

KEEP THE CAT FREE

THE FELIX

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Student Newspaper of Imperial College



Sir Ronald Oxburgh pits himself against the Voice of Reason in a head-to-head interview. Follow the battle on page six.



In Something for the Weekend: Gridlock'd, Absolute Power and a look at the Gobi gobs-mackers.

IC stalks Oxbridge in Times league

ALOK JHA

Last Friday, *The Times* published its annual league table for British universities and, once again, Imperial College came in third after the heavyweight Oxbridge contingent. However, recent improvements at IC have dramatically cut the lead of its nearest rival, Oxford, from over 120 points to less than 80, with the London School of Economics closing on the 'top two' even faster.

The rankings are compiled on the basis of a number of key statistics for each University, including library spending, accommodation, research and teaching. Published results for each section are ranked and then the highest performer is allocated 100 points. The remaining Universities then receive points based on their performance relative to the best. The teaching and research grades are calculated slightly differently; each of these is based on the grades received by different departments in the assessment exercises carried out earlier this year, and in these Imperial made a strong showing.

The teaching points are weighted 2.5:1 to the research points. This year also sees the inclusion of upper seconds into the degree classifications grade, in order to "iron out differ-

| THE TIMES 1997 LEAGUE TABLE HOW THE UNIVERSITIES SCORED | | | | | | | | 1997 score Max: 1000 | |
|--|----------------|------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----|
| Teaching assessment (2.5) | Research (2.5) | Entry grades (1) | Staff-student ratio (1) | Library spending (1) | Firasts and 2:1s (1) | Graduate destinations (1) | Accommodation (1) | | |
| 1 Cambridge | 100 | 100 | 100 | 87 | 84 | 100 | 92 | 96 | 949 |
| 2 Oxford | 91 | 96 | 100 | 86 | 100 | 83 | 98 | 91 | 930 |
| 3 Imperial | 93 | 85 | 79 | 100 | 83 | 72 | 94 | 67 | 854 |
| 4 LSE | 92 | 96 | 86 | 82 | 81 | 78 | 80 | 68 | 849 |
| 5 Warwick | 94 | 85 | 71 | 69 | 72 | 82 | 81 | 80 | 817 |
| 6 York | 99 | 79 | 71 | 63 | 71 | 78 | 73 | 89 | 810 |
| 7 UCL | 89 | 84 | 71 | 96 | 71 | 77 | 74 | 63 | 804 |
| 8 St Andrews | 90 | 72 | 71 | 53 | 69 | 81 | 88 | 100 | 793 |
| 9 Durham | 85 | 72 | 79 | 69 | 71 | 73 | 78 | 78 | 786 |
| 10 Edinburgh | 85 | 79 | 78 | 67 | 73 | 90 | 62 | 65 | 767 |
| 11 Bristol | 80 | 72 | 71 | 77 | 72 | 81 | 76 | 70 | 754 |
| 12 Lancaster | 81 | 79 | 71 | 56 | 70 | 82 | 69 | 80 | 753 |
| 13 Nottingham | 79 | 69 | 71 | 75 | 69 | 84 | 78 | 72 | 749 |
| 14 Bath | 72 | 78 | 79 | 66 | 71 | 78 | 86 | 67 | 744 |
| 15 King's College | 78 | 69 | 71 | 91 | 69 | 72 | 73 | 64 | 740 |
| 16 Sheffield | 86 | 70 | 71 | 68 | 67 | 72 | 69 | 70 | 736 |
| 17 Manchester | 79 | 74 | 71 | 72 | 71 | 66 | 77 | 71 | 735 |
| 18 Birmingham | 77 | 69 | 79 | 69 | 71 | 74 | 76 | 68 | 733 |
| 19 Southampton | 81 | 68 | 71 | 65 | 71 | 67 | 80 | 68 | 730 |
| 20 Essex | 70 | 76 | 71 | 63 | 70 | 73 | 77 | 73 | 719 |
| 21 Brunel | 66 | 69 | 71 | 72 | 66 | 69 | 69 | 71 | 714 |

ences in awarding policies of different colleges", according to *The Times*.

Imperial scored a total of 854 points out of a possible 1000, narrowly beating the LSE which scored 849. The only other University of London

colleges in the top twenty were UCL and King's with totals of 804 and 740 respectively.

Individual section scores for Imperial varied but most saw an increase over last year. IC's large population of researchers meant that

our staff-student ratio was graded, as last year, at a perfect 100 whereas IC's lowest score, 67, was again that for accommodation. This is a significant improvement on last year's score of 34 but remains among the lowest for the top 50 universities. Other London colleges fared little better in this category, reflecting the deficit of Hall provision and inordinate rents facing students in the capital.

Other major improvements over last year include the 39 point increase in library spending, raising this year's total to 83, and bringing it more in line with spending at other top universities. Encouragingly, graduate destinations was rated highly at 94 - again one of the highest in the table.

The annual publication of *The Times* lists again raises questions as to the reliability and credibility of the rankings, especially given the dramatic changes in higher education prevalent over recent years. The way scores are calculated has, in the past, been accused of intrinsically favouring Oxford and Cambridge, with some commentators pointing out that the quality of accommodation offered by a University, and the amount it

continued on page two

Candidates mysteriously appear for third race

JITEN PATEL

Now that the presidential race has kicked off for the third time it seems that we are finally going to have a choice of candidates, ranging from NCS president Mo Dulloo to Richard Chaitien, a third year geology student, with five candidates so far putting their names forward.

declared their intent so far include Laurie Tweedale, former Operatic Society chair, Al Hussein, who dropped out of the last round of elections and Despina Crassa, Overseas Societies Committee chair.

Although not all the candidates have yet gathered the required 20 seconders they are not expected to fall short of the quota, but unusually

Mr Dulloo has not yet been officially proposed. Speaking to *Felix*, he declared that "I have a personal list [of proposers] that I am considering". Mr Dulloo considered his closest rival to date as Ms Tweedale saying that "she would be very competent in the job" and that "it should be an interesting battle."

