registrars

I want to claim my right to vote

You may register at two addresses (for example, term-time and home); you may only vote from one.

Full name:

Address (as of 10th October 1996):

Post code:

Permanent/Home address (if different):

Post code:

Date of birth:

I declare that these details are correct and that I am a British, Irish, other Commonwealth or other European citizen.

Please tick here if you are a European citizen but not British or Irish:

Signature: Date:

Jointly sponsored by the Conservative Society and Labour Club of Imperial College Union

News in Brief

WELLCOME FUNDS REMOVED?

The Dearing Committee's investigation into Higher Education is due to give a report next summer regarding tertiary education in Britain and is at the moment collecting reports from various educational funding organisations, including the various research councils and charitable trusts.

In their report sent to Sir Ron Dearing, the Wellcome Trust, a charitable organisation providing scientific research grants all over the world, have argued that their grants should not be used for the general running of public education establishments.

The Wellcome Trust fund research at Imperial College and have threatened to move their UK sponsorship abroad if the Government imposes overheads for academic research. In the light of recent real-terms cuts in the science budget, further loss of support could have a devastating effect on British scientific development. The Wellcome Trust and IC have a long-standing relationship, but should Wellcome carry out their threat then this would be put into jeopardy.

DON'T FORGET YOUR LASER TOOTHBRUSH

One of the latest Imperial College research developments is a toothbrush which uses laser light and a special toothpaste with a light-sensitive chemical to kill mouth bacteria.

Research into a cancer treatment called photodynamic therapy provided the inspiration for the breakthrough, which uses inactive chemicals that are switched on by light. These chemicals react with oxygen to destroy bacterial cell membranes.

Developed by Professor David Phillips and Ilya Eigenbrot of the Chemistry Department the toothbrush will not be available for Christmas as the project is experiencing a slight technical hitch. To the dismay of all involved, a minor side effect of the toothpaste is that it turns them a rather fetching shade of blue.

FISHER HALL CHRISTMAS BALL A SUCCESS

Fisher Hall's Christmas Ball last Saturday was a success and despite an outrageously expensive bar, all attending residents enjoyed the night. The raffle in particular was popular, due to the kind donation of a £60 CD player by Richer Sounds, the Kensington hi-fi shop.

Wilson House fines students to enforce security

KENT YIP

Four residents of Wilson House were fined for contravening a new house rule, introduced a month ago, after a tribunal hearing on Monday.

The new rule forbids the opening of the front door to people who request at the window for access into the house. Controversy arose when some residents were fined for opening the door to other fellow residents. Most of them paid up, but those who regarded the punishment as being unfair refused to do so. One of them complained that he was totally unaware of the new rule and found it ridiculous to be fined for opening the front door to one of his housemates, who had been unable to retrieve his own keys from his pocket because he was carrying a box of food. This view was shared by most of the medical students.

Speaking to *Felix*, Bryan Clarke, the Warden of Wilson House, took the opposite tack, saying that he did not believe that anyone could have failed to know of the rule, which is stated clearly next to the door button. Any students who missed the sign and opened the door were also warned by the porter on duty that they were in breach of the rules. Fines were only given to those who either ignored the porter's warnings or argued with him using abusive language.

In defence of the inflexibility of the new rule, Dr Clarke said "A rule is a rule. It has to be all or nothing for it to work." When challenged as to why the new measure was introduced with neither the knowledge nor the support of the President of the Student Union and the Hall



PHOTO: LILI TCHEANG

A new form of entrance fee for College? Fines for holding the door open for a housemate may be harsh, but is the security risk worth it?

Committee, he stressed the urgent need to take appropriate actions in view of the fast deteriorating security situation in Wilson House. "What is happening here is a complete state of anarchy. We have already had two assaults and a series of thefts this

term, with the damage of the worst one estimated at £500."

On several occasions, students have reported people who have nothing to do with the medical school sleeping in the building. "I have seen drug-dealers and prostitutes hanging

around here at 3.00 am at night," commented Dr Clarke. "The crime prevention unit of the local police was called in, and we were advised to enforce this new rule. I am happy to accept any suggestions from residents and talk to the Hall Committee, but I am not prepared to let the current trend continue."

Some students saw themselves as victims of the lack of investment from the College to improve the situation. The need for a 24 hour porter service and the installation of security cameras around the house have long been advocated. Whilst Dr Clarke sympathised with them, he pointed out that acts of vandalism in the past committed by the minority only made the College reluctant to invest further. "I understand that the changes I have brought are not liked by some students, but I am responsible for the interest of the majority of the students. If this means being labelled as a dictator, then so be it."

Sami Ansari, President of the Student Union of St Mary's, described the way College handled this matter as a "gung-ho approach policy typical of IC bureaucrats" and highlighted the inconsistency in applying the new security measure.

Nick Jenkins, the Student Representative closely involved in this matter, summed up the outcome of the tribunal hearing by saying "It was sadly inevitable that they would be fined. What we've got out of this is to force our Dean and hierarchy at IC to address the security problem at IC as a whole and the appropriateness of certain security measures. It is sad to see that their attention has to come in this way."

Sir Scott deselected despite Parliamentary backing

JACKIE SKEATE

Sir Nicholas Scott has now been officially deselected as the Conservative candidate for Kensington and Chelsea in the next election.

Sir Nicholas himself called the meeting last Monday, at which 1000 Conservatives from his constituency met specifically to vote on whether or not to allow him to stand. The results were conclusive - 509 to 439 were in favour of deselection, despite his desperate last-minute speech, which had many people thinking he had made a miraculous escape.

Sir Nicholas Scott, who was found by police lying blatantly drunk in the gutter following this year's Tory Party Conference in Bournemouth,

has since pledged to give up alcohol for as long as he holds public office. However, at the meeting on Monday, his fellow Tories were obviously unconvinced by his poor excuses that he had merely "suffered an attack of dizziness" caused by painkillers foolishly mixed with an allegedly "modest amount" of alcohol.

The unexpected result, greeted by raucous cheers from the assembled Tories, means that a political career lasting more than 30 years has effectively been brought to a sticky end. Sir Nicholas, now 63, spent 13 years as a Northern Ireland minister and seven years as the Minister for the Disabled.

Doubts were originally raised

about Sir Nicholas' suitability as an MP last year, after he ran away anonymously from a car accident, leaving a child trapped in a pushchair. Although he was not deselected, this "minor indiscretion" led to him being fined and banned from driving.

Last Monday's treatment of Sir Nicholas Scott may be seen as a warning to other Conservative MPs, giving them a timely reminder that they are constantly in the public eye and that the Conservative Party will not tolerate politicians who make bad reputations for themselves.

His associates, local Conservative Party members, expressed their unambiguous belief that he should

go. One remarked "Someone like Nicholas Scott is a dinosaur. He is an old-style Tory who was simply there because of his connections...No way does he deserve to be an MP any more."

