

est. 1949

THE FELIX

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<http://www.su.ic.ac.uk/Felix>

Student Newspaper of Imperial College

News Review

Whaddya mean you weren't there? Catch up with all the terms news on page 6.

Somewhere out on campus, a good looking man awaits. Afua Osei investigates the **Imperial Man** and his prowess. Page 10.

SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND

**A super special
Something for the
Weekend with loads
of reviews, give-
aways and a story!**

New BMS accident causes injury

JACKIE SKEATE

In the latest in a string of accidents on the Biomedical Sciences building site, a worker has been seriously injured when the main gates to the compound struck him on the jaw. The incident, which occurred on Friday 6th, has prompted a change of procedure on the site.

The man, a concrete mixer truck driver who was unloading at the rear of the vehicle, was hit by the gate after a piece of wooden form-work fell from its position at nudged the gate. The piece of form-work (timber 'A' frames used to set concrete) was in turn dislodged when a crane lifting another frame knocked it.

An air ambulance and conventional emergency services were called to the scene to attend to the injured man. After treatment on site for his jaw, which was described as "smashed", he was taken to hospital.

This is the fourth incident this year involving one of the cranes on the BMS site. Over the summer the larger crane, 61 metres tall and stabilised by concrete weighing 100 tonnes, turned the wrong way and crashed into the Chemistry building. A second incident involved a large block of concrete falling from a substantial

height. This accident led to a high-level health and safety investigation, which may eventually result in changes in design of these types of crane. On another occasion, due to a breakdown in communications, a crane put several tonnes of steel reinforcing rods through a window in the Chemistry building. Four people were in the room at the time. Miraculously, no-one was injured.

Following these incidents, Schal, the main contractor, has established a permanent Quality Manager on site. A Safety Manager was also appointed. In response to the question of whether further incidents were still possible, Ian Caldwell, Director of Estates, confidently stated "We believe that what is in place should prevent other problems."

As a direct result of this accident changes have been made to safety procedures on site. Form-work that is stacked up in storage will be securely tied to the A-frame, so it cannot fall. Progress on the construction, some of which is ahead of schedule, should not be hindered by the new rule.

The injured man state was described as "stable and recovering" by College officials, but "would be drinking soup for a while."



Emergency services in action at the scene of Friday's accident. A worker was seriously injured when the main gate struck his jaw.

Postgraduate loans scheme introduced

MATHIEU RICHARD

A new postgraduate loan plan is presently being discussed in the form of a collaborative project between Midland Bank and a group of 11 British universities, potentially involving the 30,000 postgraduate students of York, Durham, Bath, Essex, Sussex, Exeter, Reading, East Anglia, Surrey and Birbeck College in London.

The official aim of this new type of

agreement is to "encourage postgraduate study" by offering the students preferential terms for bank loans. Midland Bank will offer loans of up to £10,000 for fees and maintenance costs (or £5,000 for one-year courses) at a rate only 2 percent over their base rate, and repayable for up to seven years after the end of the course.

This plan will add, to and supplant in many cases, the quasi-nonexistent

Research Council studentships and the rare Government's Career Development Loans by complementing public funding for postgraduates. The latter was severely criticised by Essex Vice-Chancellor Ivor Crewe as "inadequate to meet the [present] research needs of this country... and the future staffing needs of our universities." Therefore, Mr Crewe welcomed the agreement as "a very positive move" towards more gener-

alised postgraduate study.

Nevertheless, this optimistic view was not shared by everyone. The students themselves, through the voice of their representing body, the National Postgraduate Committee, expressed their doubts as to the real purpose of this plan and its concrete consequences.

Effectively, Midland Bank's profitable "marketing exercise", as com-

continued on page four

General Election to be held over Easter holidays

NEWSTEAM

Tory MPs from more than a dozen marginal constituencies are believed to be swaying John Major's decision over the date of the next General Election. These MPs are in constituencies which contain a relatively high percentage of students. They fear that most students will vote Labour in the next election, so they feel that it is in the best interests of them and their party if the election is held during the Easter vacation, when most students have gone home for the holidays. Many party strategists see April 10th as the most likely date, and the Prime Minister himself has said that the Government may be forced to go to the polls before the pencilled-in date of May 1st.

The majorities of Tory MPs in seats such as Luton, Coventry, Portsmouth, Oxford and Exeter are only a few hundred, and with over ten thousand students in their constituencies they believe that the date of the election could substantially influence their chances of re-election. Some are already aware that

they only secured their tiny majorities in 1992 because the election was held on April 9th. On the other hand, some Conservative MPs lost their seats in 1992 when students made a group decision to vote by post in areas such as Bath, York, and Cambridge.

A senior Tory spokesman made the position clear. "If we manage to have not just polling day but also most of the campaign during the holidays, we have increased our chances of holding those seats." With the government majority at the last election a mere twenty-two, then clearly these dozen constituencies were crucial to determining the government of the country over the last four years.

Labour strategists are believed to be mobilising in preparation for an April election, and are campaigning to persuade students to register to vote. Furthermore, a group of more than 6000 Labour students are running a campaign to show members how to use postal votes, so that whenever the election is called they can vote wherever they feel their

vote will be most useful. Their leader, Ruth Potter, said "If the Tories go for April, they will have an advantage because students tend to vote Labour. But we are working hard in our campaign." One Tory in a marginal seat commented "It is a bit of a dated concept that all students are left-wing".

Unsurprisingly, Kensington and Chelsea is not one of those constituencies said to be at risk from the hotbed of left-wing extremism that is IC. Despite the turmoil that has

recently surrounded the local Tory party with the deselection of Sir Nicholas Scott, this remains one of the safest Conservative seats in the country.

Although the effects of students all voting from home are hard to predict, it seems clear that the election date could prove crucial to the outcome of the 1997 General Election. If you still haven't registered to vote, fill out one of those "Rock the Vote" forms or go to <http://www.rock-thevote.org.uk/mark.htm>

News in Brief

AUT CONDEMN PAY OFFER

The Association of University Teachers has condemned the 5% over two years increase in pay they were offered, dismissing it as "totally inadequate." David Triesman, General Secretary of the AUT, said "All HE unions were united in rejecting this...Taken as a package this offer is actually worse than the last. Members will be very angry indeed." This means that the dispute will probably become more disruptive, with the threat of further strike action. The AUT have expressed pleasure that the employers are showing willingness to discuss the matter, but, as Mr Triesman points out, "Real negotiations are needed urgently."

WILSON HOUSE

After months of negotiations between College and St Mary's Student Union, College has finally agreed to fund part of the cost of refurbishing the bar in the Recreational Centre at Wilson House. The work is expected to be completed by the start of next term.

As well as being used as a sport centre and an examination hall, the Recreational Centre also stages the annual musical productions by the St Mary's Hospital Opera Society and the Medics' Soiree. At the moment, the bar is only ever opened on such occasions. After the refurbishments, which will include the addition of a table-tennis table, it is expected to be used as a place for club meetings and private study. The Warden, Dr Bryan Clarke, hopes that residents will make full use of the new facilities to justify the investments made by College.

CONSCIOUS COMPUTER

A research group headed by Professor Igor Aleksander yesterday unveiled a new type of computer capable of learning and making an informed decision given a choice. The computer, known as Magnus, has been described as the "first conscious machine" and is the product of over six years work. It is even theoretically possible that Magnus could one day be taught to walk and talk.

TOXIC PAINT

A more accurate method for testing for toxic metals in paint has been developed by Imperial College's Centre for Analytical Research in Environment in Berkshire. The new technique, known as neutron activation analysis, or NAA, will be able to provide a reference against which paint toxicity can be calculated.

This technique could have applications in the toy manufacturing industry, where toxicity levels in paint have to be regulated. Because NAA is highly accurate, the EU are demanding that this system should be used to set the standard. Paint contains cadmium, mercury, barium, chromium and small amounts of arsenic. The upper limits on the quantities of these potentially lethal elements must by law be carefully controlled.

LECTURERS

A recent national survey of university lecturers was published in the Guardian last week. Among those who took part in the survey, 9% of lecturers confessed themselves to be alcoholics, 23% were clinically depressed, and 60% expressed a desire to leave.

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Meningitis concern causes rush on university health services

MATTHEW BENNETT

University health services across Britain have been inundated with calls from concerned students after the spate of meningitis cases centred around the University of Wales in Cardiff spread to other institutions.

With two deaths and at least five confirmed cases from the same hall of residence in Cardiff, 770 students were given vaccinations for the C strain of meningococcal meningitis bacteria.

A 16 year old boy at a Manchester school died from meningitis and a 15 year old girl is seriously ill with the disease. Students have also died at Brighton and Bradford. The strain of the disease at Bradford has not been identified, so students there can not yet be vaccinated. There has been no decision made on whether to vaccinate the 18,000 students in Brighton.

Both the Manchester and Cardiff cases were puzzling, as the affected students were not close friends. The disease is most often passed on by

intimate contact, especially kissing, as the germs are carried in the nose and mouth. In several universities where outbreaks have occurred, many social events have been cancelled to stop it spreading.

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.

Further cases have been reported at Southampton Institute of Higher Education, York, Portsmouth and Bournemouth universities. Students have a higher rate of infection than

the general population, with freshers being seen as particularly vulnerable.

There are three strains of meningitis, A,B and C, and while there are vaccines for A & C, there is none available for the B strain. The vac-

of patients who recover from the bacterial form of the disease sustain chronic damage to the nervous system.

Meningitis can be treated with antibiotics, if caught early enough. Students at Cardiff have been issued with antibiotic tablets for use at the first appearance of symptoms, which can occur two to ten days after infection. After that, the progress of the disease is very quick, with loss of consciousness possible within hours. Many of the symptoms are similar to influenza, which has caused a lot of anxiety among the student population. Dr Paul Coathup from the University of East Anglia in Norwich explained, "We are in the middle of the 'flu season, and as soon as meningitis hits the headlines everyone thinks that they are suffering from it when really they have 'flu'."

Imperial College Union officials advised students who were experiencing severe 'flu like symptoms to see their doctor.

10/10

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Engineering Fears

NEWSTEAM

The Engineering council has announced future plans for tougher entry standards for engineering degrees. The report, known as SARTOR '96, suggests candidates should have 24 points or over at A levels to study for MEng degrees, 18 for BEng (Hons), and 6 points for a BEng. There are 10 points for an A level grade A, 8 for a B, 6 for a C, and so on.

Several university heads slammed this approach as being "elitist" and described it as a threat to the profession. One pointed out that "there was very little correlation" between A level grades of students studying courses and their final degrees.

The report recommends "fewer and better chartered engineers and more and better incorporated engi-

neers." The four year MEng meets the criteria needed for registration as a chartered engineer. The BEng degree course could end up being re-registered as an Incorporated Engineering degree, or IEng. The Engineering Council has plans to promote these courses. A spokesman, Robin Bond, said that "those gaining IEng will not be seen as failed chartered engineers. By having a degree specially for the incorporated rank, we are emphasising the importance of the practical approach to the profession."

Vice-Chancellors are concerned that a low proportion of institutions offering engineering courses will be able to ask for candidates to have the high grades the MEng degrees would require, with some institutions being forced to drop engineering.

Postgraduate loans

continued from front page

mittee General Secretary John Gray phrases it, may well not end up being very profitable to the students. Not only does this plan elude the real problem of Higher Education funding, but, apart from one-year vocational students for whom this plan may come in handy, most subscribing to this plan will find that, despite the preferential terms, this loan can turn

out to be a time bomb ready to detonate at the end of their three years of postgraduate study. In any case, this plan does not modify the intrinsically morose situation of postgraduate education. For this plan to be seen as a real encouragement, the students would need to be, as Mr Gray puts it, "pretty confident they will get straight into a big money job", which is unlikely to be the case for most.



PHOTO: ALDOUS

The Christmas spirit finally made to some parts of the campus, as a cheery Santa visits the cleaners of the Blackett Laboratory. He's making a list, checking it twice, he's going to find out who's naughty or nice...

Polys above Oxbridge in citations index

NEWSTEAM

New light has been shed on the "new" versus "old" university debate this week with the publication of eight fund-holding council assessment overview reports.

Some former polytechnics scored very highly, while other more established institutions attained less than glowing results. These reports, published by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, cover eight subject areas and are a collation of the results and recommendations outlined during the assessment of individual establishments during the 95/96 academic year. Each university and college was awarded a specific number of points in each of the areas: curriculum design, teaching, learning and assessment, student progression and achievement, learning resources, student support and guidance, and quality assurance.

The standard of higher education

in English universities has been shown to be high, with most universities achieving good scores in most or all of the above areas. The quality of courses has since been approved by the funding council in all but six cases.

Among the consistent top performers are the University of Northumbria, Queen Mary and Westfield College, Sheffield, Hull, Warwick, and University College, London.

Also issued last week were the results of a survey by an American based organization regarding the research strengths of British universities. The Institute of Scientific Information, which monitors science publications, published their report on university research which took four years to compile. The ISI assessed research in twenty-one areas and ranked institutions according to the total number of citations

received and the number of citations attained per paper for each field, the latter allowing smaller universities to be compared more equitably with larger, more reputable ones.

Careful examination of the conclusions drawn shows that Oxbridge research strength is very high, with Oxford earning a place in the top three for 17 out of the 21 fields included. Cambridge, slightly lower down the scale from Oxford, came top in seven fields.

Other establishments also fare very well. Imperial College top the league for citations per paper in both Clinical Medicine and Pharmacology, as well as falling within the first three for Mathematics, Ecology/Environment, and Immunology. Imperial also dominates the "Total citations" table, being one of the top three universities for seven out of the twenty-one research fields assessed.