With most exams over or coming

to a conclusion, the number of candidates running could rise further still creating a more exciting and competitive race. Other possible candidates include Paul Brown, current IC Radio chair, who has been given leave from his PhD supervisor and is still "seriously considering standing." Rumours persist of yet another candidate appearing from across the Park.

Bronze for IC

continued from frontpage

spends on its libraries are not factors which necessarily have any bearing whatsoever on the value of the degrees it awards.

It could be argued, for example, that science and engineering courses do not, by their very nature, require the same level of library provision as humanities courses. In a computing department, it might be difficult to distinguish directly between spending on libraries and spending on computing facilities as reference sources increasingly move on-line. Perhaps a better criterion might be the amount spent on teaching laboratories, with libraries counting as 'labs' for students on humanities courses.

Also under fire is *The Times*' practice of weighting scores in different categories up or down in calculating the totals and so in awarding the final rankings. It could be argued that criteria which have little direct bearing on teaching quality, such as accommodation and library spending, should be weighted down, while staff-stu-

dent ratios and graduate destinations should make the most significant contributions to the total. Indeed, a judicious choice of weightings to the different categories can produce a very different ranking, as the *Felix* analysis below and right shows.

These reservations aside, *The Times* rankings are held in high regard by schools and graduate recruiters. If Imperial is seen as a 'poor' third by some, this reflects the low public profile of the College rather than any failings in teaching standards.

IC scoops gold!

OUR OWN STATISTICIAN

In a startling revelation this week, *Felix* can reveal the long-awaited results of its annual survey of universities, colleges and institutes of higher education. The league table (below), based on careful theft and manipulation of other people's statistics clearly show that Imperial College has come up trumps again.

The annual back-slapping award fight was closer than usual with the top three institutions clustered within three points of each other. In a departure from previous year's calcula-

tions, extra weight has been given to the crucial academic value of the staff-to-student ratio. This along with Imperial's top teaching assessment scores have helped IC leapfrog Oxford and Cambridge and take the golden statuette for the top British seat of research and learning, as our official table shows.

A new category, Graduate Destinations, has been included to reflect prospects of the countries' top students. Favourite destinations this year are rumoured to include New York, Bali and the Costa del Sol.

| | | Teaching Assessment (2.5) | Staff-Student Ratio (1) | Library Spending (1) | Graduate Destinations (5) | Accommodation (5) | Felix Special Score (0.2) | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|----|----|------|
| 1 | Imperial | 93 | 85 | 79 | 100 | 83 | 72 | 94 | 67 | 1253 |
| 2 | Cambridge | 100 | 100 | 100 | 87 | 84 | 100 | 82 | 96 | 1252 |
| 3 | Oxford | 91 | 96 | 100 | 86 | 100 | 83 | 98 | 91 | 1251 |
| 4 | LSE | 92 | 96 | 86 | 82 | 81 | 78 | 80 | 68 | 1155 |
| 5 | Warwick | 94 | 85 | 71 | 69 | 72 | 82 | 81 | 80 | 1068 |

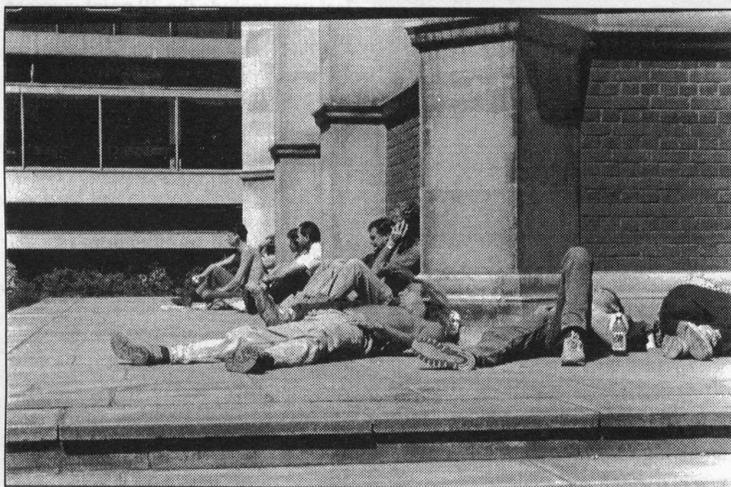


PHOTO: ROBIN

It's just a perfect day to lie in the sun. BMS site workers enjoy the late spring sunshine on the Queen's Lawn.

News in Brief

MEDIA MENTIONS

The controversy surrounding the examinations marquee attracted nationwide media attention last week, with stories in *The Independent* and Europe's largest student newspaper, *London Student*. ICU President, Eric Allsop, and Publications Board Chairman, Robin Riley, were interviewed live on *GLR FM*. College representatives were invited but did not attend.

NO WELCOME FOR LAB REPORT

A report backed by all the major research funding bodies, calling for action on the 'chronic' state of many University laboratories, will not be endorsed by the Wellcome Trust. Wellcome maintains that Universities themselves should cover overheads on research funded by the Trust. The report will be submitted to the Dearing Inquiry on HE.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES SUMMER VACATION - 1997