The search goes on to find a replacement candidate to stand at the next election to represent the Kensington and Chelsea area. Among the contenders for this seat, one of the safest in the country, are thought to be Sir John Wheeler, the Northern Ireland minister and MP for Westminster North, Hartley Booth, MP for Finchley, Alan Clark, and Terry Dicks, MP for Hayes and Harlington, whose majority has

continued on page 4

Birkbeck faces funding deficit



PHOTO: LILI TCHEANG

In response to the severe cut in funding provision from the Government, Governors at Birkbeck College, which is part of the University of London, recently appointed a strategic working party to look at a range of measures to generate income and make savings on expenditure in order to avoid a deficit in their budget. One of the more dramatic proposals was to close down the Physics Department in the year 2000. Such a closure would be a great loss to the University of London as much important research is carried out in the department at Birkbeck.

The entire College is currently being consulted on this question with a decision on the future of the Physics undergraduate and postgraduate students not to be announced until the 20th of March next year. It has been rumoured that UCL may bid to take over the department, but this is as yet unconfirmed.

Doctors head for 83 hour week

UMBAR SALAM

Ministers this week have been discussing the outline of a plan to allow junior doctors to work a maximum of 83 hours a week. The New Deal Agreement is a cause of contention and may be abandoned by junior doctors and their leaders.

The general rule, which is frequently broken, is for doctors to spend no more than 56 hours per week on the wards. The Government has asked hospital managers to use their "discretion", amidst complaints from senior medical professionals that we are producing a less competent medical workforce. This has led to the misuse and overwork of junior doctors across the country.

Junior doctor representative and London hospital Senior Registrar, David Wrede, commented "we are extremely alarmed that this is a proposal to the detriment of the training of doctors, and more importantly, the safety of patients."

The safety of the public if such shifts are reintroduced must be questioned, especially when considered in the light of recent media allegations concerning cover-ups of fatal mistakes made by overworked junior doctors.

When the NDA was first implemented, the British Medical Association decided long hours were not an effective tool for learning. But by cutting hours worked by junior doctors, more people would be required to do all the routine work performed by the doctors.

Ministers and some junior doctors argue that rigorous enforcement of the NDA could interfere with specialist training where working long hours would be necessary, or when rare surgical procedures are carried out. A department of Health official said "we believe there has to be a certain amount of flexibility around the fringes [of the agreement]."

Such flexibility already exists, called the English clause, which allows junior doctors to work longer hours for the purpose of training. However, one junior doctor's spokesman claimed "No money has gone into training. Maybe the ministers are debating the wrong issue, and a closer look needs to be taken at how the doctors are taught throughout their course."

The majority of medical professionals are in agreement that an 83 hour week is not a solution to the junior doctor problem.

ICMS Dean quizzed

continued from front page

with the current clubs and societies at St Mary's. Will they function separately or merge with those at Imperial? To this, Professor Caldwell answered "we don't want separate sports teams for the St Mary's and Imperial," though he accepted that in some ways it was necessary to retain an identity, for example in the Hospital's Cup rugby tournament. He drew an analogy with the constituent colleges at Oxford and Cambridge. Members of a team could therefore play for both St. Mary's and Imperial College.

Another question was to do with the Student Body regarding the issue of funding. At present, St Mary's Student Union receives about £42000 a year whereas Charing Cross, being larger, gets £70000. After the merger, as a constituent college at Imperial, the combined total would be a mere £12 000. Nick Jenkins, the first year rep likened this to "the total cost of running a minibus for a year." Professor Caldwell agreed that this was a problem saying "it was very important that we maintain our level of funding after the merger. Imperial College doesn't fully understand what being a medical student is like." He added that a medical school was completely different from any of the other Constituent Colleges at Imperial.

On this point, the issue of 'how different' was raised. Someone commented that many medical schools at other large universities have separate facilities, often a separate medical bar. To this Prof Caldwell said he understood the situation but that at the moment Imperial did not wish to label parts of the South Kensington campus as being solely for medical students. He went on to add that the General Medical Council stresses the importance of a 'multifactorial education' and that this would not be possible if medics started segregating themselves from the rest of the student body.

The final issue was the question of

halls of residence, particularly the future of Wilson House. Since the beginning of this term Imperial College Students from the South Kensington Campus have been taking up residence at Wilson House, angering some Clinical Students who felt that spare places should have been offered to them.

Although not directly his responsibility, Prof Caldwell said that both first year and final year students would still definitely be given places at Wilson House should they want them. However, there was never any promise made to 3rd and 4th year Clinical students regarding accommodation. Any spare places will be available to students from South Kensington though he did not see it being 'taken over' in the future. He said that Wilson House is so close to St Mary's Hospital that it would be practical to give most of the rooms to medical students because this is where they will be for a lot of the time. He concluded by saying that the "current system of room allocation is not totally fair" and that it did not take into account electives and the 48 week working year of Clinical Students. Once again he added that "Imperial College does not fully appreciate medical student's work patterns."

Clinical students raised questions concerning the inadequacy of house jobs provision were raised. Rory Shaw, Director of Clinical studies, pointed out the excellent track record of Mary's compared with other medical schools.

Overall, it was felt that the two hour session went very well. Many important points were raised and some of these will have to be addressed again at a future date. Sami Ansari, the Student Union President said that it was not about taking sides and that what is going to happen (ie the merger) will happen. "It is very important for both the medical students and all the students at South Kensington that the merger runs as smoothly as possible."

The fall of Sir Nicolas Scott

continued from page two

recently fallen to just 53. The executive council of the constituency association will meet next week to create a timetable for the selection process, before advertising the post to the Conservative Party's list of approved candidates.

No doubt Sir Nicholas will be glad of one thing. He pledged to give up alcohol for as long as he remained in public office, recently describing himself as "absolutely teetotal." He will be relieved that he has only a few tedious months of orange juice and fizzy water to go.



LANDING AT YOUR COLLEGE IN 1997

...MEANWHILE

**HURRY AND PICK UP YOUR
FREE ZAGROS T-SHIRT**

FROM THE FELIX OFFICE.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

POP and

Oasis, Blur and Pulp are all avid members of the Labour Party. It's official! Being a leftwinger is suddenly, terribly, trendy again.

During the 60s London was known as the coolest city in the world - we had The Rolling Stones, The Who and Twiggy whilst the jazzheads had Ronnie Scott's. For everyone, especially students, it was the 'ultimate' to be a leftwinger (even for undergraduates Michaels Portillo and Parkinson). Posters of Fidel Castro, Angela Davies and Bob Dylan adorned the walls of student digs across the country. On top of this, the Beatles showed their affiliation with Labour by posing in a set of photoshoots with Prime Minister Harold Wilson.

Now London is experiencing a resurgence of these vibes with Newsweek reordaining London as the "coolest" city in the world. Our 90s equivalents to the sixties pop politicians are Portishead, Massive Attack and Bjork. Today the jazzheads worship at "The Blue Note" and, at the Brit Awards Oasis happily praise Tony Blair and New Labour for giving hope to young people.