Welsh student aims high

A Welsh student studying at IC has declared her ambition to become the first person from Wales to go into space. Rhian Felstead is studying Engineering and French.

She has set her sights on travelling to Toulouse, the headquarters of the French Space Agency, for her year in Europe. Although Rhian has always been interested in the final frontier, her desire to journey into space was recently ignited when she met Helen Sharman, the only Briton to have gone into orbit. "The way she talked about what it was like, how she felt...I was fascinated." The first step toward space, learning to fly, will have to wait until she completes her degree, as Rhian was not quite tall enough to enter the College Air Squadron. However, she refuses to let such a setback block her progress "Being in space and experiencing it for myself. That's the ultimate thrill."

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NATWEST MARKETS



Autumn Term

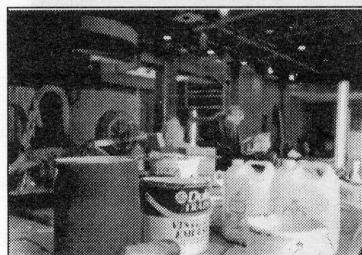
Do you remember...

ISSUE 1063

...When library users had a lucky escape as bits of concrete started falling just inches from unsuspecting students. The library was in the middle of building work that would add two extra storeys and extend the ground floor.

Just hours before *Felix* went to press, a four ton lump of concrete fell from the ceiling of the walkway just outside the library entrance. Nearby workmen observed that "it would definitely have killed anyone underneath it." Mr Ian Gillet confirmed that nobody had been injured but nervously joked that someone had "felt a draught down the back of his neck as it fell."

The incident prompted an investigation into safety on the various construction projects around campus but unfortunately was not the last to befall work on the campus.



On a brighter note for construction work, the Union saw the transformation of its Ents Lounge into the glittering spectacle of dBs, the culmination of two years of strategic planning. The £0.1 million project designed by the College's CAD Office just made its building schedule in time for the grand opening.

Events and Marketing Manager Mark Horne, commented that the old Ents Lounge had been like "a sixth form disco" and looked forward to getting the crowds in. A term's worth of usage seems to have borne out students' initial impressions that it was a significant improvement on the old "dark blue box," with the room being packed most lunchtimes and on ents nights.

The entertainment front was also given the boost by the news that Imperial College Union was one of the few in the country to serve Guinness after NUS Services Ltd, the group that supplies all NUS affiliated unions, fell out with the company. Regulars in the Union Bar looked

smug in their newly privileged position.

Smugness radiated elsewhere too as Imperial's Boat Club triumphed again, this time at Henley. In a round up of the summer sport, *Felix* reported an elated rowing team scooping the Grand at Henley for the first time in the club's history.

ISSUE 1064

The University of London Union's year got off to a bad start as they lost one of their sabbatical officers before term even started. Claire Lawrie, a former LSE student who held the position of Deputy President for Finance and Services for approximately one month before resigning due to "family problems."

The ULU President, Sarah White, sometime President of ICU, assured members of the Union that "... the service that we provide has not been affected." However, the ULU stall at ICU's Freshers' Fair seemed to be somewhat disorganised, with Ms White scurrying around due to a late delivery.

Meanwhile, back at ULU central, the papers went up for nominations for the sabbatical post. By the close of nominations, only two people were fully seconded, Nick Dearden, an MSc student from LSE, and Ben Hughes from Royal Holloway. Mr Dearden turned up at ICU to advise our sabbaticals which way to vote, a clear breach of ULU election rules. Naughty boy.

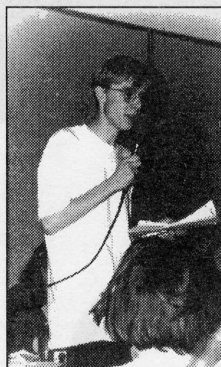
Closer to home, the Royal Geographical Society unknowingly hosted a stripper at the City and Guilds Union's freshers' reception. The stage show, organised as a simple publicity stunt by the C&GU, barely raised a murmur around College, though one of the College Tutors, Dr Gareth Jones, commented that he was "very disturbed to hear that it happened."

The RGS were less than amused, and threatened never to allow another Union event on their premises. ICU President Eric Allsop suggested to Guilds that it probably wasn't such a good idea but conceded "that how they present themselves to the student body is ultimately their decision."

ISSUE 1065

Sadness over closure of 'excellent' Montpellier Hall headed the front page story of issue 1065. Montpellier, the last of College's postgrad only halls, has been earmarked for closure in September 1997, with the loss of 75 beds. Senior academics questioned the decision, voicing concern over the priority of postgraduate accommodation.

The decision to close the Hall was taken by College's Management Planning Group, in view that it could not really postponed much longer. The Hall faces a renovation bill of £600,000. Not everyone was happy with the closure, however. Dr Richard Clark, warden of the Hall, "expressed sadness" at the decision, at that it would be "a great loss."



Back to the antics at ULU, the election for the vacant Finance and Services sabbatical took place. Nick Dearden, favourite of the previous incumbent, won convincingly despite worries over a pre-campaign interview he gave to *Felix* the previous week. The interview went against ULU electoral regulations, but, luckily for Mr Dearden, the Elections Committee chose not to prohibit his nomination.

The "casual ballistics" of a drunken Southside guest were considered lucky not to have injured someone after one a "friend-of-a-friend" of a Southside resident threw a full can of beer off the roof of the Hall. The can arched gracefully into the lounge window of a mews house behind the Hall. The resident was not pleased, and somewhat shocked, but still magnanimously conceded that "we were all students once." The Southside student was not quite so lucky and faced a disciplinary Residences Tribunal.

ISSUE 1066

At the start of a recurring theme, Clayponds' security came under the spotlight. "A spate of crime at Clayponds, the College's South Ealing residential estate, has been at the centre of rising complaints of 'inadequate' security at the site" began the article, pointing out that the current rate of one theft every ten days was quite appalling. After an initial spat over figures, with some College authorities claiming that there had been no break-ins for four weeks, the debate, carried out in the medium of *Felix*'s letters page began to centre on the proposed security measures.

Students wanted deadlocks, the College said that it couldn't afford them without upping the rents. The students wanted deadlocks, as recommended by local crime prevention officers. The College installed a "man and his dog", who stayed, in the main, in his van. The students wanted deadlocks and bars, "We wouldn't mind it looking like Alcatraz if we got to keep our stuff," said one. The College installed some carpets instead, at cost of £163,170 (including VAT) and sent round a questionnaire. The survey revealed that the students were not prepared to pay extra rent for extra security.

Another theme that kept popping up during the term, again connected to money, was the threat by the Association of University Teachers and other higher education unions to strike over their 1.5% pay offer. At this stage, the unions were balloting their members, but the result was widely predicted to be a unanimous 'yes', which would herald the "first wide scale industrial action in HE for ten years." David Treisman, General Secretary of the AUT summed up the employees feelings "All groups in the public sector have had to deal with an effective pay freeze over the last two or three years, but university staff have been outting up with one for fifteen."

The NUS immediately pledged to support any strike, whereas ICU were slightly more reserved in their support. "The AUT have a perfectly valid protest, and so we'd like to back them on this issue. However,

...it may mean top-up fees as an alternative funding source" said Eric Allsop.

ISSUE 1067

A blast from the past for most on the South Kensington site as **medical students expressed their anger at College's plans** for their new curriculum at a specially arranged forum with College academics. In particular, Dr Rory Shaw, the senior academic in charge of the new course, came in for criticism from the students.

Other topics under discussion included accommodation, where the medics were assured by Ian Caldwell, College's Director of Estates, that "any promise made in the prospectus would be fully abided by", and sporting facilities for the medics. It was announced by Eric Allsop that St Mary's sports clubs would no longer have their own team in the BUSA championships, to much derision by the assembled crowd.

As expected, the social space in the new Bio-medical Science building came up for an airing. In response to demands that the College respect the medics "closely-knit social structure," Mr Caldwell countered that "the College is keen to promote integration, and there is no reason why there should be a separate medical body."



Medical matters of a different kind were also reported as it was announced that researchers at Imperial College School of Medicine at St Mary's discovered a new link between Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy and Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food still denied that the results were conclu-

sive. A spokeswoman for MAFF stated that the Government handling of the affair was not at fault. The European Parliament disagreed and extended their investigation in to the British Government's handling of the BSE crisis. Elsewhere in the EU, beef curtains remained firmly shut.

ISSUE 1068

In a much abridged **Commemoration Ceremony**, a bold Sir Ronald Oxburgh told graduands his fears that "the quality of education was being threatened" by the cuts in higher education funding. he went on to highlight the College's achievements and the boat Clubs victory at Henley in particular, suggesting that anyone who could help financially in building the new boathouse should not "hesitate to let me know."

Medical students reared their heads again with new uproar at room allocation in Wilson House, a previously medics only hall. The residents claimed that non medical students had been given places in preference to medical student in spite of an assurance that the homeless medics in question would be given places. The Warden of the hall, Bryan Clarke, told Felix that "some of the rooms had become available for a short period because some of the residents had travelled abroad on placement." He pointed out that no medical students had applied for the places when they were advertised. Student representatives disagreed, saying that the spare rooms should have been foreseen, and the displaced students had now found alternate accommodation and thus didn't apply for the rooms. They suggested that this was "a well orchestrated move by the College to start introducing non-medics into Wilson House," and went against the grain of an earlier promise to keep the hall solely for pre-clinical students after 1998.

Extremism of a different kind cast a shadow over London as reports of active **fundamentalist Islamic groups** rose after a summer lull. King's College seemed to attract more than its fair share of attention as leafleteers taunted College and Union authorities by placing them-

selves just beyond the jurisdictional boundaries. A statement from King's College Union read "We find it important to protect our students from fundamentalism, especially the religious type. King's has had problems with such groups of all faiths in the past."

On a lighter note, the **sandwich makers of the College** catering department came into focus, or more precisely, their valuing of their own work. Following complaints about the price of sandwiches, *Felix* decided to investigate... And found that, while the cost of the materials for producing a simple sandwich amounted to about 20p, the prices varied between those of the College canteens, those of local shops and Harrods. The College blamed overheads for their higher priced product. The students, and staff, were unimpressed.

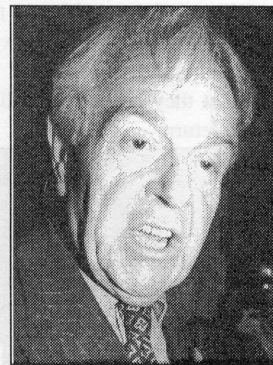
ISSUE 1069

The question in everybody's mind was whether or not the **vote by higher education workers of all levels to strike** would actually mean IC getting pickets on the gates and a total shut down. Despite claims that the vote was "the first time in history... that everyone from 'porter to professor' are going to close university gate" the vote was far from unanimous. Three of the trades unions in the higher education consortium voting on industrial action only made the majority required for action by 2%. However, Bryan Wilson, President of the Imperial College branch of the AUT, pointed out that the turnout of 59% was higher than the average turnout at General Elections of 50%. This, he said, was a "reflection of the anger" felt by staff at "paltry pay rises."

Pro-Rector Alan Swanson commented that he would be "surprised if the Government turned in their tracks" as result of the strike, but speculated that the strike would be fairly solid among technical staff. Although this would mean the shut down of many labs, he left it to Heads of Department to advise to students whether to turn up or not.

One definite downer was the defeat by St Catherine's College,

Cambridge of **Imperial's University Challenge** team. After last year's glorious victory, much was expected of the four team members. However, with presenter Jeremy Paxman urging them on (the fact that St Cats is Paxman's *alma mater* didn't escape *The Mirror's* TV critic), the gallant foursome fell on the last question. All was not lost, though, they still went through to the next round as the highest scoring losers.



In a sudden announcement, **Sir Nicholas Scott, MP for Kensington & Chelsea**, was told that he would be replaced by his constituency party as the candidate in the next election. The executive of the Kensington & Chelsea Conservative Party decided to drop Sir Nicholas as their candidate after he was found drunk face down in a gutter at the Tory party conference. In response, Sir Nicholas threatened to resign, thus putting the Government's fragile majority in jeopardy. He called for a full meeting of the constituency party to which he would put his case. The electorate carried on as normal.

ISSUE 1070

In the event, the miserable and appalling weather discouraged most people from coming into College on the day, but **striking staff were manning the picket** from an early hour. Imperial College was not the worst hit HE institution by a long way, but even here the strike had some effect. Five departments were closed entirely, and several others had a 'reduced service'.

The strikers were in a bullish mood. "The whole of HE is screwed said one picketer of the proposed Government cuts. Students came in for some minor criticism from some

News Review

Autumn Term

strikers, with complaints of a lack of support being the strongest gripe. Bryan Wilson of the AUT said that they were "leaning over backward not to affect students to much," but had felt that they had received little support in return.



The BMS construction work fell into the news again with the completion of the safety review commissioned after part of the library roof nearly killed someone. A permanent Quality Manager was installed on site by the main Contractors, Schal, and the College Safety Representative, Ian Gillet, was to tour the site weekly. The Quality Manager would review the project over a month and report on his recommendations, as well as keep an eye on the day to day running of the construction. However, concerns were not all smoothed, with one student commenting "I still check the roof just outside the library just before I go in."

Rag inflicted the local populace with their brand of humour in their annual **Sponsored Nude Kamikaze Parachute Jump Rag event**. Eight lucky and plucky souls gathered in a minibus outside Harrods to see who would be the last one back to the Union in a nude running contest. It's all for charity mind, and the event always raises a lot of interest.