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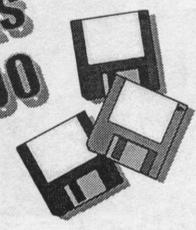
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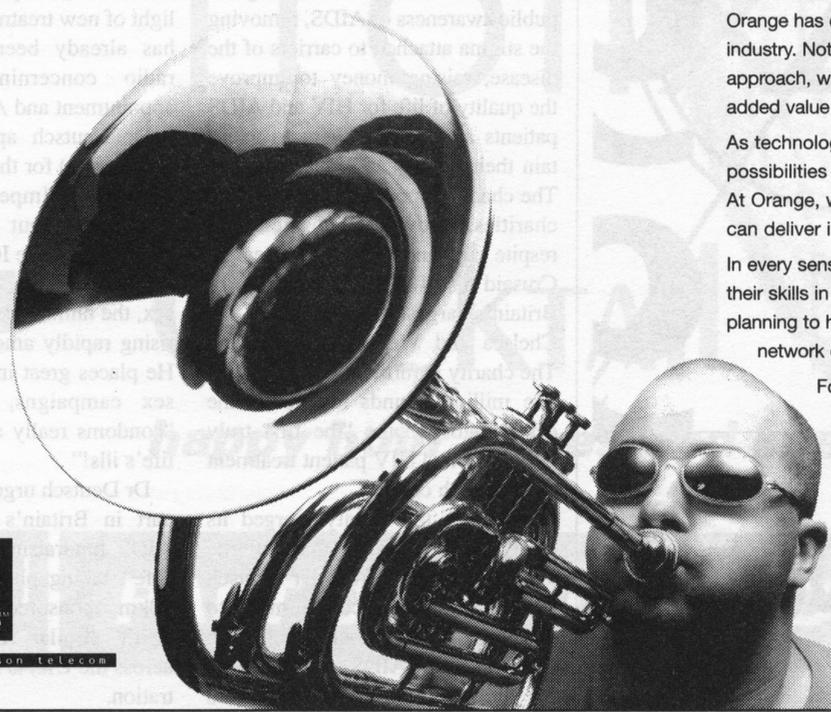
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JCR refurbishment plan in doubt

NEWSTEAM

The future of the Junior Common Room hangs in the balance today as College officials begin a series of meetings to discuss plans for its refurbishment.

Following years of neglect, the JCR has fallen into disrepair. The seats-covers are torn, the decor is tatty and the lighting is poor, leading

some students to declare it "the eyesore on the walkway."

Speaking to *Felix*, Ian Caldwell, Director of Estates, admitted "The JCR is certainly not what it should be... of all the student facilities it needs the most improvement." Plans due to be drawn up by IC Estates Design Office may include the relocation of the QT snack-bar, possibly

to a more conspicuous site on the Sheffield walkway. Furthermore the wall of the JCR adjoining the walkway may be recessed, in an attempt to alleviate the bottleneck at the main common room entrance. Mr Caldwell commented "We want to keep the JCR as a flexible space, but improve the environment."

At the time of going to press it is not yet clear where funding for the project will be found, unofficial estimates of the cost approaching £400 000. In the past, JCR refurbishment has been paid for by a combination of IC Estates, IC catering and IC Union.

If, as precedent would suggest, the Union is asked to contribute as much as a third of the cost, negotiations may stall. The 'Memorandum of Understanding', which outlines areas of the Union's responsibility, would suggest that the Union is under no obligation to pay for improvements to the JCR, which is College-run. Union officials may be reluctant to part with such a significant fraction of ICU's development reserve before finalising details of improvements in social facilities in Beit Quad, planned for next year in anticipation of the medical merger.



PHOTO: ROBIN

No, no come back! The 'tatty' JCR may be refurbished for next year.

IC don appointed charity chief

MATTHEW BENNETT

Dr James Deutsch, a Silwood park lecturer, and expert on cichlid fishes in lake Malawi, has been appointed Chief Executive of Cruisaid, a London based AIDS charity.

Dr Deutsch, who is himself HIV positive, applied for the job after volunteering for another AIDS charity, the AIDS treatment project. He left his job as lecturer in biology to start the new job on 1 May, but will remain connected to Imperial as an Honorary Lecturer whilst working for Cruisaid. He will work for a trial period of six months, with the option of an extended contract covering several years.

From studying the explosive evolution of lake Malawi cichlids, Dr Deutsch finds himself at the head of one of the largest AIDS charities. Cruisaid aims include increasing the public awareness of AIDS, removing the stigma attached to carriers of the disease, raising money to improve the quality of life for HIV and AIDS patients and helping them to maintain their dignity and independence. The charity supports institutions and charities, providing hospice and respite care and furthering research. Cruisaid also funded the creation of Britain's largest HIV clinic, at the Chelsea and Westminster hospital. The charity is further hoping to raise one million pounds to expand the centre into become "the first truly integrated and HIV patient treatment and research centre."

Recently, the charity merged its hardship fund with that of the Terrence Higgins Trust. Dr Deutsch has reiterated his commitment to working in close conjunction with other HIV and AIDS charities, with the aim of establishing a "unified

agenda for meeting the needs of people with the disease in light of improvements in treatment."

On the subject of treatments, Dr Deutsch is positive about the new 'multi-drug' treatments now available, which have been shown to prolong life, especially in cases where the disease is diagnosed early. Dr Deutsch has stressed the need for reliable, effective treatments; without them, many potential sufferers see little or no benefit in taking an HIV test.

Dr Deutsch spoke to *Felix* about his hopes and aspirations for the new job. He sees himself taking on such diverse duties as "welcoming people to charity benefit dinners and theatre openings to working with other AIDS charities and agencies to meet the needs of people with HIV and AIDS as the epidemic changes in light of new treatments." Dr Deutsch has already been interviewed on radio concerning himself, his appointment and AIDS as a whole.

Dr Deutsch applauded Imperial Queers (IQ) for their efforts in keeping the Imperial community informed about the disease. He added that while IC students seem to know about the dangers of unsafe sex, the number of new HIV cases is rising rapidly among young people. He places great importance on safer sex campaigns, concluding that "condoms really are the solution to life's ills!"

Dr Deutsch urges everyone to take part in Britain's largest HIV and AIDS fundraising event, 'Walk for Life', taking place on June 8. The 10km sponsored walk in London (with similar events happening across the UK) is still open for registration.

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After months of meticulous planning, the time had come. I entered Sherfield, scurried up the back stairs and reached the top floor. Suite Five lay in the distance. Through the landmines, under the razor wire, passing the 'KILL BAKER' and 'SILENCE THE VOICE' posters, I was almost there. My lucky break came when Lynda Davis' machine gun jammed. Our Head of PR and Chief of IC Secret Police hurriedly reached for her revolver, but it was too late. I was in the Rector's Office.

Simon Baker, Voice of Reason, talks to Sir Ronald Oxburgh, the Rector, about some of his favourite subjects.