Cynics may say that Oasis are simply mimicking the Beatles in political as well as musical styles. Non-cynics, namely Labour supporters, will state that it's simply about New Labour's hard-hitting policies. Regardless of opinion it is rather symbolic that the Mancunian band should choose to support Labour. Oasis are currently revelling in the full-blown joys of greedy capitalism. Although there is

one historical hitch in Oasis becoming fully fledged blue-rinsed Conservatives - Oasis are working class Northerners.

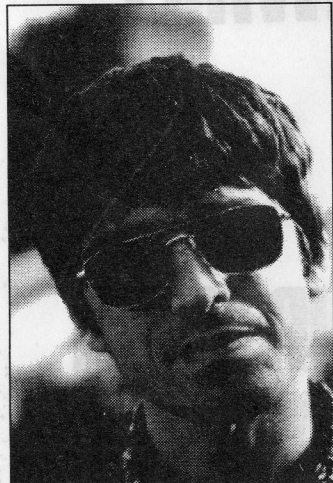
A voter's class, education and line of work seem to be crucial denominators in determining the party that he or she supports. In fact the political party that a person endorses has become a lifestyle affirmation.

Traditional Labour supporters tended to be either champagne socialists or trades union blue-collar workers. The champagne socialists included radical intellectual thinkers, writers and artists, as well as theatre-land luvvies (generally people who rebelled against convention).

The business world has always leaned towards the Conservatives, due to sympathetic money-making policies. Other traditional Conservatives include the staid and upstanding civil-servants and middle managers.

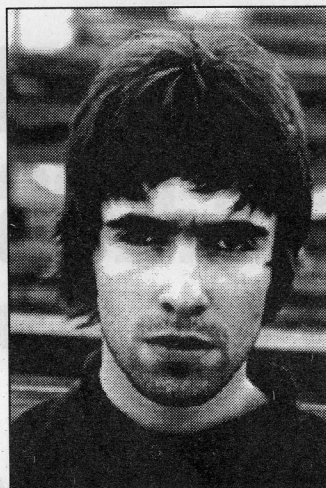
The sixties saw the more liberated atmosphere spurring the beginnings of widespread class mobility and the middle classes acquiring a social conscience. All this ensured that Labour stayed in power for most of the next two decades. Unfortunately the mid 1970s saw the trades unions adopting bully boy tactics with their strangle hold over the Labour Government. Hence the leftwing dream died and rightwing Thatcherism was born. With it went the careers of many a politically vocal popstar.

The 1980s British economy boomed because Thatcher liberated the financial institutions of their cumbersome,

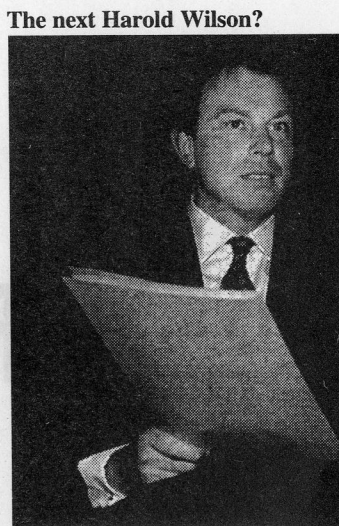


The next Macartney?

On a stage near you soon. Oasis's public endorsements of New Labour have not yet seen Tony Blair jumping at the chance to be seen with them. Hard Lessons learnt from his predecessor Harold Wilson, perhaps?



The next Lennon?



The next Harold Wilson?

With politicians rushing to kiss every available baby and shake every offered hand, it's often forgotten that there are other public figures, particularly musicians and popstars, who are quite prepared to voice a political preference. *Afua Osei* looks into the love-hate relationship between popular music and politicians.

politics

financially unsound traditions. She sold public utilities so that everyone could be an entrepreneur. Everyone earned incredible amounts of money, most famously the East-end barrow-boys who infested the city as stockbrokers. The music scene during the 80s sums up this Bacchanalian era perfectly, with slick music acts such as Spandau Ballet, Sade, Wham, and Duran Duran dominating. Every self-respecting yuppie religiously knew the words to Harry Enfield's "Loadsamoney" anthem and bubblegum dustbin pop was produced by the barrel load.

Stock, Aitken & Waterman were the pioneers of throw-away music of the likes of Kylie Minogue, Jason Donovan, Bros, and Sonia (don't forget that Messieurs Stock and Aitken are both dedicated Tories). Not all the musicians were turned into instant Tories though. Red Wedge, a grouping of popsters who supported Labour wrote songs, sang at gigs and appeared on TV to promote their chosen political party. Despite the mood of that time, Red Wedge thrived, headed by the likes of Billy Bragg and Paul Weller. Their campaigning for Labour generated a lot of publicity and everybody, understandably, loved their music, particularly students.

Unfortunately the student population of the 1980s was rather fickle in its party allegiances. They devoted their lives to Labour; that is, until they got a high-powered job in the city with a fat salary. At this point, they would get greedy and vote Tory. However, too much of a good