This year was no exception as a

somewhat less fit competitor was picked up by the Police. Luckily for him, they were in a nice mood and escorted him back to the Union building to find some clothes. After reassuring their superior that it was just a student stunt, one commented "women and children don't want to see naked overweight blokes on the streets." Rag Chair Andy Southern counted this year's event to be a success.

A secret pet was discovered in Selkirk Hall after one re-app found himself sharing his morning shower with a swarm of crickets. Not that somewhere there was a resident that kept crickets. No. Selkirk Hall was host to a tarantula spider, and the crickets were just its food!

The culprit was soon apprehended, and the Hall fumigated. The resident was given 48 hours to get rid of the spider. The homeless arachnid was last seen advertised on a notice board in the Chemistry Department.

ISSUE 1071

The Budget finally arrived and was a bit of a non-event really. Higher Education got an extra £200 million, science an extra £20 million. The AUT claimed that their campaigning had reduced the expected cut from 3% to a mere 0.5% in real terms. Rodney Eastwood, College's Director of Planning, said that the extra funding did not reverse last year's deep cuts, but it was still too early to say what affect the Budget would have on Imperial College.

Following the strike action two week's earlier, HE staff were preparing to boycott teaching quality assessments as the next stage of their protest. David Treisman, of the AUT, described the Budget as "a change in the step of decline" of HE funding but stated that essentially, they were pinning their hopes on Sir Ron



Dearing's report.

Another success story on the sporting front also with **strong Imperial College involvement was the victory at the United Kingdom Championships** of the ULU Karate Team. The team comprised two current IC student, a former IC student and a medic from University College Hospital. They beat teams from Manchester, Aberystwyth and Liverpool on their way to the title.

A week after Lord Sheffield, a former Rector of the College died, Nobel Laureate and Imperial College Professor Abdus Salam passed away at the aged of 70. A leading light in theoretical physics, Professor Salam, also played a major role in many international organisations, including the Third World Academy of Science and as scientific advisor to the United Nations Educational and Cultural Organisation.

Autumn saw a mid-term trough for the **Royal College of Science Union as two of its officers resigned**. Both the Senior and Junior Honorary Treasurers submitted their resignations in a bad week for the RCSU. Senior Treasurer Ann Mitchell, was forced to resign due to a technicality in the Union's rules - the HST has to be a permanent member of staff, and Dr Mitchell had recently been moved on to a short term contract. The HJT, Chris Bragg, on the other hand was

simply annoyed with the financial incompetence of club treasurers, and after two years in the job already under his belt, decided to resign. RCSU President, Mo Dullloo, agreed that there were some people who were "clueless" about financial policy.

ISSUE 1072

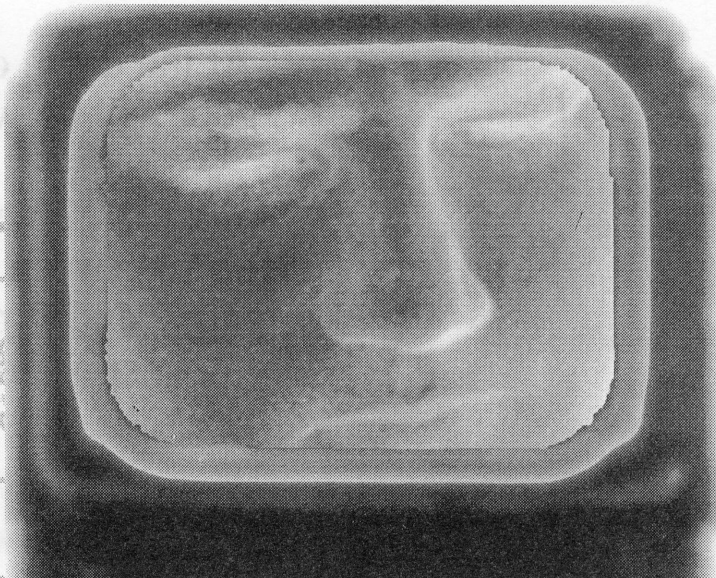
More doom and gloom in the air for students with the news that the **fatal brain disease meningitis had claimed two students at Cardiff University**. Five others were still 'under observation' but were generally thought to be OK. It was revealed that the hall that the students lived had had a case of bacterial meningitis five weeks earlier. The President of Cardiff Student's Union, Dot Hodge, said the two deaths had been traumatic. "Most students of this age are not used to dealing with this sort of grief. Our priority is to do everything that we can to help them cope."

Medics in the news again as the security at **Wilson House became a hot issue**. Four residents of the house were disciplined under a new rule that fines anyone who opened the front door to people with out access cards. The fines of £10 each were imposed by the porter after he caught the students holding the door open for their friends. Bryan Clarke defended the fines by saying "A rule is a rule. It has to be all or nothing for it to work." Sami Ansari, President of St Mary's Student's Union described the move as the "gun-ho approach to policy typical of IC bureaucrats."

Finally, the **long running saga of Sir Nicholas Scott** came to a head. At a meeting of the full constituency party he was deselected by 509 votes to 439, despite a last minute appeal and the backing of a hundred fellow MPs. Sir Nicholas backpedalled on his threat to resign if deselected.

News Review

...do you remember now?



That man on the other page, Simon Baker, takes us through his choice pickings of Christmas televisual 'entertainment'

Ah, you thought my eclectic views were confined to politics and building projects. *Mais non*, for here I shall present to you, dear reader, my top tips for the perfect televisual Crimbo. And, as they say, what a Christmas line-up it is too. In all honesty, this is the best for many years, partly because someone reminded ITV that there is some quaint celebration at the end of December, a fact omitted from their diaries last year.

Starting with films, it's hard to know where to begin. As you probably know by now, **Jurassic Park** (BBC1, 6:30pm) and **The Remains of the Day** (ITV, 10:00pm) are the big hitters on Christmas Day, which unusually has the largest number of must-sees, including **The Wizard of Oz** (BBC1, 11:20am), **Revenge of the Pink Panther** (BBC1, midnight) and **Casablanca** (BBC2, 3:10pm). If you haven't seen the latter and fail to watch it this year, I shall personally send the boys round to ask why. The

Monday before has the brilliant **My Left Foot** (C4, 10:05pm), the sole highlight of the day, but Christmas Eve does better with **Cliffhanger** (BBC1, 9:00pm), the old faithful **Top Gun** (ITV, 9:45pm), **Blazing Saddles** (BBC2, 10:00pm) and **Drop Dead Fred** (C4, 6:45pm). I'm sorry, the last one is a terrible error, Vic - my nuclear strength Nurofen have just kicked in.

Bond fans are not to be disappointed; **Never Say Never Again** (BBC1, Boxing Day, 1:50pm) and, slightly underrated, **The Living Daylights** (ITV, 29th, 8:00pm). As well as Clouseau, Peter Sellers gets a bit of a season this Christmas, with three of his other films - **The Battle of the Sexes** (C4, Christmas Day, 6:50pm), the brilliant send-up of trade unionism **I'm All Right Jack** (C4, New Year's Day, 5:05pm) and the incomparable **Dr Strangelove** (C4, 2nd, 12:25am). Incidentally, **The Man with two Brains** (C4, 27th, 10:00pm), which always, bizarrely, reminds me of **Dr Strangelove** is well worth a look.

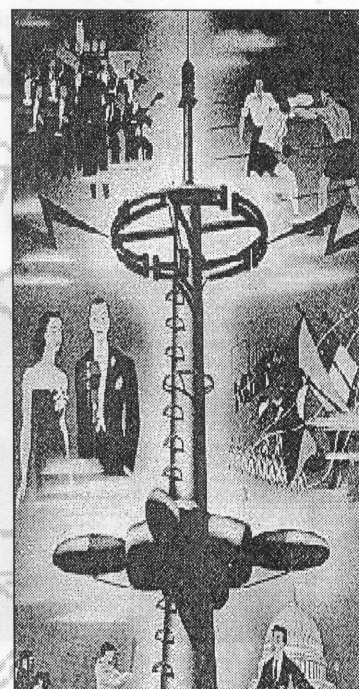
Diehard *Felix* readers will remember last Christmas when I waxed lyrical about **The Italian Job**. This is without doubt one of the funniest caper films ever made, completely timeless and beautifully cast with Michael Caine opposite the redoubtable Noel Coward. If I feared that it wasn't on this year, not being in its regular Christmas Eve slot, but am delighted to say that it is on Boxing Day (BBC2, 4.25pm). What's more, **The Incredibly Close** (BBC1, 28th, 1:40am)

and **Louise** (BBC1, 3th, 10:20pm), **Die Hard** (ITV, New Year's Day, 9:00pm), **ET** (BBC1, New Year's Day, 6:10pm), **The Birds** (BBC1, Christmas Eve, 12:50am), **The Graduate** (BBC1, Boxing Day, 12:05am), **Grease** (BBC1, 27th, 2:55pm), **Raiders of the Lost Ark** (BBC1, 22nd, 8:00pm) and **Shadowlands** (BBC1, New Year's Eve, so video, 8:00pm). There are also a couple of **Carry on** films (**Girls**, **Matron** and **Cowboy**) and a few from-TV movies, normally, not to be touched with a barge pole, but **Porridge** (BBC1, New Year's Day, 2.00pm) is just about the exception to the rule.

"Normal" output has not been neglected this year, with the BBC the clear winner as it has been since the dawn of time. Christmas specials are in abundance, the best being **They Think It's all Over** (BBC1, 23rd, 10.00pm), **Father Ted** (C4, Christmas Eve, 10:00pm), **One Foot in the Grave** (BBC1, Boxing Day, 9:00pm), **The Brittas Empire** (BBC1, Christmas Eve, 6:30pm), **The Fast Show** (BBC2, 27th, 9:40pm) and **Shooting Stars** (BBC2, 27th, (9:00pm). First and foremost however, is the three-part **Only Fools and Horses** special (BBC1, starting Christmas Day, 9:00pm), which may, apparently, be their last, although Del Boy has had more retirements than Frank Sinatra. It should certainly be the highlight of

Auntie's schedule, and alone constitutes more watchable comedy than ITV produces in a decade. Their only

As the more astute of you may have gleaned from my column, I am a bit of a traditionalist. You would think less of me if I did not mention the **Queen's message** at 3pm (BBC1, don't watch it on ITV, it's simply not the done thing, children) and **The Morecambe and Wise Christmas Show** (BBC1, Christmas Day, 10:55pm), without which Britain is merely an outcrop of land northwest of Europe. Aficionados of quality television from the good old days (why did we make so many quality sitcoms at a time when the country was down the pan and half way round the U bend?) are in for a real treat this year.



Dear Santa,

I have been a good girl

A rower or a rugby player - who would you like to unwrap?

Many women are absolutely fascinated and completely hooked on **rugby** and **rowing**. The sheer athleticism and highly physical nature of these sports have most definitely prolonged this fascination.

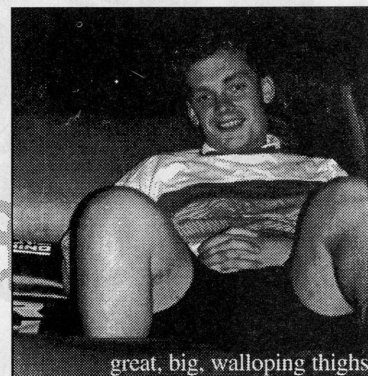
The **rugby** teams have the physical consistency of a Reubens nude painting. The **rowers** clearly have the bodies of some of Michealangelo's most interesting paintings; due to their well honed bods, long lithe legs and great teeth. They are simply Britain's answer to the surfer-beach boy. In short the **rowers** are certainly "pretty boys."

Meanwhile, the **rugby** team are not a pretty sight - this is probably due to the excessive consumption of Union curries and barrels of beer. Regardless of this fact the **rugby** boys have cheeky, great, big walloping thighs and a personality overload. Hence a photographer and I went to watch the IC **rugby** firsts play St Georges medics last Wednesday. I had expected the IC **rugger** boys to be beer-bellied misogynist Neanderthals who would sooner eat a female journo than speak to her. Instead they were human and almost gentlemanly.

The weather was biting cold and the playing field was a potential swamp.

The match was simply watching thirty men indulge in rough, fast, testosterone driven wrestling and running; it was great! By the end of the game I had developed an acute understanding of the **rugby** psyche. Basically they play a grimy, dirty and sometimes painfully physical game; this explains why their social life is grimy, dirty, and joyfully physical. The sordid **rugby** "sex anthems" reflect the kind of attitude needed for such a gruelling game.

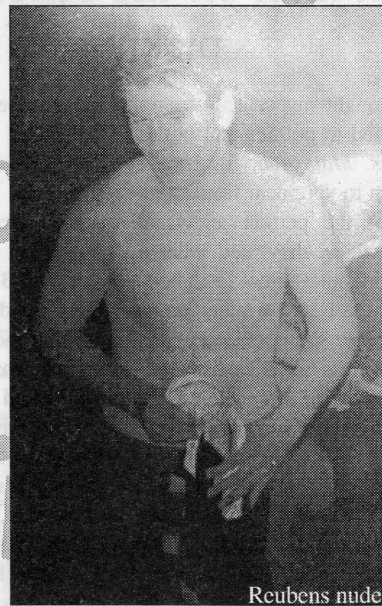
In reality the IC men's **rugby** team admitted to worshipping at the alter of the IC Virgins (women's **rugby** team), and were serious exponents of women's **rugby**.



great, big, walloping thighs

At the dawn of 1997, is there any goodwill between the women and men of Imperial?

Afua Osei investigates the state of affairs between the Sexes (opposite page), and explores the IC man's sporting talent (this page).