Sir Ron Oxburgh

The idea for this interview, or rather chat, actually came from a very unexpected sources within the upper echelons of that esteemed building. After listening to me bang on about the whys and wherefores of Imperial for the last two years, it seemed a good idea to hear from the leader of the Opposition, namely Sir Ron Oxburgh. No discussion about the College at the moment could avoid the exam relocation farrago; it has been a good encapsulation of the general notion that students feel aggrieved by the attitude of College towards them. While I'll agree with the notion that students will always find something to moan about, this is not a trivial matter. Let Sir Ron now answer.

"A choice between two evils", the tent and the Great Hall, is a view that most would support. "I am satisfied the people that were concerned have actually done everything possible" may raise at least a few eyebrows among our more cynical members. As the Rector pointed out, "the problem developed eight days before the exams," which is true, if one refers to the specific incident causing the noise. The broader point is surely that College should have erred on the side of caution by either planning the construction work around the exams or relocating the exams much, much earlier.

The suggestion that the last couple of weeks of exams may indeed be moved to a variety of locations around College means that the latter option could have been taken with a little more foresight by Estates and the Registry. The new garden behind Weeks Hall was "obviously considered", but rejected because of "access problems". Hang on a minute. Did we not have an almighty row last year about access to this garden, deemed so important that a path was constructed to it during last year's exams? All in all, this is, despite the protes-

tations of the Rector, a disaster that could so easily have been avoided.

Our conversation then turned to Campus Renaissance. To my surprise and delight, the Rector stated that the next big priority was Beit Quad, a combination of increased Union facilities and significantly upgraded accommodation offering 270 rooms. I say surprised, since it does not appear in a recent Estates Major Projects Report even in the planning section. Beit Quad has enormous potential, and Sir Ron alluded to a Cambridge model, which is certainly applicable in this case (to a certain extent). A figure of about £7million was mentioned, and we look forward to the results.

On the broader issue of student rents, the Rector was reasonably encouraging. Acknowledging that we do not "have a very good arrangement at the moment", he went on to say, "I would like us to have rents as low as possible, but I would like those to be economic rents...any subsidies should be decided on grounds other than being a first year." And so say all of us, but the figures do not seem to bear that out. Of the £4.5 million student rent collected last year plus the £2.3 million from other lettings, College was left with a final surplus after all costs of £2.2 million. Rents as low as possible Sir Ron? He quickly pointed out that this was a "spoofig figure" no depreciation charges for ultimate replacement of the Halls were included in that figure. Quite so, nor included anywhere else at all, it would seem. It is the case that hotels do not depreciate long-standing properties, but simply keep them in good repair. Given the large under-spend in the maintenance budget here, we appear to do neither. True, no loan repayments were included in

this figure. This would only apply to Clayponds, as far as is obvious, bringing the surplus down to about £1.2 million, or free rent for everyone in Princes Gardens. No scope for lower rents? I remain unconvinced that students are getting the best deal.

Conferencing remains the big hope for College accommodation. Again, the Rector cited a Cambridge College, who by a "careful and clever marketing strategy" have produced very good returns. Sadly Imperial, whose sixties buildings he described as "orange boxes, badly designed, badly built", is no Cambridge college. The 'virtuous circle' of investment in accommodation stock to attract conferencing business that would in turn help fund more redevelopment looks very appealing, but with it comes the risk that student rents will have to meet the shortfalls from pricing ourselves out of the market.

The more observant of you will have noticed that I have the odd gripe about Sherfield, both the building and the contents. "The role of administration is to provide the College with an interface with the outside world to leave the academics free from outside interference and to provide an environment in which they can pursue their activities." Most academics that I have spoken to would contend that the bulk of interference is not from external bodies but from Sherfield itself.

I have before now stated that at least half the IC teaching grant gets taken centrally. 'A totally misleading figure', but one supported by several senior academics. It is partly a case of how you do your sums, but the near universal feeling is that our central admin is over-bloated. Sir Ron countered this charge by suggesting that we had one of the lowest

cost, most efficient administrations in the country. As we can, and did, argue numbers somewhat fruitlessly, I leave you to draw your own conclusions. Suffice it to say, that I have heard a variety of views on this subject recently, somewhat at odds with this vision of loveliness. "College has frankly got to sharpen up many of its areas of activity", "The College cannot afford to go round in circles as it often does", the method of allocating teaching money by formula has been described as "abdication of management". "Senior academics are probably the worst perpetrators of ill-informed chatter." The last quote, lest you were wondering, was made by the Rector.

Sharpening up areas of activity inevitably means services such as catering, cleaning and security, all of which impact heavily on students. These days it is becoming progressively more unusual to find an organisation trying to do everything in-house themselves. As is abundantly obvious, the core

of it. What was less apparent from the Rector were the potential problems. A senior member of IC recently told me that there is a real worry that the "old College" will be neglected as the medical schools hog the limelight. There is also concern in some quarters about the speed of the mergers, which will happen in less than 10 weeks; there are still conflicts arising from the far simpler Mary's merger which took place in 1988. The mergers present an enormous opportunity to strengthen the College. We shall become the largest UK university by turnover, which will give us some serious clout. But within IC, the medics will have 40% of the personnel and 70% of the money. Money is power and that's a lot of money.

The changes are also a big incentive to reform the way College is run. Rationalisation should be at the top of the agenda, given the obvious overlap between the various merging institutions. Some pruning has taken place, but only where people have retired, as far as can be determined. Sir Ron

students, whose interests are also of considerable importance, begin to be affected. I can, thankfully, only think of isolated examples where this has or does occur. The Rector did say that he "would be surprised if we have no voluntary redundancies by the turn of the century." Time will tell.

A number of points become clear as a result of my interview with the Rector and conversations with other illuminati in College. Firstly, Imperial is about to go through a very major transformation, which on the whole will be very beneficial but is not without pitfalls. This must be acknowledged at every level in the College. Opportunities must be seized, since they will almost certainly not present themselves again for many years.