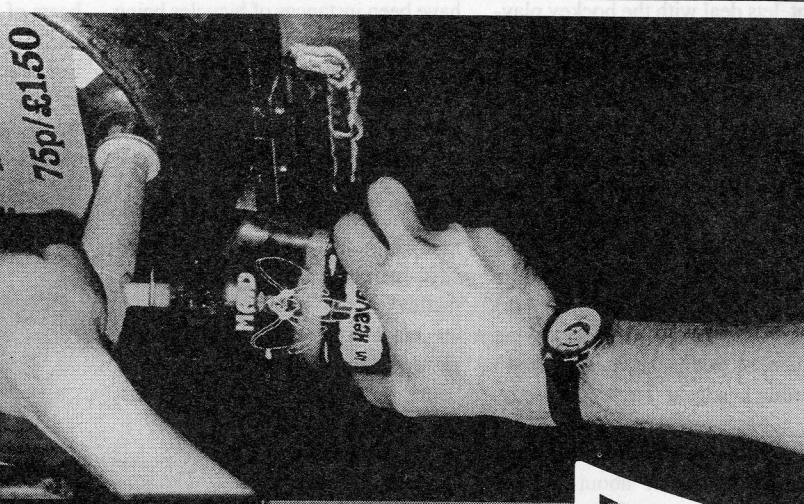
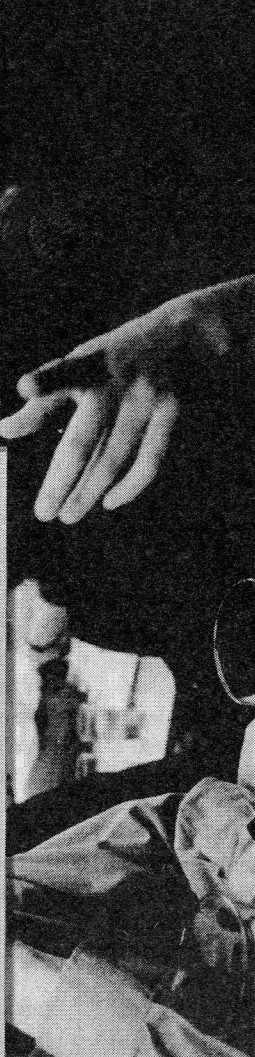
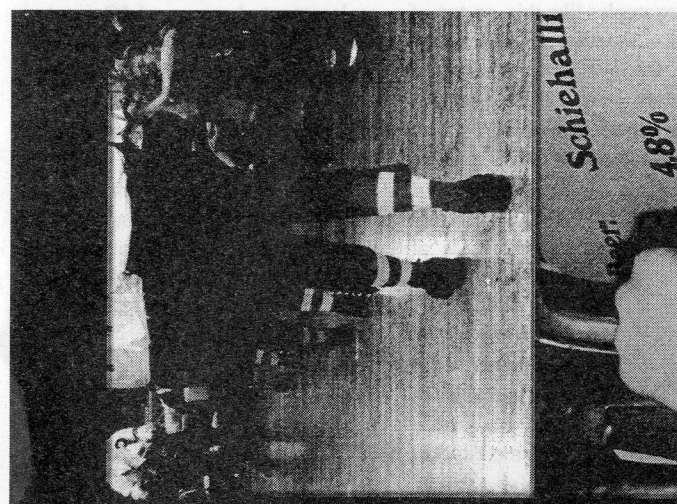
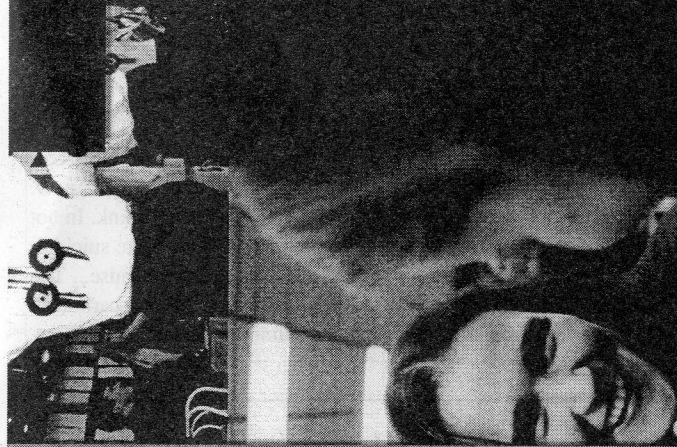
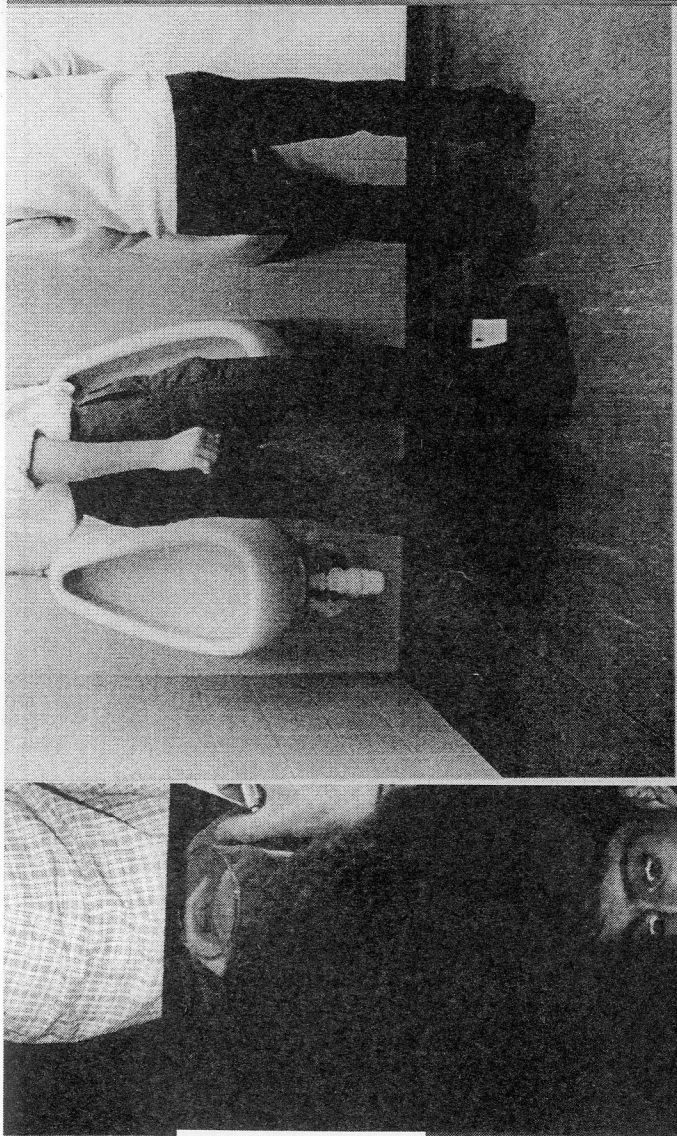
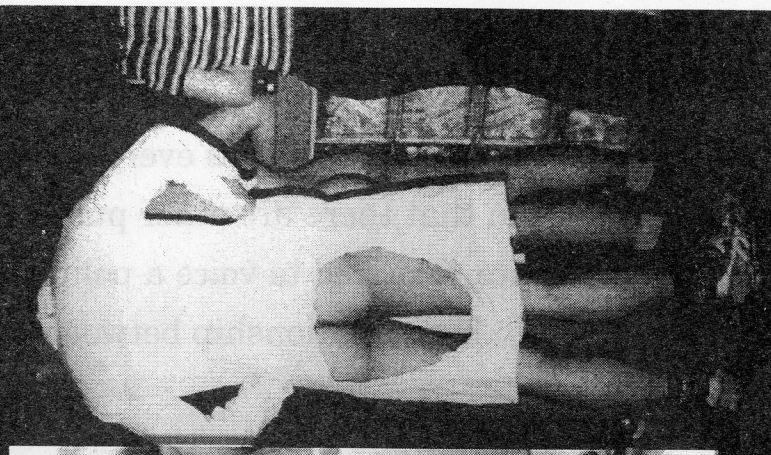
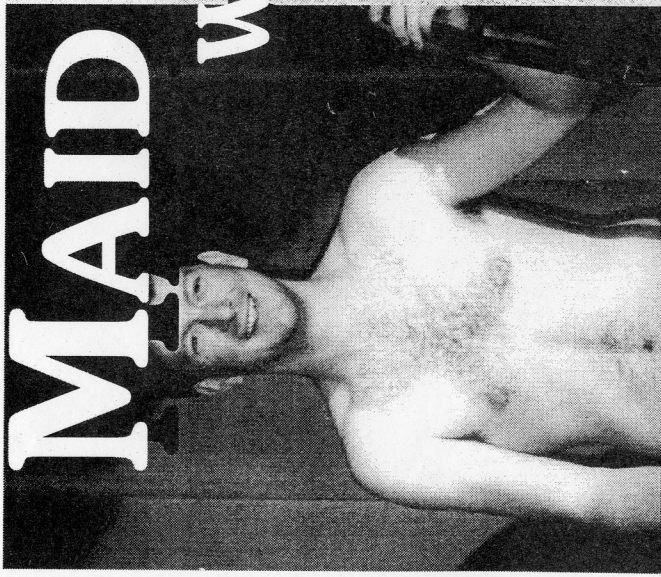
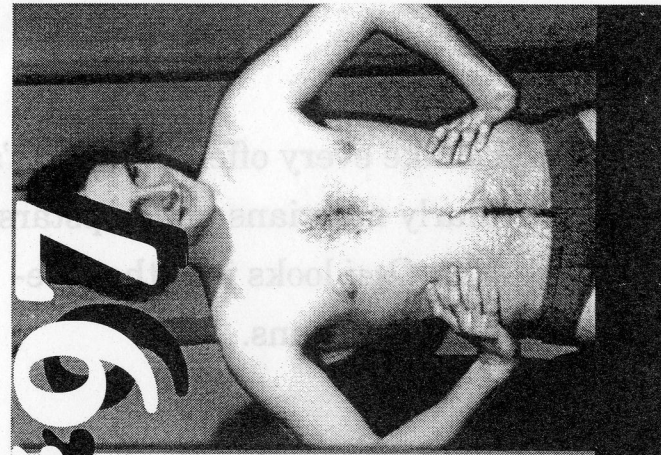
thing is bad for you; inflation spiralled into maddening heights and the giddy hedonism ended. Mass unemployment among the middle-classes saw people who had once earned disgusting but pleasant sums of money on the dole, along with a tragic class of people who had never experienced the ruthless joys of capitalism. The recession triggered a fatalistic party mood amongst the young, and rave sub-culture emerged. Rave's offspring, techno and ambient, are deeply rooted in drug culture, and with the glum job prospects of the early 90s, the widespread availability of recreational drugs provided an easy escape.