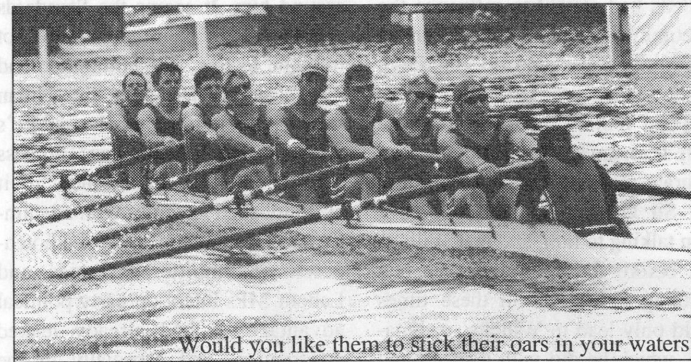
Reubens nude

Originally I had intended to literally investigate the IC male sporting talent by getting good shots of them in the showers; with as one **rugby** player politely said "tinsel around their todgers." The **rowers** were extremely enthusiastic, about flaunting themselves to satisfy the female population, but due to the **rowing** boys' timing being off last week, we were unable to liaise with them on the photographic front. We did take some shots of the **rugby** players in the showers but unfortunately the camera lenses steamed up. Although do not despair, if there is sufficient demand I will most definitely pursue this assignment.

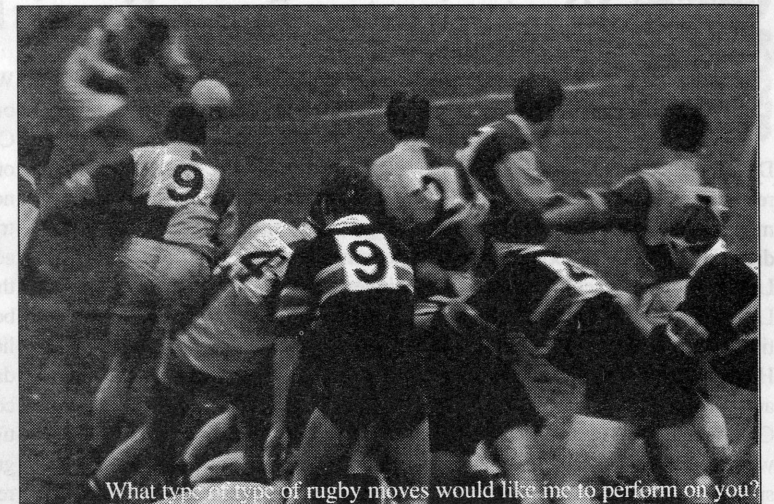
To help you decide who to unwrap on Christmas morning, the cream of IC's sporting talent have kindly given us a few words of wisdom:

The **rowing** boys insist that they are fit, last forever, and have impressively large protruding organs, while the **rugby** team state that the **rowers** "can't get it up after two pints" and are too tall to fit under the mistletoe.

Hmm, tricky one. You decide.



Would you like them to stick their oars in your waters?



What type of type of rugby moves would like me to perform on you?

Imperial College Male:Female Public Relations

Out on the streets that constitute Imperial College's campus, the wild groups of predatory men and women stalk one another. But, trapped and with opinions squirmed out of them, what do the *les hommes et les femmes* of IC think of each other?

The boistrous **men** seem to think that Imperial women are far too studious. A common jibe is that many good-looking women are too prudish, extremely arrogant and unapproachable.

But are these men just intimidated by the powers of female intellect and sexuality?

Perhaps not; others responded more positively:

"There are a lot of foreign women at Imperial, and they have a great sense of style"

"They are very tasty and I could eat them all"

One response which provoked great hilarity was this gem: "Imperial College should pass a resolution banning women from having any morals or any boyfriends. This is to enable IC women to adequately satisfy the huge male population" When asked about emotions and feelings, this IC man proclaimed that "You can feel for them on the night" A rubber blow-up doll was suggested as another solution to his problem, but the interviewee insisted that he already had one! Elsewhere, another extremely lonely and frustrated man whined that he was unable to find anyone at IC with "A massive chest and long legs." In this instance a pair of melons from Sainsburys would probably better suit this gentleman, because he obviously feels more comfortable with inanimate objects, rather than females of the human species!

On the other side of the gender divide, the disappointed **women** felt that IC men are, in summary:

"Sad and scrawny"

"Nerdy and hideous"

"Similar to an array of volcanic pimples"

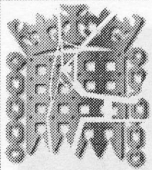
And to seal the evolutionary death knell for the Imperial College man, a female cambridge student visiting our union happily guaranteed that the male talent was better back there.

Despite these reactions, it seems that underneath all the bluff, Imperial **men** and **women** have a huge adoration and appreciation of each other, which they will only confess to when gently coaxed. It also seems unbelievable that Imperial **women** feel that there are no decent **men**. Is it possible that they are being over selective...?

Eitherway, after scouting the imperial campus for seven hours - we have found a sea of gorgeous kissable **men** for your mistletoe. They're out there somewhere, happy hunting!



the rugby boys running in retreat from the 'fit rowers'



Westminster Eye - Hamish Common

This time it's my local MP that's in the hot water. David Willetts, MP for Havant, has resigned as Paymaster-General amid more sleaze and intrigue, with predictable reactions: Labour's Deputy Leader, John Prescott, along with Lynne Armstrong, Labour's prospective parliamentary candidate for Havant would even like him to resign and fight a by-election! The Guardian jumped on the sleaze bandwagon with gusto, devoting as much space to a character assassination of Mr Willetts as it did to Dunblane the day after the massacre.

The background to this sorry state lies with the relationship between Neil Hamilton and Ian Greer. Hamilton, a former minister, has been accused of several parliamentary crimes, including payments for asking questions in the House, dodgy stays in the Ritz and murky dealings with a lobbyist. To cap it all, he proceeded to sue the Guardian for libel, and mysteriously dropped the case the day before the trial began. Into this delightful scenario stepped David Willetts, who was a junior whip when the now defunct Commons Committee on Members' Interests was investigating Neil Hamilton. The only evidence against Willetts was a hand-written memo to the Chief Whip about what to do

with the Committee investigating Hamilton. "...[The committee chairman] is now expecting to receive a formal complaint about Hamilton receiving money etc. He could (i) argue now *sub judice* and get [the] committee to set it aside; or (ii) investigate as quickly as possible, exploiting good Tory majority at [once]" Willetts freely concedes that this was a poor example a whip's note, containing to much of what he thought and too little of what he said. As a junior whip he would have been trying to impress his seniors by dramatising accounts of conversations. The new Committee on Standards and Privileges decided that the evidence he gave to the previous committee was inconsistent in its own right and with Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, the previous committee chairman. "We cannot accept much of the memorandum submitted by Mr Willetts, nor much of his oral evidence, as being accurate. ... We are very concerned that any Member should dissemble in his account to the committee and believe this response has substantially aggravated the original offence. We have decided that in any future investigation of matters of privilege or of complaints about the conduct of Members, it will be our normal practice to take evidence on oath."

The committee concluded that

Willetts had sought to influence the outcome of the Interests Committee's decision on Hamilton, on the evidence of the hand-written note and Willetts' economy with the truth. It assumed that the note was an accurate record of the conversation, that Sir Geoffrey should not have been talking to him, and that Willetts lied before the committee. Such a damning indictment in these times could only lead to Willetts' resignation, which he did with a speed and grace which improves his chances of re-appearing on the front benches at some stage in the future.

Most politicians agree that Willetts was brought to book less for what he did than that he was a victim of his own naïveté. He was made a whip after a short time in the Commons because although his ability was obvious, he needed some exposure to the rougher aspects of political horseplay. His previous career had consisted of time in the Number 10 Policy Unit, and then as head of the Centre for Political Studies. With such a background and intelligence (he was known as Two-Brains) it was natural he would undergo rapid promotion. After four years in Parliament, he was the first of his intake to become a Minister of State. Such a career path attracted jealousy from his colleagues, and there were few tears shed when the whiff of scandal rose

around him. It seems the Standards and Privileges Committee were not immune to this. The committee had just been created after the Nolan report, and it felt that the public's faith in the parliamentary process would only be maintained if it accomplished its duties with unanimity and force. It consisted of a hotch-potch of embittered Tories and Labour MPs intent on party political advantage. It had already leaked information, and especially in the closing stages of the proceedings it seemed to be driven by partisan considerations. The most obvious case of this was Quentin Davies, a talented Tory MP who has never had the appointments or publicity that Willetts had. His scorching cross-examination shocked many Tories, and his scrutiny of the text on a two-year old quickly-written note was unprecedented.

It is saddening that a career built up over many years has fallen victim to the jaundiced mood of the Commons today, but Mr Willetts may be one of the few former ministers who could be in a position to salvage his career. The Committee on Standards and Privileges has passed its first test in the public eye, and it seems the Tories have forgiven Mr Willetts for his indiscretions. How long it will take them to forgive Mr Davies is unclear.



Don't forget to pick up some of the great Christmas giveaways in this week's issue of Something for the Weekend.

The Weekly Poem by PoetIC

Leaf Relief

Following a gentle arc,
The river-path among trees
Whose shimmering leaves and dappled bark
Put my restless mind at ease.

The all absorbing masquerade,
Of London's dark and guarded blot
Is held worthless in this leafy shade
Where my city life is soon forgot.

So when I walk with unbalanced gait
And there's chaos in my personal space,
I saunter here to put things straight
And let the real world touch my face.

by Nick Reeve, October 96

PoetIC is the creative writing society of Imperial College. for more details of our meeting times contact Keith McNulty on ext 58610 or via k.mculty@ic.ac.uk



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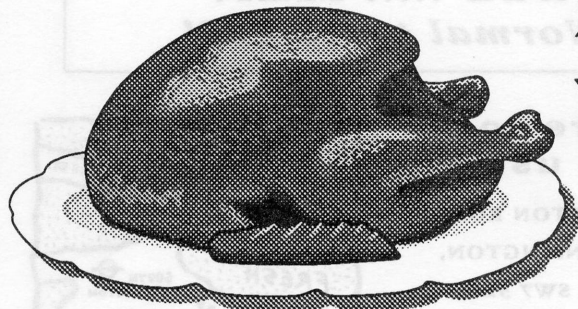
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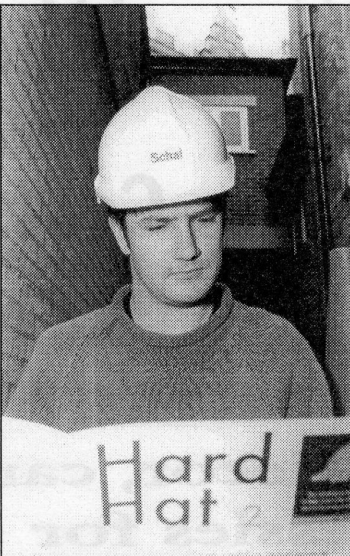
A week last Friday, at lunchtime, someone suggested that it was time my photo was changed. I agreed, thinking that the Schal hat was more relevant to last year's Felix, when scarcely a week went by without some disaster engulfing Campus Renaissance. This year by comparison, things have been going pretty well, with the BMS a mere three weeks behind schedule and rising like the clappers. And then Friday afternoon's incident occurred, the details of which you will have seen elsewhere. Thankfully not as serious as it might have been, the contractor concerned nevertheless received nasty injuries from which we all hope he will make a speedy recovery. What is particularly worrying is the fact that this occurred barely a month after an independent safety review and the appointment of a Quality Manager. The banal response that accidents do happen on construction sites is no excuse, particularly when procedures are supposed to have been reviewed and tightened up.

It gets worse. The following Monday evening, a couple of chemists. They were leaving the department by the door next to the site over which there is scaffolding, ushered through by one of the workmen, who was direct-

ing the crane driver. Half way under it, the workman shouted "Get Back", shortly after which there was a loud bang on top of the scaffold walkway such that it visibly moved. Once they were given the all clear and had walked under it the workmen laughingly remarked that "I've saved your life. You could have been killed." This is absolutely scandalous. If possible the worker responsible should be found and removed from the site permanently. Such a cavalier attitude will result in people both student and contractors alike being seriously injured. It gives me no pleasure to say that the way things are going some-one will be killed before this project is over, at which point the excrement will hit the rotating machinery with some force. I acknowledge that putting up large buildings like the BMS and altering

the Library is an inherently risky business, and safety is all about managing that risk. If however, the project had to conform to some of the crackpot health and safety regulations that I as a chemist follow, I doubt very much if they would get

Simon Baker



Voice of Reason

for this catalogue of accidents and management cockups fall squarely at the feet of the Schal Project Management Team, a title that sits on the list of the world's greatest oxy-

beyond the foundations. Sloppy safety, like most working practices, can inevitably traced to equally bad management. At this point, dear reader, you would expect to lay into my esteemed friend Ian Caldwell. Not so, because it's not his fault. In fact, I understand that he is apparently as fed up with the lip service that Schal are paying to safety as the rest of us and three cheers to that. The blame

morons between Police Intelligence and Belgian Culture. Step forward Phil Hilton You are, presumably, handsomely rewarded for looking after the motley crew of tradesmen on the site, a task, which on the basis of recent evidence, is one that clearly warrants a bit more of your precious time, for sake of argument, another five days a week. You are however in the fortunate position that your Christmas bonus is not set by me, otherwise it would be the Salvation Army soup kitchen for you on the 25th.

Not been a particularly good couple of weeks for the Conservatives. I'll rephrase that, it's been apocalyptically bad, but, eternal optimist that I am, I always knew it would improve.