One thing that has become abundantly clear over the course of this undertaking is the lack of transparency in Imperial's undertakings. The evasion and unnecessary secrecy which are the hallmark of many dealings that the 'authorities' have with the

vs Voice of Reason

activity of Imperial College is teaching and research, and (after prompting from the Rector) "pastoral care of the students".

We are not a cleaning company, catering is not our thing and, while accepting that security is slightly different from the previous two, it cannot be argued that we must keep it to ourselves. Given the near-glacial pace of change in this area, I was encouraged to hear that the Rector has "no position" on who should own these services. Less comforting was the very pessimistic stance on contracting out- only problems seemed to be identified, rather than opportunities; if it is such a bad idea, why are organisations all over the world moving in this direction?

To be fair, it is vital that one approaches these matters carefully, otherwise we, the students, will inevitably suffer most. God forbid what would happen if catering was contracted out and got worse.

The medical mergers are probably the biggest challenges facing the College. "It is a win-win situation", he said, which, I think, most of us agree it could be. Probably the most obvious grievance felt by the South Ken students is the apparent special treatment given to our medical brethren. The Rector was reassuring on the level of social facilities in the BMS, describing them as "no more than students have in any larger department...much less than they wanted." This has the potential to turn very ugly if the medics don't get what they were expecting, though it is good to hear that steps are being taken to coax the medics into broader College life.

You have all heard the marvellous advantages of the BMS for us all, and I for one agree with much

seems to favour re-deployment, rather than redundancy, which is all very well, but rarely delivers the goods.

Such laudable compassion is not limited to the Rector; a senior member of the Sherfield staff related a story of a man who was up for redundancy. This was put to a senior member of the Management and Planning Group (IC's effective head honchos), who asked "does he have a family?" Gentlemen, we are not running a charity. The Rector rightly said that "it is true that universities have tried to look after their staff...to try to be a good employer", which of course is essential for good morale. But let us not get carried away with this benevolent attitude, to the point where stu-

students are counterproductive, and invariably results in egg on the faces of the powers that be.

This a view, to be fair, is supported some senior administrative staff at IC, and hopefully will give the necessary impetus. Students feel much more contented if they feel that it is not the case of the rulers and the ruled. As for Sir Ron himself, I was broadly impressed. There are clearly areas where I cannot agree with his stance, a feeling I suspect is mutual! He is a very adept performer, whose work on the Dearing Committee is vital for the defence of Imperial's needs. A man with a lot on his plate at the moment, I am sure that he will concentrate on the nitty-gritty of IC once the *grand projets* are up and running.



A Doctor writes...

This article was originally published in *Marmalade Sandwich*, the Student Newspaper of St Mary's. However, on reflection it seems that it is perhaps equally relevant to students of the other Constituent Colleges in South Kensington and so here it is, slightly revised in order to make it more generally directed. From the first word, I should point out that it was not written as a piece of anti-Imperial propaganda, it was written out of a frustration at the escalating level of misunderstanding that exists and, whilst it may seem biased towards St Mary's, this is simply because I am a student there and have a more limited experience of Imperial College as a whole unit.

Nick Oliver

Despite my being a focus for the frustration of St Mary's students, I felt that this article neatly summed up the concern for the future of ICU and the other CCUs. AF

It seems that Imperial College students wish to keep medics at a safe distance and they are now showing their resentment at our impending invasion by writing bitter editorials in *Felix*. However, the issue concerning the evolving relationship between St Mary's and Imperial is far wider and more two-sided than this. Mary's medics have a greater resentment at being unseated from what we see as our home (in a physical and, for want of a better word, spiritual sense) and have felt strongly over this for some years. However, only now, when firm decisions about our future are being made, is our feeling being truly noticed by the lethargic student body at Imperial and, whilst bitter editorials were written, they were perhaps simply a reaction to articles printed elsewhere which claim every decision made to be a glorious victory for Mary's and a cucumber up the arse for Imperial.

The to-ing and fro-ing of victorious claims and bitter rebukes in *Felix* began at the beginning of February after the 'Question and Answer' session with Professor Caldwell and Professor Swanson. The conclusions of that meeting were basically promises from Professor Swanson (Deputy Rector of IC) that the funding for ICSM will remain at its present level and will continue to be paid through College in contrast to the other constituent Colleges who receive their funding through Imperial College Union (ICU). We were also told that we could continue to play as a Medics team in BUSA and some other smaller issues were decided, probably in our favour. The conclusions we can draw from this are that i) Prof. Swanson will listen to our concerns and will be reasonable in helping out and ii) if we don't ask, we don't get. OK so far? Good. However, the headline in *Felix* was "Medics Secure Independence" which, in a couple of areas, we have done but, Alex Feakes, Editor of *Felix*, saw this article as "a stirring story of triumph in the face of

adversity".

And perhaps he was right, but I believe that he must realise the fact that this imminent change, in one way or another, scares or worries every one of us and so any decisions which go some way to alleviating some of these fears will be celebrated in a way which is perhaps victorious. However, for Mr Feakes to go on to accuse us of being "selfish" is simply short-sighted.

Of course we are being selfish. We are being uprooted against almost all of our wills and, whilst we realise that without the move, Mary's would have a very short life-expectancy indeed, we are merely trying to ensure that despite the geographical changes, little else about what is a fantastic place (though St Mary's, of course, has its weaknesses) alters perceptibly. The supposed "deprivation of other students of funds for their activities" is, bluntly, not our concern and this is something which the "...other students" must raise with the College.

Ultimately, this has been College's free decision and it must be assumed that it has been fully considered, including its knock-on effect across the whole student body. To criticise us directly for taking away from the members of ICU is a pointless twisting of fact. We are not "a room full of baying medical students" any more than ICU students are a University of simpering apathetics. We are simply concerned and are doing everything in our power to make ICSM a worthy successor to Mary's.

Unfortunately, duplication (and even triplication) of undergraduate services is a necessity if future students are to study on three such widely spread sites so economics states that more funds are required.