On a political level, today has seen the British public running back to Labour in their droves-like a repentant unruly child running back home. New Labour has got the golden touch again, due to a polished PR department and a leader who reflects middle class aspirations. They have transformed themselves from a pair of BHS boxershorts to an Armani number and the Brit poppers love it. It remains to be seen whether New Labour have the consistency to offer the country a future that is as bright as their image, and if the red roses pinned to the sleeves of pop stars become an embarrassment.

Unfortunately for all political parties today's 20-30s year-olds are highly sophisticated non-voters. They are unimpressed by politics as it appears sleaze infested. It will be interesting to see whether something as frivolous as "Britpoppers for Labour" may seduce the young vote.

MAID IN HEAVEN '97

WHAT A LOAD OF ARSE!



RAG WEEK '97

ICU RAG '97

ICU RAG '97

Schiehalli
4.8%
75p/£1.50

Right, lets deal with the hockey players first. Was ever a man more misunderstood. The anonymous writer has completely missed the point. My point was about the impenetrability of some sports articles because of these nicknames, not the nicknames themselves. I know all about this team spirit malarkey, but you show me a piece on the England Cricket team by Christopher Martin-Jenkins in the Telegraph that refers to Ian Botham as Beefy and I shall begin digesting headgear. Nuff said.

It was quite a coincidence that there should be an article about College Security in last weeks Felix, as I had already planned to mention that esteemed band of men and women this week. A number of people have approached me and moaned at the level of security at IC with regard to bikes (you see the pressures of this job- its me that gets all the complaints, you know). I have heard a story where someone had bits stolen from a bike under the glare of a security camera near Southside. There

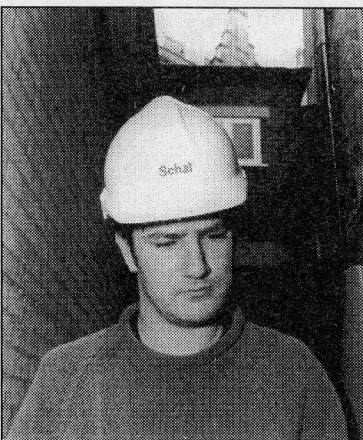
have been instances of bicycles being stolen from outside the Chemistry Department. A few weeks ago, there was a letter from the ridiculously titled Humbaba. Excusing the pathetic comment about using a pen name

to avoid the hate mail (drastically miscalculated self-importance methinks), the letter made a good point about a bike being stolen from the RSM walkway, despite the camera coverage. Clearly, something is going badly wrong with Security. Nobody would expect or want a security blanket over College that, to quote Felix

Lleiter in Diamonds are Forever, a mouse wearing sneakers could not get through. However, when one

hears of examples like this, on top of the Great Computer Swindle from last year, the level of service begins to look very poor. Looking around IC, I don't think underfunding is to blame, more a case of appalling value

Simon Baker



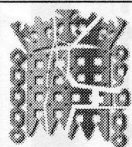
Voice of Reason

for money. I have long suspected a case of what we doctors call Catering Syndrome. You may know it as bad management. This has been confirmed by last week's article, where it emerged that we could only manage 25% cover for strikers because of trade union regulations. Forgive me, but this is 1996, not

1979. People don't run organisations like that anymore. Together with the non-issue of swipe cards to the

replacements because of IC regulations, the situation looks farcical. As with Catering, the College should put out to tender the contract to keep us safe in our beds/labs. Imperial is in the business of education, not running service companies badly. Oh and by the way, don't you think it would be rather a good idea to record the pictures from the cameras? It may sound crazy, but it might prove useful.

The Weekly Poem, which shares this page with your humble columnist, has caused me problems. Acknowledging that it is a useful foil to my diatribes, I can't help noticing how perpetually depressing the output of PoetIC is. The tongue that pronounces death and doom, our love destroyed by the ocean, I hear the agonising moans, Societies sickening groans. I feel all miserable now. So a little competition, I think. In not more than 20 words, I write suicidally melancholic poetry because... The winner gets a jar of lithium carbonate and the runner up a course of Prozac.



Westminster Eye - Hamish Common

So, Imperial College's local MP is to have a new "career opportunity" after the next General Election. Members of one of the safest Conservative seats in the country voted last Monday by 509 votes to 439 to deselect Sir Nicholas Scott following a range of embarrassing incidents culminating in him being found face down in the gutter during the party conference in Bournemouth two months ago. He had been taken into a private room to be told of the decision, returning ashen-faced to the hall to discuss their opinion of his conduct. "You have told be in no uncertain terms what that is. During the remainder of my time in Parliament I will give my wholehearted support to this party and to John Major. I will continue with assiduity to look after the interests of my constituents. It is a sad moment for me."

Sir Nicholas had only just survived selection for the recently merged Kensington and Chelsea seat when he failed to stop after an accident where a toddler had been trapped in a car. As Minister for the Disabled he was censured by the disabled community and his own daughter over his policies. In a weakened position, he faced a coalition of the dotty right and those association members who thought "enough is enough". The opinion on Scott was not unanimous: said one

member "...it was a bit of a witch-hunt in there, and when you have a kangaroo court and a witch hunt, there has to be a victim, and it was him."