On the eve of the Barnsley by-election I saw that my friends the charming Spice Girls decided to enter the great political debate. It soon emerged that not only are they Conservatives and Eurosceptic, they are Thatcherites, proclaiming Lady T the first Spice Girl. I am in love. Blair, old son, you didn't make a bad fist of it, you almost looked slightly, possibly credible at times (nah!), but you've had it now.

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THE ROYAL INTERNATIONAL AIR TATTOO FLYING SCHOLARSHIPS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE (FSD) IS INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR ITS 1997 SCHOLARSHIPS. CANDIDATES MUST BE AGED OVER 17, REGISTRABLE AS DISABLED AND A UK RESIDENT. AFTER FINAL SELECTION AT RAF CRANWELL THE TEN SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES WILL TAKE PART IN AN ALL-EXPENSES PAID SIX-WEEK PILOT TRAINING COURSE WITH EPPS AVIATION OF ATLANTA, GEORGIA. HERE THEY WILL BE KEPT BUSY FROM DAWN TO DUSK WITH 40 HOURS OF DUAL AND SOLO FLYING IN A PIPER CHEROKEE, 36 HOURS OF CLASSROOM WORK AND A FURTHER 10 HOURS OF DEBRIEFING WITH INSTRUCTORS.

FOR INFORMATION AND AN APPLICATION FORM CONTACT MARTIN ABBOTT, FSD PRINCIPAL, THE ROYAL INTERNATIONAL AIR TATTOO FLYING SCHOLARSHIPS, BUILDING 15, RAF FAIRFORD, GLOUCESTERSHIRE GL7 4DL. TEL: 01285 713300. FAX 01285 713268. APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 31 DECEMBER 1996.

MEDITERRANEAN NIGHT RAFFLE

THE MEDITERRANEAN NIGHT RAFFLE OF 6TH DECEMBER WAS WON BY TICKET NUMBERS 165 AND 225. THE WINNERS SHOULD COLLECT THEIR STA TRAVEL VOUCHERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE FROM MARIO CABODI, PHYSICS IV. MARIO IS CONTACTABLE ON ma.cabodi@ic.ac.uk

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

Deadline for letters in Felix 1074 is Tuesday 7th January.

Please bring some form of identification.

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



Student Newspaper of Imperial College

Editor Alex Feakes / Advertising Manager Mark Baker

Reports suggesting that top Tory MPs are pushing for an Easter General Election highlight one of the few occasions that our legislators' minds turn to that large segment of the voting public, students. Not, as you might think, in an attempt to woo their vote, but rather in a desperate scramble to foist these potentially anti-conservative electors off on some safer MP and away from their own fragile majorities. The theory is that around Easter, when most students are on vacation and no longer concentrated in large numbers, the effects of their supposedly left-wing vote will be diluted and Conservative MPs with a small majority will be saved from defeat.

I bet students have never realised that they instill such fear in MPs beyond that which a great unwashed mob generates when they threaten a prim toff. However, it is a shame that the effect of most students will be, if you excuse the pun, marginal on the fates of MPs sitting on small majorities. Unless, of course, large groups of students choose to use postal their vote all in one constituency as the NUS is pushing for. I must say that this sounds faintly undemocratic, but the thought of MPs cowering before a few students is quite amusing.

Closer to the campus, the Rock the Vote wagon has slowly been lurching around London, even pausing to pick up a few completed voter registration cards from our own JCR. But an even better wheeze has been dreamt up by some publicity wag - the Spice Girls are to stand for the soon to be vacant seat of Kensington & Chelsea, or so reports last week's *Sun*. This would, no doubt, cause a bit of surge in the turnout for this constituency as students rushed to cast their votes for their favourite brand of Spice. Just think - with the glamorous pouting fivesome on on the podium with the spectacled and suited, for some the the choice would already be made. But don't forget how broad their appeal could be; with the Girls claiming Mrs Thatcher as one of their heroines, they might just appeal to that other group whose vote certain a Tory MP cannot depend upon - the Kensington & Chelsea Conservative Party. Sir Nicholas, not being adverse to a bit of 'spice' himself, would be grinning all the way to the ballot box.

Lastly, it has come to my attention that a bizarre global celebration is coming up. In keeping with this tradition, I would like to wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year!

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THE FELIX WEEKLY ECHO WRITTEN AND DESIGNED BY: ROBIN AND THE
NEWS TEAM

Don't forget to pick up your copy of the
bumper Christmas issue of
Something for the Weekend.

Keep active this Christmas with Prize Crossword and win a

Across:

1. Charity where the young element of the north-east meet a press officer. (8,2,4)
7. In trouble beside fence? (7,3,4)
13. Almond, perhaps, in stubborn utility. (3)
14. Student in no first class organised international body. (6,7)
18. Whether in dread or in reverence, still in it. (3)
21. Master rises up without final time constraints. (3)
22. Indicate after a Peruvian ambassador-elect? (7)
24. Utah nail I confused with a country. (9)
25. That man's conservative look back through the years! (7)
26. The female person in Cornish equation? (3)
28. Learner in north-east sting is a young bird? (8)
30. Stan and Anne accommodated the aerials. (8)
32. Morning measure - so be it! (4)
33. Important to cheer on new books. (6)
34. A long time in conducting simple oncology? (3)
35. Holy, concerning alien road. (6)
37. Rent first-class accommodation that is sensitive to light! (6)
40. Upright mistake by soldiers. (6)
41. Tooth-operator without it leaves cavities! (5)
42. English turn creates self-esteem. (3)
43. Moan about tan disintegrating in US state. (7)
44. 'Small change' is so upper-class! (3)
45. Respected queen is more expensive. (6)
46. Allow the French time. (3)
47. Time and dates, strangely, are assessed. (9)
48. William's legislation? (4)
49. Toddler is upset - always in tears. (7)
51. Cry of pain when ring undercuts first before church. (4)
54. Ally. I tune, perhaps. (5)
56. A human being for every boy? (6)
59. Greeting, we hear, on forms of communication are speech sounds. (10)
62. Church cry before first royal singers. (5)
64. Monkey in cap entertains. (3)
68. Glenn's song of undying devotion? (8,5,6,2,4,3,3)
69. Conjunction in band wagon? (3)

71. Bird, for example, concerned with first travellers. (5)
72. Join palms for togetherness. (4,2,4)
76. Lead compared with water, for example, is thicker. (6)
78. Form of transport is ordinary, we hear. (5)
80. Lake is spooky, we hear. (4)
85. 78 leaves, it's a farce! (7)
87. Endure the end. (4)
88. Plan in advance before appointment in the Church. (9)
89. Males in state in the north? (3)
91. Indicate message after dead Englishman. (6)
92. Humble and under-average. (3)
94. Nasty filth? (7)
95. Go round sticky material. (3)
96. A main agitator in the inner personality. (5)
97. Cat that is a circular church auction article? (6)
98. Base press officer adrift on the ocean floor? (6)
101. No dose contaminates when caught. (6)
103. To surround women first takes more than one. (3)
105. Motor organisation gent dismantled by a male relative! (6)
107. Ogle over reel. (4)
108. Interfered backside of English red? (8)
111. Circle the germ fragments in the earth's energy. (8)
112. Atmosphere in first-class condition? Right! (3)
114. Scottish race by river is in the frame. (7)
115. Tuna groan amalgamated in an ape? (5-4)
116. Self-change about fun reflected by sniff? (7)
118. North-east metal is the first of it's kind. (3)
119. Consume peculiar tea. (3)
120. Ancient pupils are the best! (5,8)
123. Favour the master? (3)
124. Book about a circle master? (4,2,3,5)
125. Singer of 'Jo's machine lack' perhaps. (7,7)

Down:

1. Northern chap with huge tooth reassembled when found red-handed. (6,2,3,3)
2. Imperial College's Italian chemical company? (1,1,1)
3. Party with English deer? (3)
4. In note, good Queen is numerically whole! (7)
5. Time of day, whatever way you look at it! (4)
6. Get into more trouble when pancake is badly tossed! (3,2,3,6,3,4,3,4)
8. First and last German at odds with flea? (4)
9. Leader is a fruit with no final idea! (6)
10. Noted to be mine in ten states. (7)
11. Murder of two donkeys by one country. (13)
12. Big father in learner disaster that was too real? (6,4,4)
15. Round motel pet shaken when found on ethnic statue. (5,4)
16. Evil qualities shown under the cover of it. (8)
17. South Africa in time for southern holy men? (6)
19. The Spanish feminine mythical creature? (3)
20. Liberian student excited first by toboggan. (4)
23. Apathetic when bank gives no money. (2,8)
27. Old children's program about kindly live northerner? (6,3)
29. Strangle with rot in gate. (7)
30. Painting in circular train? (3)
31. Heavyweight on after time. (3)
33. Unnecessary out of all proportion. (6)
36. Time for the right? Last direction! (5)
38. Clue for learner is a belief? (5)
39. Eastern English ramp jolts a current measurement. (6)
46. Resin secreted in rural acres. (3)
49. Part of the gut, in other words, south of the provinces. (8)
50. Express disapproval at Bulgarian athletic homecoming, primarily. (3)
57. King's poem - French one, female and loud. What a rabble! (4-

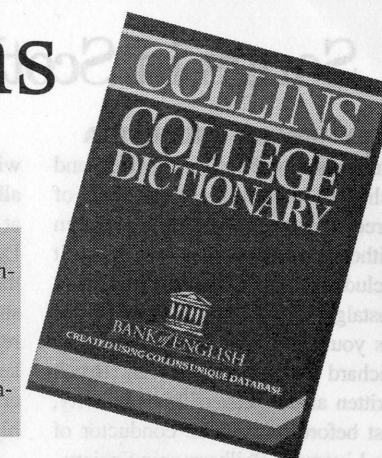
- 4)
58. Run faster, not being in for the journey. (7)
60. Pamphlett mail for Queen? (6)
61. Smells old party - under reformation first in south. (6)
63. Many old-timers first - a large number of them. (3)
64. Exclamation about pop group! (3)
65. Final hiding place overturned. (3)
66. French fruit in gym of church in the east. (5 - French word)
67. Cry at glass obstruction in past. (3)
70. Body of water goes through a local line? (7,7)
73. Eaten revoltingly. First Northern Ireland Nissan garage tidying? (9)
74. College east of frozen water? (3)
75. Revise lecture - understand one's mistake. (5,3,6)
76. Scots hurried when first thrown about by Olympic competitor. (6,7)
77. Mistakes Queen that bishop out-sizes awkwardly. (6)
79. Capital borough of old? (6,4)
81. Gallop in greater unity. (3)
82. Snake has a company that railway's after first. (5)
83. Shamefaced to kill animal. (7)
84. Relit funny measurement. (5)
86. Circular table crushes a flattened sphere. (6)
90. Melt East Lane - strange but obvious! (9)
93. Sheep hair which, we hear, can be found in a Building Society! (8)
99. Hearing aid has an aptitude for music? (3)
100. Auction British identification? (3)
102. Sam led alternative path to a woman. (6)
104. On oil residue, I circle a lake! (7)
106. First class Northerner in ash is a beginner? (7)
109. The perimeter - journalist gets first two! (4)
110. 'Starter for ten' turned concerning Englishman. (6)
113. Singular omen, nasty evening first! (3)
116. Holy metal found in animal. (4)
117. Hit Conservative about irritation! (4)
121. Mythical beast in mentor crisis? (3)
122. Promotions in the modern ages? (3)

the Felix Giant Christmas Collins Dictionary

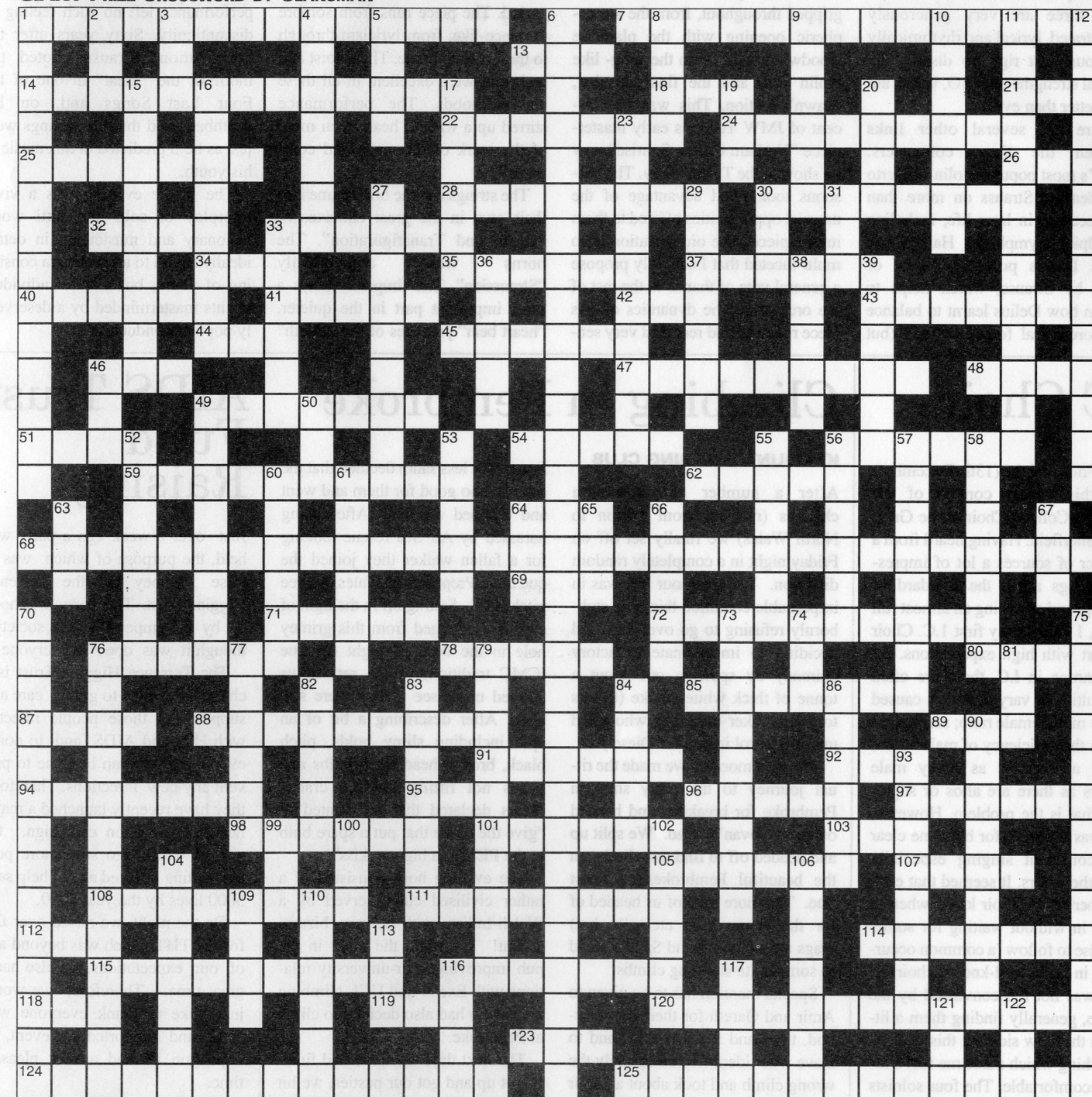
Stop the cold getting into your brain this holiday season with the *Felix* Giant Christmas Prize Crossword.