I understand that perhaps our actions will serve to divide the campus into medics and non-medics but to claim that this will be "detrimental to the substance of this institution (Imperial College)" is unwarranted

arrogance. Last year, IC rag week raised £920 between 6000 students. St. Mary's rag raised upwards of £30 000 between 600 students. A mere week after Mary's rag week ICU sabbatical positions were once again decided by the Paddington vote (something that has been repeated this year). If these things are a measure of IC substance (and can there be better indicators?), then perhaps division was always inevitable anyway.

A couple of weeks after this editorial, a letter was written to *Felix* attempting to put forward the Mary's point of view. Unfortunately, this letter slipped down the unproductive slope of being aggressive and confrontational (hypocritically something it accuses Alex Feakes of). For several years now "St Mary's xenophobia", a trait peculiar to all London Medical Schools ever since their inception, has extended to IC.

I have already skimmed the surface of why this has occurred but, unlike Alex Feakes and Nick Jenkins, I don't believe that this is something we should be rapidly beginning to unravel. Of course, it has a detrimental edge to it but after 3½ years at Mary's (as opposed to just one exploratory term), I've realised that without our xenophobia (which, for the most part is purely posturing - just visit the pavilion bar after any big rugby game) we would lose our fierce pride. And it is this pride which drives us to our fantastic achievements and makes Mary's the undeniably formidable place that it is.

This is just one debate of many to come and it is important to realise that aggressive triumphalism is not wanted at IC any more than snide jealousy and resentment are well received at Mary's. This whole process is inevitable and, as far as Mary's are concerned, continuity is what is wanted and needed. It is undoubtedly going to require a lot of work but we will continue to strive to obtain everything that we reasonably can.

Gobi gobsmackers

THIS summer the Natural History Museum launches its new exhibition 'Dinosaurs of the Gobi Desert' just as Jurassic Park II fever is about to hit Britain. These pre-historic 'monsters' may still inspire fear and excitement in children's hearts, but the new exhibition reveals some of their more tender moments. **Heather Holve** reports on the first UK showing of these spectacular fossils discovered in the 1920s and explains how the exhibition quite literally unearths the domestic life of dinosaurs.

As I walked in the exhibition I was immediately struck by a towering wall of orange. Having over-enthusiastically fallen for last year's colour myself I felt in no place to comment at the choice. But one should never judge too quickly: I discovered I was standing at the foot of the 'Flaming Cliffs' of the Gobi desert where Roy Chapman-Andrews and his team made the dramatic chance discovery of the first ever recorded dinosaur eggs. What they discovered in this extreme and inhospitable landscape, while, incidentally, looking for proof that Central Asia was the cradle of evolution, was one of the richest dinosaur graveyards in the world. This landscape continues to lay bare new fossils which fire the imagination of palaeontologists around the world today.

What these first explorers uncovered changed the direction of future research. They found nests filled with eggs, dinosaur babies and youngsters at different stages of development, which provided important information about how they nurtured their young and a direct link between dinosaurs and their descendants, birds. The link these explorers uncovered also extended further back into pre-history. Many of the dinosaurs found in the Gobi desert are more primitive forms of North American dinosaurs, suggesting that major groups evolved in Asia and later spread to North America across a land bridge that once joined the two continents.

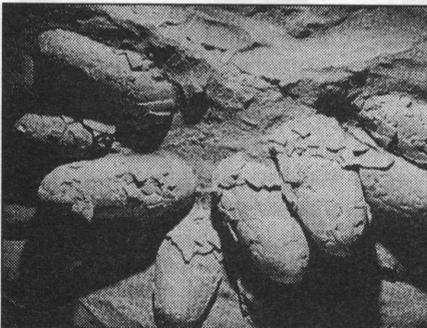
As someone who's knowledge of dinosaurs is limited to impromptu lessons from my elder brother, I was instantly lost in the face of all those bones. These skeletal monsters may have held a fleeting resemblance to specimens in my ABC book of dinosaurs, but the impression they left was very different. These beasts were of much smaller than many of their North American relatives; the *Tarbosaurus* ('alarming lizard') stood about two-thirds the height of its more recent relative the *Tyrannosaurus Rex* ('tyrant lizard king'). And with so many examples of eggs, nests and young I found myself comparing these creatures to Sesame Street's Big Bird rather than monsters like Godzilla.

For the first time I gazed in wonder at the ostrich-like structure of *Gallimus Bullatus* ('chicken-mimic'). I had never seen fossils where a series of ages could be compared, and the *Gallimus* was just the beginning of the experience. A range of *Protoceratops* skulls from adults to mere hatchlings showed how this turtle-beaked vegetarian developed. This small dinosaur, common to the Gobi, browsed on plants, cropping and chopping vegetation with self-sharpening teeth. What I found amazing was that the skulls at different stages showed how the 'frill' on the back of the head developed with age. I was looking at how a cute and cuddly baby changes into an overly large emu-like lizard!

So what did the audience make of this display of dinosaur family values? I did a swift straw pole. Two very unsuspecting kids, Kristen age 10 and Ezesme age 8 gave their expert opinion 'Really great...I loved it all. I especially liked all those BIG teeth'. The new age 'family values' approach to palaeontology obviously passed these two by. Kristen and Ezesme revelled in the thrill of knowing that, through a trick of geological timing, they'd escaped the risk of being eaten by a monster that even their imagination would find difficult to conjure-up.

Giles Clarke and Catherine Barr, who have been responsible for the development of the exhibition, are more than happy with this reaction. They arranged for the exhibits and information to be at kid height to bring the fossils, if not to life, then so close to the child as to make them seem part of a pre-historic zoo. Visitors can latch onto whichever theme touches their imagination; dinosaurs as monsters, dinosaurs the much maligned parent; intrepid desert adventurers past and present.