I still cannot help thinking that getting rid of a senior Tory in a bitter battle three months before a general election is unwise at the very least. Constituency associations aren't famous for examining the wider issues, like contemplating the effect on the public of booting out a distinguished MP three months before a General Election. They should also consider sort of party they want to see after the election. Since the departure of Margaret Thatcher in 1990, the party has seen its idealism turned into ideology. Sir Nicholas and others on the centre-left of the party are an important counterweight to some of their shriller banterings. Constituency associations are usually more extreme in their views than the Parliamentary party, and Kensington and Chelsea is no exception to this. Now they have done their worst to Sir Nicholas, they will no doubt engage in similar wranglings over the new candidate. Eurosceptics will surely be looking for someone in the mould of Redwood, Cash or Tebbit. This seat is a jewel in the eyes of those who would seek to take it, and we can certainly look forward to some interesting local debate in the ensuing months.

The Weekly Poem

The Long Journey Home

As my eyelids open to the dawn of a new day,
It is night!
The clock reads 80:11, and with puzzled interest I survey
The people sitting opposite me.
The lady with the hat reading Erye Enaj,
And the man with the Alorotom phone.

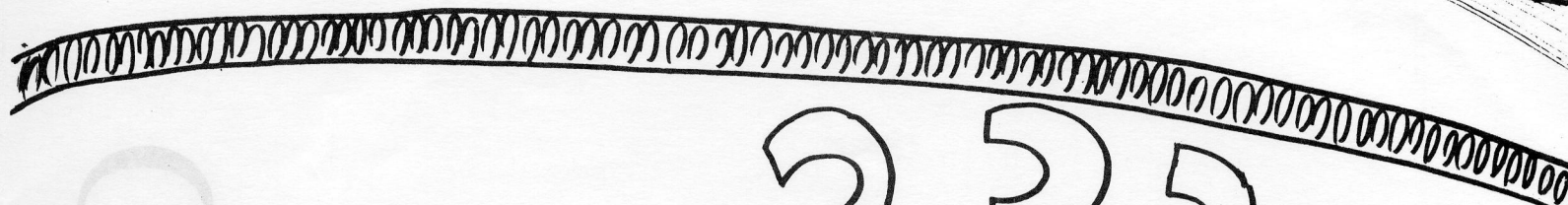
The child asleep on the beret of his mother,
She is the lady with a wedding ring on her right hand,
And the Lemac cigarettes protruding from her coat.
Next to her is the priest,
With his copy of the Elbib.

But as my mind approaches some semblance of consciousness,
I see that they are all ghouls,
See-through spectres of the night,
And the cars' lights shine through them
and blind my eyes shut again.

I must sleep,
for I will be home soon,
and everything will be normal once again.

Keith

PoetIC is the creative writing society of Imperial College. The next meeting is Monday, 9th December at 6pm in Materials room G21. For more details contact Keith McNulty on ext. 58610, or email k.mculty@ic.ac.uk



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Tickets sold during International Week in JCR

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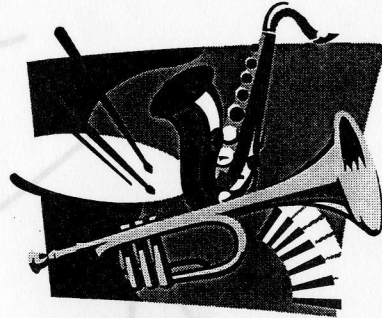
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TIME: 8-12

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MUSIC: SWING, SOUL AND YEAH DANCE.....

FREE DRINKS (YEAH DRINKS!)

LETTERS TO FELIX

answered by David Roberts

This letter was held over last week
Dear Editor,

In the past few episodes of Felix, I have read that there have been a few problems with bicycle security. During the holidays, I had my fourth operation on my knee. Having secured a flat in Fulham, I decided that the best mode of transport was a bike. Both for the savings I would make, as well as my doctor advising me it was a sensible idea.

Three days after I started at college, my bike was stolen. Not unusual in London, but the circumstances are undeniably suspicious and lead me to believe that the people in charge of College security are in fact completely incompetent.

At 4 o'clock on a Friday afternoon I had left my bike chained to one of the bicycle rails outside the main security office in the Sherfield building. By the time I returned at 6 o'clock the bike had been taken from right under the noses of our hawk-eyed security officers, D-lock included. What I didn't notice when I was attaching the bike to the railing, was that the railing had in fact been previously cut with what was believed to be a power saw.

Considering my close proximity to the Security office, I decided to report the theft. After writing down all the required details, I got chatting to the security officers on duty. They told me of the previous seven bicycle thefts in four days and unless you spend around 100 pounds on a D-lock your bike may as well not be locked up! I was then told that the safest place to lock my bike is on the walkway where there are cameras.

As far as I know, people are still attaching their bikes to the damaged railing, but worst off all, there has been little or no advice by security as to the best way we should keep our bikes at College.

At this time [November 20th] I am waiting to hear from the college after I requested a full reimbursement of the cost of the bike.

Robert Pawlowicz
Physics UG

You'll be the luckiest man alive if you manage to get a penny out of them. At the present time College authorities seem to view the oh-so-evident incompetency of Security as your problem, not theirs. Perhaps when some enterprising thief steals the Rector's Mercedes from his doorstep, we might see the situation change. (If there is anyone out there with the requisite balaclava, crow-bar and black sack, don't be afraid to ask any member of Security for directions - they'll probably even open the gate for you to drive the car away)

Dear Felix,

I am about to finish a Ph.D. after completing a degree at Imperial. Although I have received LEA and postgraduate research grants, plus a number of access fund contributions, I have still run up a few debts (from two credit cards, student loans, and four bank overdrafts) totalling just under £12000 (documentary evidence upon request). Can any of your readers beat that?

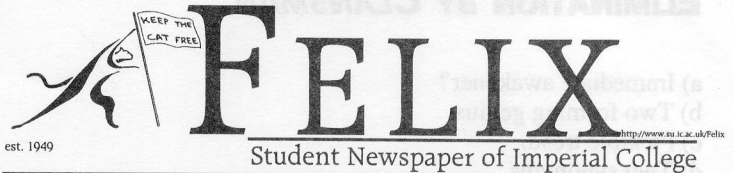
Name and address supplied.

Game on. Without espousing one-upmanship, can anyone beat that?

Letters may be edited for length. The guest editor's opinions are not necessarily those of the editor.

Deadline for letters in Felix 1073 is Wednesday 11th December.
Please bring some form of identification.

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



Editor Alex Feakes / Advertising Manager Mark Baker

Recently, I was contacted by the infamous advertising agency Saatchi & Saatchi with a view to booking a few pages for one of their clients. I was somewhat surprised to be rung up by an agency that usually puts its collective mind round a campaign for big, important clients like the Tory party, rather than something that would be well received in the student press. Nevertheless, the man on the 'phone was seriously interested in obtaining enough details about our advertising procedure to book some space if he should so want. He was also being very cagey about revealing who the advert was being booked for. Before telling me, he asked if there were any editorial restrictions on who could advertise. Naturally, I said no, the only strictures that we put on adverts are that they be legally valid and not too offensive, with discretion reserved. I replied that we were all capitalists now, with the undercurrent of 'nothing is getting to get in the way of us and your cash'.