As you chew your christmas chocolates or nibble the latest round of turkey sandwiches, try exercising your mental faculties with this massive word puzzle instead of slumping in front of Noel's Christmas House Party. And to top it all there is a prize to be won, a huge Collins College Dictionary (pictured right and on sale for £8.99 in all good bookshops), to the first correct entry drawn out of the hat.

Hand your completed answer grid into the *Felix* office by 2.00pm Tuesday 7th January at the latest, and the winner will be announced in the first *Felix* of the new year. Good luck!



GIANT PRIZE CROSSWORD BY CLANSMAN



Solution to issue 1071's Prize Crossword:

Across: 1. Part company, 10. Ozone, 11. Dartmouth, 12. Tidal wave; 13. Nicer, 14. Assess, 16. Tail coat, 18. External, 20. Hansom, 23. Tears, 24. Abundance, 26. Oblations, 27. Trace, 28. Double-cross. **Down:** 2. Avoid, 3. Trellis, Ordeal, 5. Parmesan, 6. Nominal, 7. Contraception, 8. Luscious, 9. Short tempered, 15. Satiabie, 17. Catacomb, 19. Risotto, 21. Auditor, 22. Tussle, 25. Nears.

Solution to issue 1072's Elimination:

a) (37,32); b) (34,9); c) (35,30); d) (8,41); e) (1,4); f) (19,27); g) (23,21); h) (28,18); i) (20,16); j) (26,36); k) (7,13); l) (31,12); m) (25,23); n) (11,29); o) (10,38); p) (3,6); q) (4,39); r) (2,17); s) (33,22); t) (15,40).....leaving "fill" (5).

The winner of issue 1071's Prize Crossword was Duncan Baker, a Chem Eng PG.

Duncan, come along to the Felix office to collect your prize, a Collins Gem Dictionary and Thesaurus.

Songs in Scotland, Sex in Paris and Death in Bavaria

IC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

This was a brilliantly conceived and delivered programme consisting of three masterpieces, each written without conventional sonata form. It included Delius's first masterpiece (a nostalgic farewell to the latter part of his youth in Paris), an early one by Richard Strauss and one by Bruch written at the peak of his creativity, just before he became conductor of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society.

All three are very generously orchestrated, lyrical and rhythmically vivacious; just right to display the musical strengths of ICSO, which are now better than ever.

There are several other links between the three composers. Bruch's most popular violin concerto lent ideas to Strauss on more than one occasion in later life, including the Alpine Symphony. Half of the scores Delius possessed were of music by Strauss, which helps to explain how Delius learnt to balance great orchestral forces so well (but

with poetry in place of rhetoric). The all-pervasive influence of Nietzsche at that time showed in the work of Delius and Strauss and encouraged them in, among other things, their strong egotism. Delius's consequent rejection of conventional morality led to the disease which blinded and crippled him and which was probably contracted in a Parisian brothel.

The ICSO performance of "Paris" gripped throughout, from the atmospheric opening with the plaintive woodwind solos on to the song-like violin solo and the final, blazing, "dawn" section. This was reminiscent of JMW Turner's early masterpiece "Norham Castle: Sunrise" now on show at the Tate Gallery. The bassoons took good advantage of the unusual opportunities offered to them in this piece. The orchestration is so multi-faceted that I can only propose a general vote of thanks to the rest of the orchestra! The dynamics of this piece required and received very sen-

sitive direction by the conductor, Richard Dickins. It worked.

The virtuosity of the solo violin in the Scottish Fantasy exceeds that of Bruch's other violin concertos. Edward Bale gave us artistry of the highest order, negotiating the stretches of double stopping with apparent ease and deploying occasional hints of portamento and vibrato appropriate to a concerto of the late romantic period. The piece runs from sombre to dance-like, from lyricism through to the war-like finale. The soloist and orchestra were excellent in all these varied moods. The performance stirred up a wish to hear much more of the work of this neglected composer.

The strings and the brass came into their own in the great climaxes of "Death and Transfiguration". The horns were authentically "Straussian". The timpanist plays a most important part in the quieter, "heart beat" passages of the "Death"

section. This gives the rare opportunity to praise the sensitivity of the ICSO timpanist. Similarly, it is refreshing to be able to praise the harpists (one as sub-soloist in the Bruch and two in the other works). Generally, the "Death" section (which is actually more to do with the development of human personality) is thought to be more convincing than the "Transfiguration" but this performance left no such feeling of discontinuity. Sixty years after the composition, Strauss quoted the motif of the "Ideal" in one of the Four Last Songs and, on his deathbed, said that his feelings were just as he'd predicted in this music of his youth.

The whole evening was a vivid interplay of solo and tutti work, visionary and musicianly in detail, ideally suited to an orchestra consisting of young but mature individual talents masterminded by a deservedly popular conductor.

IC Choir

Last Friday night (13th December) saw this term's concert of the Imperial College Choir in the Great Hall, Sheffield. Having heard from a number of sources a lot of impressive things about the standard of singing, and on seeing an almost full house, I went to my first I.C. Choir concert with high expectations. As is common in I.C. there are often difficulties of varying levels caused by the male/female ratio; surprisingly it is the deficiency of male voices (there are almost as many male singers as there are altos or sopranos) that is the problem. However, this was made up for by some clear and confident singing especially from the tenors. It seemed that each member of the choir knew when to come in without waiting for someone else to follow (a common occurrence in some well-known choirs).

I was not too convinced by the tempo, generally finding them a little on the slow side but this was the only thing which made me feel a little uncomfortable. The four soloists and orchestra were remarkable, particularly the two sopranos (Naomi Harvey again and Janet Shell) who managed to deliver some of the most horrendously difficult vocal lines ever written with such ease.

Climbing in Pembroke

IC MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

After a number of destination changes (ranging from Devon to North Wales) we finally set off on Friday night in a completely random direction. Yet again our bus was in impeccable condition this time stubbornly refusing to go over fifty and deciding to impersonate a factory chimney by spewing out about a tonne of thick white smoke (thanks to the twonker before us who filled up with petrol instead of Diesel).

The next morning we made the ritual journey to the pasty shop in Pembroke for breakfast and headed off to St Govan's Head. We split up and headed off to find our climbs on the beautiful Pembrokeshire coast line. The more sane of us headed off for the sunny (and eternally hot) crags at St Govans and Saddle Head to some quite stunning climbs.

Special mention has to be given to Amir and Gareth for their first (second, third and fourth!) leads and to Dave who identified completely the wrong climb and took about an hour puzzling why there was no protection and no holds! Dave also finally lead the brilliant Chieftan with vengeance after having backed off it on a previous trip.

While the rest of us sane mortals were out on the sunny cliffs Rob and

James (the less sane) decided that the sun was too good for them and went and climbed a cave! After being harassed by Air Sea rescue looking for a fallen walker they joined the queue to do Preposterous Tales, a three pitch HVS. Setting off in the light of day they emerged from this grimey hole in the dead of night (in true ICMC tradition) as the rest of us strolled up to see if they were still alive. After describing a bit of an epic including slimy holds, pitch black, broken head torch bulbs and heads not fitting through cracks James declared that he wanted to "give the bloke that put a spare bulb in the PETZL a big wet kiss"!

The evening nosh consisted of a rather civilised curry served by a Welsh-Indian with a very bizarre accent! We spent the night in the pub improving inter-university relations with Exeter and UCL climbing clubs who had also decided to climb at Pembroke.

The next day, when we had finally got up and got our pasties, we hit the cliffs for another good day's climbing, burning off home in a revitalised bus (since it had Diesel in it) to get back (staggeringly) before Monday.

AIDS Trust Fund Raising

Just over a week ago a party was held, the purpose of which was to raise money for the Terrence Higgins Trust. The party was hosted by IQ (Imperial's LCB society), though it was open to everyone.

The Terrence Higgins Trust is a charity dedicated to giving care and support to those people infected with HIV and AIDS and to doing everything that can be done to prevent any new infections. Therefore, they have recently launched a major health promotion campaign, the aim of which is to stop more people getting infected and to help save 3000 lives by the year 2000.

On the night, we raised over £80 for the THT which was beyond any of our expectations, we also had a great time. Therefore, we would just like to thank everyone who came and supported the event, we hope you all had a very pleasant time.

If you would like to know any more information about the Terrence Higgins Trust and the work they do, or if you would like any confidential advice on safe sex or other matters, the THT have a phone line, 0171 242 1010.

IC rugby : down but not out

GARETH WILLIAMS
FELIX RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

IC's Gutteridge Cup run came to a halt against the medics of St Georges. An explosive first five minutes saw tries scored by both teams, with Andy Mayes replying to St Georges opening salvo. After the opening frenetic burst IC had their backs to the wall, and despite some courageous tackling were unable to prevent St Georges stretching out a healthy lead before half-time.

After the break, IC raised their game and came storming back at St Georges. Debutants Kolone Yung and Matt Fogerty putting in impressive performances. Dan Doherty was his normal fiery self, and Martin Byre fancied himself as a fly-half - though surely without the kicking skills.

The two heavyweights Geoff Millet and Rob Gare beefed up the scrum with Jasper Hyde and Matt Anstead combining well in the line-out. Number 8 Paul Hardcastle

capped a good performance by crashing over the line from a tap penalty.

For the backs, Chris Mutter and Dave Gol formed a solid pairing in the centre, showing touches of real class. Dave Chatterji was like a whippet behind the forwards, forming a smooth link to silky skills outside-half Gareth Williams.

Persistent IC pressure resulted in a further try for grease lightning winger Maru Woodhouse. Unfortunately it was not quite to be, as the first-half deficit proved just a mite too difficult to overcome. However, it was still a brave effort, with IC hampered by the absence of Jack Peart and Olly Littleton to ULU.

Our last fixture of the year is the Christmas dinner, when we will be looking forward to 1997. IC seem well placed for a successful campaign in the new year, which could well prove to be one of our most successful for some time.

Fourths humiliate UMDS

Obviously from start to finish IC dominated this game, to such an extent that the 7-1 score-line flattered the UMDS. Individual performance of the match must go to Sion Hale who scored a stunning hat-trick. The first was a penalty following a foul on Dmitri, then a well taken tap in, but the highlight was his third, a spinning, curling shot from the right wing into the top corner. Not bad for a left back totally out of position!

The other goals were scored by Chris, direct from a corner, two from Ryan, including an excellent glancing header and an own goal created by Dmitri. For the second time in two matches Adam hit an unstoppable shot onto the left-hand post, and again played supremely well in the centre of midfield. His play deserved a goal and it is a great shame he missed a

last minute penalty.

We had shots inches wide, shots which hit the cross-bar, and two headers from only yards out when it seemed easier to score than miss. All in all IC were unstoppable. At the haff time stage in the season we are in a great position to win promotion, and having qualified for the National Stages of BUSA this has the makings of a famous season for the Fourths.

In this match report I really wanted to write about a Hitleresque ref showing as little compassion as the ICU stewards, but the ref was fine, unlike the powercrazy stewards who continue to operate a harsh regime where innocent people are made scapegoats for more serious offences. It really needs to be sorted out, but for now never mind since we're only students and we don't matter.

RSM leave the rest behind

Following the news that our closest rival Gold II have now lost a game and draw one, the RSM had an opportunity to move 5 points clear at the top. Although starting early, we still managed to arrive late at the ground of Royal Vets due to some good co-piloting by Roger and Si. There were a couple of big changes in the team this time around. Seeing that Swedish strikers are renowned for their composure in the box, something the Scotland-Sweden game bears witness to, we played Magnus H. up front. After about 5-minutes a corner was driven long to the back post where Neil headed it back into the danger area. Now something incredible happened, something that will be discussed (at every opportunity!) in the RSM halls. From out of nowhere Fredrik step up to calmly place the ball past at least 8 players + the goalie. His first goal for RSM, surely many to come. The rest of the half saw RSM again having virtually all the posses-

sion but not being able to convert it into goals. Michel produced a bit of magic when he left 3 defenders for dead. The second half saw the game proceed in similar fashion. Keith come close with a shoot that struck the post. Si was brought on when about 20 minutes remained. He quickly got control of the ball inside the box and calmly placed his shoot in the corner. The two Swedes, Magnus H and Magnus W, interconnected well down the right leading to a deep cross to the left which Si easily headed inn from the tightest of angles. It seemed we would be rewarded a penalty when Michel was "hacked" own in the box. The referee seemed less convinced and let play continue. The result of this negligence was booed by the spectators similar to the McDonalds add. The opposition must be commended for their commitment, although some of their tackles were reckless. Still a comfortable 3-0 victory.