I am still not ready to throw away my ABC book of dinosaurs, but I can now honestly say that these creatures have been rescued from the 'mythical' department



These eggs were discovered in the 1920s by the adventurer Roy Chapman Andrews (the model for Indiana Jones) in the Gobi desert. Initially believed to have been stolen by the dinosaur *Oviraptor* ('egg-thief'), they have recently been discovered to have been laid in Mongolia by the mis-named *Oviraptor* over 80 million years ago.

of my memory's storage system and dinosaurs are now very real to me. These beasts of the Gobi were turned to stone while in the process of nurturing and protecting their young from a cruel sandstorm 70-80 million years ago. And every year the Gobi offers up a few more treasures as the abrasive powers of sandstorms cut into a new layer of the landscape.

We still have not reached 'the end' of dinosaur history. Only in 1993, 70 years after its discovery, did the *Oviraptor* (egg-thief) finally have its conviction for thieving quashed when an adult was found not 'raiding', but protecting a nest of 22 eggs. Dr Rinchen Barsbold, Director of the Geological Institute of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, quotes from Newton to explain recent successes "We stood on the shoulders of giants". He thus honours past palaeontologists and hints at the calibre of today's international scientists busy unravelling present day dinosaur secrets.

Dinosaurs of the Gobi Desert opens 18 May until 31 August and offers a wide range of kids activities: Dinosaur Dig, the drama 'Legends of the Flaming Cliffs' and 'Travel the Timeline' and 'Build a Dinosaur' workshop.

"Two very unsuspecting kids, Kristen age 10 and Ezesme age 8 gave their expert opinion 'Really great...I loved it all. I especially liked all those BIG teeth'. The new age 'family values' approach to palaeontology obviously passed these two by."

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1089/II

9

300597

Have the words 'long awaited **Prodigy** album'

become tired and useless words in your vocabulary? Do you feel a dull ache in the back of your head any time someone asks you if you know when *it* is coming out? Well, prepare for a date. Yes, after more speculation and bated breath than someone who is waiting for the return of Elvis, we can tell you that the *Fat of the Land* will be out on 30th of June (yes, this year). Probably.

If you enjoyed that little gem, then here is another one. **Ian Brown** is underway on his solo project. Things are not completely simple, though. 'Who else is playing on the record?'

OCTOPUS The Borderline

SFTW
1089/11
10
300597

The Borderline is one of the best venues I've ever been to. On the way down to the stage, the names of every band that have ever played there are engraved - a list which includes Oasis, Pearl Jam and even Spinal Tap!! It's got a really good atmosphere and the best bit is that the bar runs a tab...

Octopus are meant to be one of the new up-and-coming indie bands. Visually they are interesting, but the first thing you notice is the singer. He's the son of Ronnie Briggs the Great Train Robber, looks like Stephen Fry and is tall. Very tall.

The band on the whole look a little odd but the audience don't seem to mind at all and they all cheer raucously, bouncing along gleefully. This is where I felt the band didn't work. Although there are eight players, the harmonica only appeared twice and the trumpets didn't make much of an appearance. The result was a surprisingly weak sound which kept promising to be heavy but only delivered juvenile pop. The songs were generally quite light and

you may ask. Well, none other than former band-mates Mani and Reni. The working title of the album is *Under The Pavement The Beach* - something to do with the French riots in the 1960's, apparently. Brown also needs to find a record label to release his stuff on after Geffen dropped him last year when the Stone Roses broke up.

Talking of album releases, **Oasis** are due to give theirs to the world in a few months. *Be Here Now* will be released on the 18th of August and will be preceded by a single release in July.

Radiohead have added more dates to their tour in september, so if you didn't get a chance

LIVE

to buy tickets last time, here's another one. New dates are as follows: Cardiff International Arena (November 15th), London Wembley Arena (16), Manchester Nynex Arena (17), Birmingham NEC (19) and Aberdeen Exhibition Centre (20). All tickets cost £15 and they go on sale tomorrow (31st May).

Finally, a bit of film news. Steve Hanft, better known as **Beck's** video director, is about to release the film that inspired Beck's hit *Loser*. *Kill The Moonlight* is all about a man who needs to fix his stock car before a big race. The film is released in Los Angeles in June but the date for the United Kingdom is unknown at the moment.

KHALED + ANOKHA London Astoria

Having never heard of either Khaled or Anokha, I had absolutely no idea what to expect of the show. I had been informed by my Northern African Correspondent that Khaled was an African singer currently living in exile. As for Anokha, I was led to believe that he would provide a more ambient sound spiced with tablas.

The Astoria had magically been transformed into a temple filled with a heaving throng of rampant worshippers celebrating an alien form of music which clearly made their ears go pop. This is a venue where, mere days ago, I had been witness to the traditional rock n' roll valhalla where Faith No More were playing one of the gigs of the year. There were circles of short blokes dancing around each other with their arms raised above their heads to make them look taller. There were tall blokes with other tall blokes on their shoulders and even in the upper circle, people were trying to reach higher, dancing on the tables and generally strutting their stuff and all shouting '1, 2, 3 Vive L'Algerie!' And this was between songs...

Given such a friendly crowd, the two acts could hardly fail and they didn't. DJ Anokha played a solid set of crowd-pleasing anthems which would clearly have guaranteed a good response at various Algerian equivalents of the Hippodrome. Musically, it sounded like a combination Latin and African rhythms with a thumping beat and a collection of chant-be-happy choruses. The mood was that of a summer carnival in a carefree tropical location in the sun.

The tempo slowed a little as Khaled took to the stage with his nine-piece band, but the song remained the same. Maybe because these are the only references that I have but I felt that a lot of the songs had the potential to burst into a chorus of *Yeke Yeke* or swing into the the Lambada.

World music, Worlds apart.

concentrated much more on the lyrics. However, where this approach works well with fellow new band Subcircus, here the songs seem to lose direction and ideas especially on *Yes, Yes, Yes* and their dismal new song, *Boo for You*. Not all are bad, though - *Everybody Needs* goes down well and the encore *Farewell/Goodby* is pleasantly Pink Floyd-ish. It's a fairly long set and by the end the singer's hand is bleeding profusely over his guitar.