Intrigued by all this intrigue, I finally got out of him that his client was a large national graduate recruiter that had been suffering from bad press over its equal opportunities policy (I'm afraid that I cannot reveal who it actually is - you will have to wait for the next issue). Knowing the

answer already, I asked why there had been problems. He replied that many students' unions had policies expressly prohibiting dealings with his client.

There was a similar case with the summer mailout by the Union to new members of College. A contract with the mailout suppliers explicitly said that the Union was not allowed to object to the companies in the mailout, and particular to a specific bank. No problem for us, as ICU has no such interdictions, but for other students' unions there might be a conflict of interest. In today's rather harsh fiscal environment, principle can often be sold down the river for financial rewards. But with the demand on the services provided by unions increasing, and students' expectations greater than ever before can the managers of unions (and clubs like *Felix*) afford not to take these straightforward offers of additional income?

Principle can also come into conflict with good business sense. This is amply demonstrated by the problems NUS Services Ltd, the service arm of the NUS, have had with the NUS campaign against Pepsi. NUSSL have signed a deal with Pepsi giving low prices to students, but the NUS has a standing policy not to deal with the company.

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ALDUS, IVAN, LILI, LING AND ROBIN; SPORT: DAVID;
COLLATING LAST WEEK: DAVID

Don't forget:
the bumper Christmas *Felix* comes out on
Wednesday 18th December

Filled with giveaways, a huge review section, Christmas stories and features, plus a roundup of next year's news.

ELIMINATION BY CLANSMAN

- a) Immediate awakener?
- b) Two forming genius.
- c) Flexible tread.
- d) Two synonyms.
- e) In the beginning?
- f) Two anagrams.
- g) Immediate delivery?
- h) Two forming playground attraction.
- i) Active movement.
- j) Two with safety.
- k) Sporting display?
- l) Two with broker.
- m) Transparent roughage?
- n) Two with fall.
- o) Finger covering.
- p) Two with off.
- q) Symbolic gesture.
- r) Two forming interconnecting system.
- s) Automatic payout?
- t) Two with market.

1. big
2. net
3. tip
4. bang
5. fill
6. form
7. game
8. hard
9. mind
10. nail
11. over
12. pawn
13. show
14. sign
15. town
16. walk
17. work
18. about
19. anger
20. brisk
21. class
22. debit
23. fibre
24. first
25. glass
26. match
27. range
28. round
29. short
30. stamp
31. stock
32. coffee
33. direct
34. master
35. rubber
36. curtain
37. instant
38. varnish
39. language
40. Saturday
41. difficult

Elimination:

Fairly straightforward really. Look at the first statement above, and try and find two words from the list on the right that match it, then cross off these two words.

Keep working down the list, crossing off two words each time, and eventually you should find that you are left with just one word. This is the solution.

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Kings flatten Jesters IC fall foul of RSM Football

A superlative performance by the Kings of RSM against the Jesters of IC Seconds led to their 100% winning record remaining intact. IC Seconds scored an unexpected and early goal, after which RSM took control and dominated play for the next seventy minutes. With some of the most dazzling and exciting play this college has witnessed, IC Seconds were totally embarrassed, and to be honest might have looked more at ease against our second team. Two goals from Keith

Whitehead, whose scything runs through the heart of the IC defence led to simple tap-ins. IC goalkeeper (Dracula - he can't hold crosses) had a nightmare of a game, and Neil Price and Johan Viktorsson scored two consolation goals, more through the inability of RSM defence than good play.

A good team performance led to the final 5-3 scoreline, with Neil Price outstanding, and earning the nomination as Man of the Match.

Painted Ladies take sweet revenge, as Womens Rugby storm to victory

The Painted Ladies (minus the vocal Juliette) stormed onto the pitch to take revenge on the hated hussies from the Royal Free.

Intense pressure from IC forced a massive blunder by the stretched Royal Free defence, giving IC an early lead. Atisa put another in the back of the net from one of the numerous corners won by IC. After much encouragement/abuse from the incapacitated captain, Bente pounced on a hopeless clearance to smash home number three, leaving IC 3-0 up at half-time.

In the second-half, Royal Free finally got their act together and pulled back a lucky goal straight after Olympia notched up IC's fourth. However, stern defence, particularly by Steph and Hege, stopped Royal Free getting back into the game.

The final scoreline, a convincing four - one victory to the Painted ladies, proved sweet revenge. It was a terrific performance, and the congratulations for the victory must go to both the attack and the defence, all of whom put in sterling work.

Controversy continues to stalk embittered Fourths

On the face of it this should have been a mismatch; surely a comfortable win for the fourths? However circumstances conspired against us to such an extent that eight players were unavailable, and it is down to the team's hard work that a draw was obtained.

After a shaky start due to so many new faces we quickly got into our stride and scored two quality goals, one clinically finished by Darren, the other a supreme 25 yard chip by Nak. From then however Queen Mary's dominated the game leaving IC with only a few chances to wrap up the game. Queen Mary's pulled one back before half-time; a tame shot which the 'keeper could only push onto the post was followed up and tapped into an empty net.

In the second half QMW wasted various chances, though IC's

defence played their part producing numerous last ditch tackles to keep their goal in tact. The 'keeper also played his part; one shot in particular produced, at full stretch, a finger tip save. Queen Mary's controversial equaliser came with only minutes remaining, from a corner our keeper was physically obstructed from reaching the ball and the resulting shot was cleared off the line by Paul. The referee said, "No obstruction" and that the ball had crossed the line. Everyone was outraged but despite heated protests the goal stood.

Everybody played their part in a good team performance, though a mention must be given to the central midfield duo of Adam and Nak who were superb.

Roll on Saturday and the nutters of UMDS...

Final thrust saves Virgin's reputation

The Womens Rugby team began strongly (as expected), with a defence penetration by Becky leading to a try from Petra within the first two minutes. UCL, realising we were no easy game, fought back hard and soon equalised. The game proved an unexpected struggle, with UCL scoring again before half-time.

The forwards stormed through with fantastic rucking, and Lynsey scored to take it to 10-10. UCL soon scored again, and it was only in the final two minutes that Sarah W brought us equal again, so we have still never lost to UCL. Special praise goes to all of our new recruits, who were playing in their first match.

C&G massacre South Bank

**SEAN FITZPATRICK
FELIX RUGBY CORRESPONDENT**

A rampant C & G side put on a power display of rugby to emerge victorious 38-0 against a shell shocked South Bank Poly.

Dave Pearce opened the scoring under the posts and Keith Beattie danced around several men to add a second try. Andy Gilder operating effectively at scrum half burrowed over for a third.