London six-pack sees IC Sailing Club triumphant

At the recently held London Six Pack, IC Sailing Club tried out their new and improved team for 1996-97. Hosted by the University of London on our home water, the event is one of the premiere university team racing competitions in the sailing calendar. IC, having put together a team not three days before, went into the event looking to gain experience for the forthcoming qualifiers and the British University Sports Association (BUSA) nationals.

The first day's racing was blessed with a good force three breeze which carried the boys through three consecutive victories over strong teams representing Cambridge, London and Oxford Ladies. This brought smiles to Imperial faces especially as

the University of London were to be beaten by only one other team.

Lunch brought a change in fortunes, and the lack of experience showed as IC conceded some narrow losses to some very good university teams. Despite two wins at the end of the day IC were eliminated from the finals.

Sunday racing continued throughout the day with most sailors feeling somewhat fragile from the previous nights festivities (including fireworks and bonfires!!).

The eventual winners were "Castaways" an ex-London boys team who showed their experience by not losing a match throughout the entire weekend.

RESULTS

RUGBY

IC 2ND 12 - 24 CHARRING CROSS

SNOOKER

IC CHRISTMAS OPEN FINAL

SIMON BAUGH 3 - 2 RUSSELL TOWERS

FOOTBALL

IC 1ST 1 - 0 GOLDSMITH'S 1ST

IC 2ND 1 - 1 IC 3RD

IC 3RD 2 - 1 ROYAL HOLLOWAY 4TH

IC 3RD 0 - 2 RSM

IC 4TH 7 - 1 UMDS 2ND

IC 5TH 4 - 4 RSM 2ND

IC 6TH 1 - 5 LSE 6TH

RSM 3 - 0 ROYAL VETS

FELIX SPORT

Deadlock in IC Derby as Seconds tie with Thirds

There was never any doubt that this was a BIG match. Thanks to the relegation of the seconds last year, both the second and third teams play in the same division - hence this derby. Neither team's form thus far into the season had been that good but this match wasn't about league status or points - it was about pride and honour and all the things that are noble on this earth. It was also about a large number of pints that had been staked on the outcome but that was the furthest thing from our minds as the ref blew his whistle and the seconds kicked off.

The game started well for the thirds - strong challenges came from both sides but the commitment from the blues made it hard going for the seconds. The pace of the game was fast and the ball was played up and down the field in frenzied attacks. Ben and Simon were snorting fire

and brimstone in midfield and it was about fifteen minutes before the seconds started to fight back. With the tide of the game turning slightly, the thirds broke from defence with a strong run through the middle. The defence backed away and so the shot came from outside the penalty box and dipped over Steve's head into the goal - the thirds had taken a shock lead. The rest of the half was dominated by a seemingly endless string of corners for the seconds. At last one of Felix's inswingers was bundled into the goal by the mighty Robo and so half-time arrived with honours even.

Second's captain Steve was not happy at half-time - his standing in the club, along with numerous drinks, were on the line here. "The Slags" needed to show that they had the class to beat the thirds with a little bit of intelligent play instead of

the headless chicken approach of the first half. The thirds resolved to keep battling and start the second half as they had the first.

From the kick-off the seconds started to show that they could manage to pass the ball. The thirds didn't seem to be able to mount any form of attack as the ball was pinged about the pitch from second's red shirt to second's red shirt. Defenders Will, German and Loz, 21, took control and gave the midfielders a bit of time to play with. Slick passing down the left from Si, Phil "the pill" and Hajo carved out many opportunities but staunch defending, particularly from full-backs Tim and Jamie who, despite struggling with ridiculous hairstyles, ensured that the only shots on goal were long-range efforts which the 'keeper dealt with easily.

The pressure continued with attack after attack being repulsed by the

thirds. Captain Dan showed what true commitment was by blocking one cross with his testicles. Some of the thirds commented, perhaps cruelly, that it was the first time that they had seen him use his head this season. As the clock ran down the seconds' forays became tinged with desperation as they knew there was not much time left to save their reputation. Martin's bet that he would score a hat-trick was lost, however, as the thirds' grit and determination at the back meant that they emerged moral victors with a draw.

The league points were shared but there was no doubt at who was more pleased with the result. The seconds will have to finish games off if they are to be promoted this season. The thirds' defensive fortitude will serve them well if they can keep it up in subsequent matches.

Sport in brief

IC THIRDS TAKE ON RSM

The Mines played IC III and through a mixture of a slight inability of the RSM to finish the opportunities provided to them and some reasonable defending from IC especially in the second half when they seemed content with playing 5 in midfield, we only managed to score 2 goals. The first by Magnus in the first half the second in the second half by Craig (stealing the glory from Roger, unlucky mate). We would like to thank the opposition of IC V for providing the meal tickets for 2 of our team.

BOAT CLUB

The boat club took a small squad to last weekend's Walton Small Boat's head, but still managed to win most divisions.

The double scull of Tom Gale and Martin Kettle were the fastest crew of the day, beating former World Champion Peter Haining in the process.

Racing in a single scull, Pete Wilson comfortably won the Senior 2 and Senior 3 divisions, whilst Simon Dennis took the Novice crown.

Richard Dunn and Simon Wall

had a storming row in their class, finishing within a second of Atlanta Olympians Graham Smith and Rupert Obholzer. Stefan Eyre and Paul Backes were third overall.

Several other divisions were won against notable opposition, including the University of London, who must by now be getting highly embarrassed by their inability to beat one of their constituent colleges.

RUGBY SECONDS

Despite a determined and aggressive performance, IC Seconds went down fighting, 24-12, in a closely fought contest with Charring Cross Seconds (again!) Early scores for Charring Cross only succeeded in stirring the IC fire, with tries coming from Darren Bryce and David Pearce, and a conversion from Justin Lee. The stars of this glittering performance are too numerous to all be mentioned - you all know who you are. However, special credit goes to Dave Pearce and Peachy who both starred in unfamiliar positions.

We are now looking forward to our grudge clash with the Firsts next week, when we hope we can repeat this outstanding performance.

Snooker Open "Best in living memory"

Last Sunday saw the traditional Imperial College Christmas snooker open. There was a shock in the first round with the reigning champion Jon Fulcher being beaten 2-0 in two hard fought, close frames by Club president Russell Towers. Russell then proved that this was no fluke by progressing to the final with 2-1 wins over first Alex Robinson and then Steff Lewis, winning in dramatic style after Steff went in-off the final black. In the top half of the draw Simon Baugh made it to the final, beating Aki Pakarinen (2-0) and Tim Dann (2-1).

The final was a close affair. The first four frames were shared with Russell twice coming from behind to level at 2-2. In the deciding frame Russell pulled away to a 35 point lead before Simon pulled himself back into it with some consistent scoring and then took the lead with a difficult 26 break. Simon eventually secured the frame and match with the final blue and pink. The final was described by one of the spectators as 'the best in living memory'.

The Snooker Club now looks forward to a key match at Cardiff next weekend.

Inauspicious start for IC wrestling

The newly-formed Imperial Olympic Wrestling Club got off to an inauspicious, if predictable, start at the 1996 London Freestyle Championships on 14th December. The championships, held at Kensington Sports Centre, was the last major tournament of the season, and many of the country's top wrestlers attended. The sole IC entrant suffered two heavy defeats against experienced opponents, including an ex-Hungarian national squad member, in the Senior 82kg

division. Kensington Wrestling Club (which the Imperial club is part of) fared rather better, taking 3rd in the 90kg, 2nd in the 82kg and firsts in both the 57 and 62kg Senior events, and numerous trophies in the Junior categories.

Frank Murrey, sports and leisure manager at IC, presented the trophies on the day, emphasising the hope that wrestling will play an important role in the life of the planned sports centre to be built under Princes Gardens.

Wednesday 18th December 1996, Free, where delivered

RECTOR FACES SHOCK ELECTION DEFEAT

The Rector, Sir Ronald Oxbrough, has sensationally admitted that he does not expect to be returned in tomorrow's rectorial election.

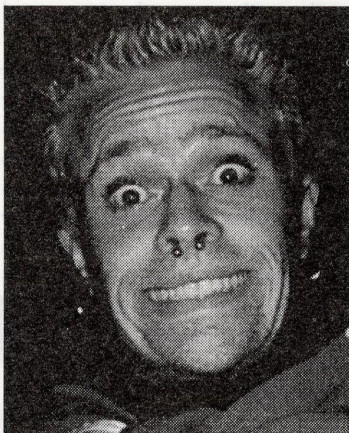
Sir Ronald conceded that his position would not stand up to a rectorial examination...

Opinion polls show the current front-runner to be showbiz bad-boy Keith Flint, of popular beat-combo 'The Prodigy.' Speaking exclusively to *The Echo*, Mr Flint outlined his plans to lead the College into the next century, saying: "I'm the firestarter... Twisted firestarter."

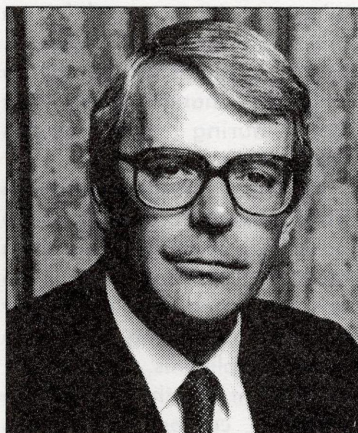
Nominations for the post closed this evening with seven fully seconded candidates. An eighth, suspected to be American, narrowly missed his flight and thus the nomination deadline. Legitimate candidates are summerised below.

Keith Flint: Top of the polls at the moment is the scary bloke from the Prodigy. Wants all students to fuck off and die. Hobbies: Fire-starting.

Sir Nicholas Scott: Disgraced Kensington and Chelsea MP. Promises to boost the profits of



Flint: Firestarter



Major: Not standing, but could need a new job in five months time. A dark horse, slow start, good in the finish. Oxburgh: Odd



Branson: Pickle



the bar, and set up an on-campus pharmacy. Hobbies: Booze, fags, lard.

Dave Trotsky (Socialist Worker). Pledges to abolish capitalism and redistribute wealth. He hopes to achieve this by handing out flyers, shouting very loudly, and having an occasional riot. Hobbies: Being Northern.

Sir Ronald (again): Mythical. Only the Governing Body claim to have met him. Hobbies: Tea parties with lots of biscuits, foreign holidays.

Richard Branson: The man behind the Virgin empire. Pledges more music, less talk. Hobbies: World domination.

Princess Di: Promises counselling, all profits to charity, and to ban mobile phones from campus. Hobbies: Casual sex.

Marvin the Martian: unavailable for comment, though an aide-de-camp said 'take us to your leader'. Hobbies: N/A.

Polling stations will be open in all major departments, the Union lobby and the Sheffield lobby. Registration forms are available from all departments, the Union Office and Sir Ron.

Police Raid Busts Da Vinci's Curry Success

ICU's popular snack bar, Da Vinci's, was closed last week following the arrest of the entire catering staff by the Metropolitan Police drugs squad.

Acting on a tip-off, police officers with sniffer dogs mounted a dawn raid on the Union's kitchens. Their search revealed large quantities of both hard and so-called 'soft' drugs.

A police spokesman told *The*

Echo: "Our suspicions were first aroused by the inexplicably long queues for 'pound curries.' We were mystified as to why anyone would willingly buy these suspicious meals. The

continued on page 2

Inside:

Sherfield building flooded
plague of locusts in Beit Hall

Caldwell walks on water
IC catering feeds 5000
Rector's wife turned into pillar of salt
Health centre cures leper etc...

BOOKSTORE TENDER AWARDED TO LCC

College officials announced yesterday that the London Church of Christ had successfully fought off rivals Dillons, Waterstones, and the Sock Shop to become the new operators of the ex-Union Bookstore.

Mr J H Christ, acting as a spokesman for the LCC, described the decision as "divine."

A delighted Mr Christ went on to outline the planned improve-

ments; "We intend to increase custom by holding informal meetings, discussions, tambourine lessons and talking to people on a one-to-one basis. If anyone has any problems, any problems at all, or are feeling vulnerable, or are seeking meaning in their life, they must feel able to come and discuss things with us," he explained.

When questioned on rumours circulating that LCC are an evil brainwashing cult and will not be selling textbooks at all, but

instead trying to indoctrinate people and persuade them to part with all their money, he responded; "That simply isn't true. But if anyone feels the urge to give us large quantities of used banknotes, we won't discourage it."

Asked if the new bookstore would only sell copies of the Bible, the shaven-headed Mr Christ replied "No! No, no, no. Not at all. Well, actually... yes. We feel it may be risky to diversify too much in the early

stages."

There has been much discussion in recent months over the loss of revenue suffered by the Union as a result of losing the bookstore. The LCC spokesman was quick to offer hope to Union staff; "If you'd like to discuss it further, we will be holding an induction evening on Tuesday where we will answer queries. It's at my place, with tea, Jaffa cakes, spiritual bonding and ritual sex. See you there."

Registry Office seal of approval for sex change op

Last Wednesday, the Registry Office announced a radical plan of action to redress the balance of IC's male-/female ratio.

Starting next year, all male applicants to Imperial College will be made aware of new bursaries available to those who opt for full sex-change surgery upon admission.

Developed at St Mary's by a team of frustrated researchers, the new procedure makes use of laser technology and can be

completed in just under five minutes, with no need for an overnight stay in hospital. Existing students will be able to 'chop and change' gender at a stall during next year's Freshers' Fair.

Despite a positive response from students and staff, there have been loud objections from the Union Women's group, who are concerned that no similar bursaries are being offered to female applicants. Also in disagreement are the staff of the medical center in Princes

Gardens, who are threatening strike action over the increased workload.

The Registry Department claim they have the full backing of the Rector, and remain confident that their scheme will soon become an integral part of the admissions procedure. "Our ultimate aim is for everyone to be able to go down to the Union bar and pull," said a happy, newly-engaged researcher.

Barmy MP opens booze palace for gutter experience

SW7 nightlife looks set to improve following the recent decision by local councillors to grant a bar licence to disgraced Kensington & Chelsea MP, Sir Nicholas Scott. The former minister for Northern Ireland plans to open the first of a franchised chain of 'blues & booze' jazz clubs, to be known as "Nicky Scott's."



Scott: Pissed

Sir Nicholas hopes that the seductive blend of alcohol and music he plans to offer will entice students away from the cheaper Union bar. He claims to have personally tasted every single one of the five hundred and seventy two different drinks and cocktails available, proclaiming them "Fantashtic" shortly before leaving in his ambulance. Among his own personal favourites is the house speciality cocktail "The Party Conference", a heady mixture of whisky and the strongest prescription painkillers.

Facilities provided will include topless go-go dancers and a controversial "Hit 'n' Run" drink-driving simulator, with an exclusive bonus 'pushchair level'. The modern interior design will feature a gutter room, exclusive to members, which will recreate the atmosphere of a breezy Bournemouth evening.

Cold turkey for curry addicts

continued from page 1

only feasible explanation was that the whole lunch operation was merely a front for a vast narcotics ring."

Sure enough, forensic analysis showed traces of crack cocaine in the pork biryani.

The ensuing investigation aims to determine whether students buying the curries knew that they were being supplied with illegal substances, or if staff had surreptitiously added the dangerously habit-forming drugs in order to boost profits. In either case, addicts unable to get their fix of lamb vindaloo will face 'cold turkey' this Christmas.

In a brief telephone call from Kensington and Chelsea police station, a member of the disgraced catering team could only comment: "Erm... chutney with that?"

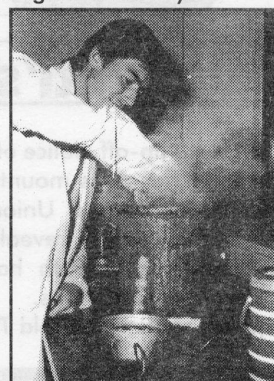
Boffins crack Mech Eng gene

Dr Crispian Govinda of the Genetics Department announced last Friday that after years of painstaking research in collaboration with the Human Genome Project, his team had isolated the gene that leads people to enrol at university to study mechanical engineering.

Recognised symptoms include hair on the palm of the hands, a low forehead, atrophied frontal lobes, reduced speech capacity and an affinity for greasy spanners. Previous research had suggested that this rare affliction was caused by environmental conditions, but these latest findings prove that it is hereditary.

According to Dr Govinda, suf-

ferers often form crude social groups, giving themselves names such as "Motor Club" or "C&G Exec" and spend hours probing engines with rudimentary tools. Even with gene therapy, complete recovery is rare, and students showing these symptoms are advised to seek medical assistance and counselling immediately.



Scientist: Hot property

SLOT MACHINE FAILURE BRINGS HUXLEY TO ITS KNEES

The Maths Department's usually sedate routine was disrupted last Thursday when the drinks machine in the Huxley Building obstinately refused to function.

Distressed students were found wandering the corridors, severely disoriented and experiencing hallucinations, nausea and vomiting. On further medical examination it was confirmed that these were in fact

withdrawal symptoms, with students suffering from caffeine deprivation.

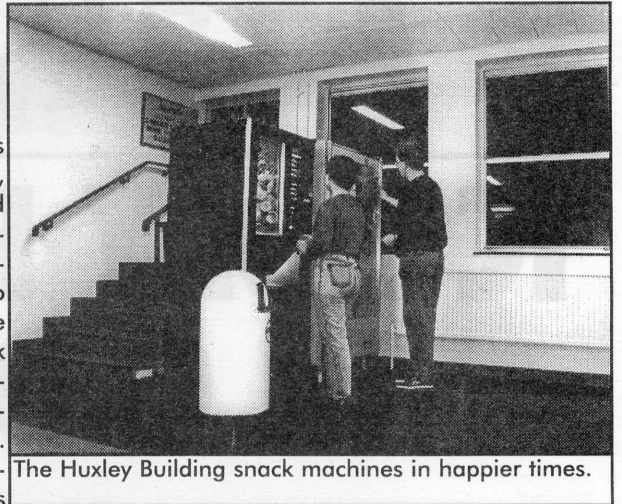
An immediate investigation into the condition was launched with the initial findings confirming a dependence on a synthetic vitamin-free blend of cocoa, powdered milk and boiling water. If the "drinks" machine is not fixed within a few days, it is estimated that the mathematics postgraduate population could become extinct if nothing is done to save them.

Thursday's disaster forced

hundreds of the shy, pallid mathematics students to surface and seek nourishment elsewhere. Eye-witnesses

accounts tell of a mass exodus to Blackett Laboratory, where they were forced to use the

vastly inferior vending machine avoided daily by knowing physicists.



The Huxley Building snack machines in happier times.

Millenium bang planned by Physics

Imperial College's Dept. of Physics has received an undisclosed sum from the Millennium Commission, following its successful bid to provide the light show for celebrations on New Year's Eve, 1999.

In an ambitious and far-reaching scheme, the Blackett Laboratory has pledged to furnish London with a display far surpassing the simple lasers and fireworks planned by other cities. Britain's entire remaining nuclear arsenal will be launched at the stroke of midnight, and detonated at the edge of space directly above the Old Royal Observatory, Greenwich.

Announcing the project, Head of Dept. Professor David Eastwood revealed: "By carefully timing the detonations, we

hope to provide approximately 15 minutes of continuous daylight over Europe." Addressing concerns over safety, Prof. Eastwood explained that nuclear explosions in a vacuum produce very little fallout, and that the increased lighting would be invaluable to revellers attempting to meet in Trafalgar Square. The warheads will be carried into space using tried and trusted Ariane technology.

Disposing of atomic weapons in this way is both more entertaining and cheaper than careful decommissioning. The Government has given the plan its full support, seeing a chance for Britain to lead the world towards unilateral disarmament. It is hoped that the residual atmospheric radiation, expected to endure for thousands of millennia, will serve as a proud and lasting monument to world peace.

Student Debt Award scooped by IC

A student from Imperial College's Department of Computing has seen off stiff competition to win Britain's first annual Student Debt Award, successfully demonstrating that he owed more money than any other student registered in the UK.

The winner was announced during a gala dinner at the Park Lane Hilton last Friday, attended by the cream of society's debt-ridden celebrities and bankrupt entrepreneurs.

The IC student, who is wanted by debt collection agencies and so cannot be named, wore a false beard as he accepted the award, presented this year by Kevin Maxwell. In a short speech, the prizewinner addressed a cheering crowd of young debt-building hopefuls,

recounting how he had amassed a personal deficit of around £275,000 through bogus identities, 13 bank accounts, multiple student loan applications and countless credit-cards. He claimed that, while many students foolishly squandered their grants on textbooks and living expenses, the prudent spender should invest the money in drink, drugs and loose women.

Despite professing only vague recollections as to where the money had gone, the student jovially recalled how spending on his heroin habit had been largely overshadowed by his Queens Gate Terrace flat rent, and how he had been unable to supply the 3 months of bank statements necessary to apply for College access funds, never having stayed with the same bank for more than six weeks at a time.

Tory MP blasts medical text as porn

Sir Harold Twistleton-Smythe, Conservative MP for Lower Furbleton West, declared his total disgust yesterday for the "unashamedly pornographic" content of a medical textbook. It is understood that he found the book in the possession of his daughter, who attends St Mary's Hospital Medical School. "I shall be asking questions in

the House over this sordid affair. I don't know how the publishers can allow this filth to be printed," said Sir Harold. The book is understood to contain several pictures of naked men and women from a number of different angles. Sir Harold was particularly shocked to find diagrams of internal organs and dissected body parts. "I shall be writing immediately to the Chairman of the General

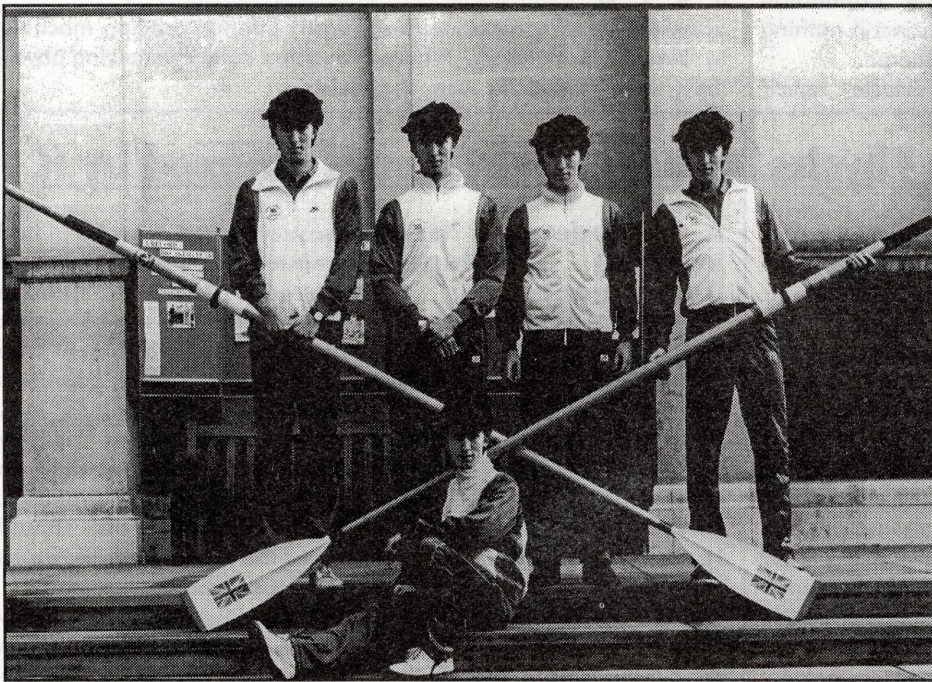
Medical Council about this. This book is more suited to the top shelf of a seedy newsagent's than a student library. In my day all we had was the occasional saucy postcard from the continent." The publishers of the book, 'Gray's Anatomy', were surprised at the commotion, explaining: "The book has been in print since the nineteenth century and this is the first complaint we've had." Sir Harold

was unrepentant: "It's indecent and immoral. It's probably on the blasted internet too, if I could just get the dashed contraption to work."

At the time of going to press, members of the House of Commons have established a cross-party select committee to examine the pictures in detail, and will publish their findings in a report later this year.

Wednesday 18th December 1996

IC BOAT BOYS SUSPECT IN CLONING ROW



Rowing authorities have slammed Imperial College's Boat Club in a row over the Club's alleged use of clones. The rowing team, who have won the World Championships in just about everything, were devastated to learn that their trophy cabinet may be in jeopardy.

Bill 'Grand Master' Mason, the team Coach spoke of the club's anger over the charge. "The team are very angry that other teams have accused them of being clones. It is totally untrue. We have never used clones, except in training." He went on to accuse their opponents of being sore losers.

Will Taker, stroke in the Henley Grand winning team, said that "competitions always bring out the worst in people." His crewmate, cox Billy Taka, agreed. "It must be disheartening to see us race away from you after all those months of training" he said. Power stroke William Taykerr and number three Liam Cztaecha declined to comment.

IC UC BOFFS SUSPECT IN CLONING ROW

Next issue:

Union bar to introduce top-up fees.

Felix editor expected back from lunch break "within 6 months." Rector's face appears in cloud formation.

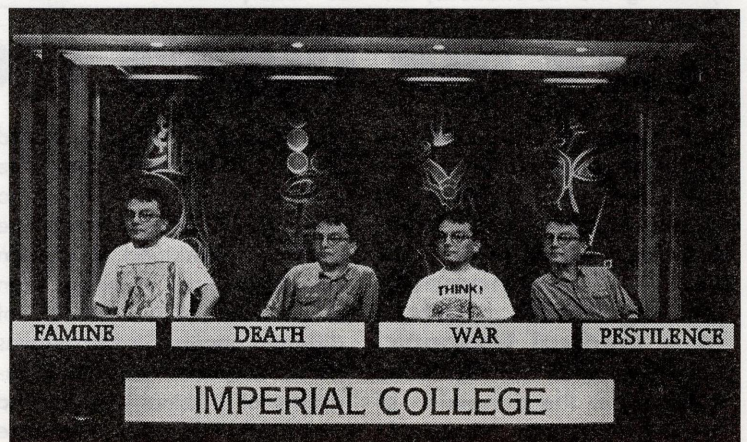
IC reporter found dead.

St Mary's Union exec. Still missing; New BMS foundations laid. Southwell Hall cockroaches demand better conditions.

Quiz show authorities have slammed Imperial College's University Challenge team over the alleged use of clones. The team of four won the last series of the top BBC show.

Team leader Jim De'Ath denied the charge. "This is ridiculous. Scientists simply do not have the ability to do this. Yet."

Mr De'Ath is 210.



Tomorrow's sport today!