Sustained pressure in the second-half saw flanker Martin Arye increase the lead and further tries followed for Chris Mutter on a superbly executed double dummy pop, and hooker Matt Anstead rounding off a sweeping movement. Fly-half Gareth Williams was in stunning form (compared to normal) with the boot, and slotted over four conversions. All in all a resounding victory for the engineers.

RESULTS

MENS FOOTBALL

IC 1ST 1 - 2 LSE 1ST

IC 2ND 3 - 4 LSE 2ND

IC 2ND 3 - 5 RSM 1ST

IC 3RD 6 - 0 CHARRING CROSS

IC 3RD 1 - 2 KINGS 2ND

IC 4TH 2 - 0 BARTS

IC 4TH 2 - 2 QMW

IC 5TH 1 - 7 KINGS 5TH

WOMENS FOOTBALL

IC 4 - 1 ROYAL FREE

MENS RUGBY

C & G 38 - 0 SOUTH BANK

RCS 34 - 20 QMW

WOMENS RUGBY

IC 15 - 15 UCL

FELIX SPORT

Football Seconds loose out to luck of the draw

With the league stage of the BUSA cup over and the knockout stage starting today the stakes were high for IC seconds. The winner of this match would be playing a team from somewhere in the south-east - a day at the seaside a distinct possibility if, "The Slags" could pull this one off. The opponents were LSE - the league leaders of the division above us. The odds looked stacked against us, especially as three regular team members were out with flu but we knew that LSE couldn't match our passion, determination or sheer good looks.

The game started badly - with our defence looking surprisingly shaky a dubious penalty was conceded and duly scored. We were two down within ten minutes and in desperate need of a booster from somewhere. It came when the ball was played to the right and latched onto by the blonde blur that was GoldiLoz - this week's birthday boy looking good in his swanky new boots - who's low cross was hammered home by the ever goal-hungry Martin, who then levelled the score with a sensational lob. More defensive madness, though, meant that at half-time the

score was 3-2 to them.

An arousing speech by Captain Condom Steve got us going and from the restart our hard tackling and superb hairstyles put LSE on the back foot. A subtle flick down the line by simple Si sent the mighty Robo away and his superb cross was finished off in fine style by fourth team ringer Tak.

With the game heading into extra time, and the ref looking at his watch, a ball was played through our defence. Neither Rob nor Will could get near the LSE striker and his low shot was deflected by goalie Steve. Our hearts were in our mouths as, seemingly in slow-motion, German was fooled by a bad bounce and forced to palm the ball off the line. The second penalty of the day was slotted home by LSE and there was barely time for the game to restart.

We were left to reflect on what might have been in a match that was balanced, exciting and played in the true spirit of the game. At the end of the day, football was the winner (Brian). Unfortunately we were the losers.

British Indoor Rowing championships retained

Awesome Simon Dennis (Biology III) powered his way to victory in the British Indoor Rowing championships in Reading last weekend.

Racing in the Under-23 division, which was stacked to the brim with top Oxbridge rowers, Dennis qualified for the final with the fifth fastest time. Commentators billed the final as a clash between Oxford and Cambridge, but Dennis was having none of this, and was keen to keep the trophy in the IC cabinet, Louis Attnl having achieved victory last year.

As the race unfolded, Dennis and Thomas Westerling (an international sculler) broke clear of the pack. But with 700m of the 2km distance left to row, Dennis roared and pulled a series of staggering splits out of the

bag, as he trucked on to victory. His time of 5.57 knocked seven seconds off his personal best and was only three seconds off the time clocked by World record holder Greg Searle in the Mens Senior final.

In the womens race, Alison Trickey (Chemistry & Management III) came within a second of victory. In a closely fought race, she just lost out to Elise Laverick (a World Under-23 bronze medallist). The womens squad was well represented in the final, highlighting their strength in depth.

Both Alison and Simon won the BUSA competition, and other IC Boat Club rowers also figured highly in the BUSA rankings, showing that winter training is going well, which bodes well for the summer.

Hockey Firsts bounce back into top form

Time for the old skool to take charge. After a rather nervy start, 2-0 down after 15 minutes, the IC Hockey Firsts steamroller charged into top gear. Two goals in five minutes from short corners. Chicken Bol drove in a shot to the far post with the venom of a python, while Marky Mark bumbled a pile-driver between the goalies legs. The score remained the same until half-time. Rent Boy delivered an epic skippers half-time talk, prompting continued rampaging play, buoyed by the promise of free-beer.

But, despite this the tide began to turn as the ginger-haired wonder of QMW began to spur his shambles towards greater things. Increasing pressure from QMW resulted in a well taken goal by their no.15, mak-

ing the score 3-2.

This stung IC back into action, with Sid producing a classic, prompting the goalkeeper to put the ball into his own net. There was no stopping the Firsts now, another short-corner allowing the Dutch-come-English wonder to net our fourth. Despite QMW's dismal efforts to pierce our rock-solid defence, the last laugh belonged to IC. On the stroke of full-time Sid netted again, this time from nearly two full inches, making the final score 5-3 to IC. The First's now enter the second round of the ULU cup, and with only a mixture of Peter Andre fans and big girls left in the competition, our chances of securing trophies for the fans must be rated as very good.

Sport in brief

RCS RUGBY

RCS started the season with a well fought victory over QMW. RCS started with fire with a well worked try from Maru Woodhouse, closely followed by the first yellow card in college rugby history. Leading after half-time, QMW replied by pulling back to within two points, until tries by Jack Pert, Kolone Yong and captain Psyco Dan, sealed the game for RCS, despite unlucky kicking by Andy mobile Mayes. We confirmed our superiority by roundly defeating them in the boatraces.

LADIES HOCKEY

After the 10-0 win against Wye, the IC First babes have been on a roll. Saturday was a well earned draw against the top of the league club, thanks mainly to a wonderful penalty flick save from Becky and then a little goal from the amazingly, wonderful Dutch captain.

Then, onto a deserved 2-0 win against UMDS. Everybody played an excellent match, and a special mention must be made of the beautiful short corners.

Our entertaining keeper kept up the team, our defence was like an iron wall, the halves kept it wide and our wingers flew through the opposition.

BOAT CLUB

The IC Boat Club continued its successful season with a win for the mens' Novice B crew at the University of London Sprint Regatta last weekend. The crew, who all started rowing in October, performed with increasing confidence during the day, achieving substantial wins over the Royal Free, a composite form Royal London and Bart's, and the UCL novices in the final.

Such a result from the novice B crew so early in the season highlights the strength of the IC Boat Club at all levels in general, and the amazing ability of the novices in particular.

HOCKEY THIRDS

Even though UMDS played a continental 1-4-2 formation, IC's abilities meant a solid draw was ensured at the end of normal time. Skank and Curtains scored two amazing goals between them to ensure the game progressed to penalty flicks.

Paul Cornow scored again, along with Digger and unbelievably, only one of their slightly inferior team scored.

Through to the next round of the London Universities cup - unbelievable!