On the whole, Octopus weren't bad. However, I can't see them going on to greater things on the evidence of this gig. I really do think it would be so much better if they replaced on or two members of the harmonica/trumpets with another guitar as, I felt, the songs would come really alive then.

I also think that the barman was rather silly in agreeing to give me a tab...

A L B U M S

MUSIC FOR PLEASURE Monaco

Peter Hook, formerly of Joy Division, got his new band off to a flying start with the release of their debut and immensely catchy single *What Do You Want From Me?* Admittedly I have only heard a couple of songs by Joy Division and, to be honest, I didn't become an instant fan. However, the sheer exuberance of the aforementioned single meant that I had to give the album a listen. I couldn't imagine missing out on any similar gems possibly contained within.

So, lying back, I let the waves of the first single wash over me again, which soon brought me to the second track called *Shine*. This was a dreamy tune that mixed pop and melancholy sentimentality perfectly. Half of the album follows this trend with more guitar pop in the semi-bluesy *Buzz Gum* and the summery *Happy Jack*. The 80s New Order influence is

LIPSLIDE Sarah Cracknell

So you think you know Sarah, do you? Just some random airhead that Pete and Bob roped in to give St. Etienne a bit of sparkle, a bit of that old star class, hell, even to make the press shots look better. You bunch of cynics. You're just the people that Crackers is going to grind under her stacked heels with this album. If you were expecting typically Etienne slices of knowing cool, never sure if they're being ironic or not, then you're in for a shock. Because Sarah is obviously a hopeless romantic, and while the boys were off footling around with sequencers and stuff, she's been hard at work with a whole bunch of other producers and songwriters crafting an album of gorgeous tunes brimming with love, hope and disappointment.

Wide-eyed honesty is the outstanding feature here. On *Coastal Town* she gets Grace to budge over a bit on the park-bench of happy house anthems, and still manages to sound wistful in 'a coastal town, after the rain/You're the brightest star, you're my best friend'. She knows that the sweetest things always have a bitter aftertaste, and by coupling the most exuberant electronica with yearning lyrics (*Desert Baby*) you get songs with a mighty emotional punch. She doesn't get it right all the time, though, and as the middle third of the album proves it's all too easy to slip from musical simplicity into banality. *Taxi* is just too damn bland to have any impact and on *Taking Off For France* the ideas are all there but lack the arse-kicking from Oakenfold would provide. But by the time the disco funk of *If You Leave Me* comes around, she's back on track strutting

crystal clear throughout and is necessary to make this album sound as good as it does.

It's not all straight-up guitar pop. Songs like *Sweet Lips* veer away, sending a thumping disco style tumult of energy towards your ears. There aren't just a couple of dance tracks thrown in here either. Four quality affairs abound, like the ethereal trip hop edge of *Billy Bones* or *Junk* with its typical bassline foundation that features heavily as the backbone of the whole album. Undeniably there is nothing dated about the tracks - they are definitely placed in the sphere of 90s music.

The album closes with a bleak instrumental that sounds as though its sole purpose is to provide a balance to the cheerful melodies that adorn the rest of the recording. At the end of the recording, you're instructed to turn it off, but I had to refuse, and reach for play again. (8)

Jason

attitude and defiance with Aretha, Gloria and the girls in tow. The whole lot is neatly book-ended by *Ready or Not* and *Can't Stop Now*, both saturated with sweeping strings and honey vocals that unashamedly push all those buttons guaranteed to have a tear in your eye.

Lipslide is certainly a flawed album, but still one to be treasured. (7)

Norm

RED APPLE FALLS Smog

Just how depressed do you feel at the moment? Girlfriend left you? Exams getting you down? Conservative? Well, here's something to cheer you up - you're probably happier than Smog, members of that quietly flourishing breed of indie miserabilists who believe that a song isn't worth its salt unless its either (a) slow and unhappy or (b) just unhappy. Listening to this sparse, mostly percussion-free album and its tales of loss and loneliness makes you feel like an intruder, as though you'd happened upon a friend's diary and been unable to resist reading it; a guilty pleasure.

Most of the songs consist of a strummed guitar and piano, maybe a little brass; there's no bravado, no machismo, the music is still and quiet. The rough production serves to enhance the rawness of the sound, the imperfections in the singer's voice are more noticeable, the cracks more like choked-back tears. This all makes the songs that dare to break into a trot, such as the Giant Sand-esque *I Was A Stranger*, sound incongruous - an unnecessary effort to lighten the mood. They are better when they are simply being miserable.

A charge of self-indulgence, of navel-gazing to the nth degree could easily be levelled at

THE COLOUR AND THE SHAPE The Foo Fighters

A quick history lesson: Dave Grohl, drummer for the mildly influential grunge band Nirvana. In 1993 Kurt Cobain, frontman of Nirvana, has an unfortunate accident with a rifle killing himself. Now this leaves poor Dave unemployed. So instead of signing on, the young lad decides to collect together all those coppers he earned from tips and the few coins thrown on stage whilst he was touring the pub circuits with the aforementioned band and form his own record label, Roswell, and a band, the Foo Fighters. He cobbled together the first album in a matter of minutes, playing all the instruments himself and even singing! Five days after he recorded the album he got the rest of the band together and was away. The eponymously titled album gained great critical acclaim.

And now, two years later, *The Colour and the Shape*, is the first Foo Fighters album recorded by the band as a whole. To call this album punctuated would be an understatement. It starts off with the gentle, floating track *Doll*, all one minute twenty-three seconds of it. And then, BAM!, straight into the mammoth rock song that is *Monkey Wrench*, their current single. Indeed this seems to be the new Foo Fighters formula, quiet intros followed by blinding guitar rock, with a quiet end (or any mix and match combination of those three.) But there is a more introspective feel to several of the tracks especially the acoustic tracks, *See You* and *Walking After You*. Songs like these show the other side to the Foo's muscle rock norm and are a great addition to the album. Only the sluggish five minute ballad *February Stars* takes the introspection one step too far and you watch in amazement as the life is visibly sapped from your body. However you are easily revived by the scorching pop song *Up in Arms* and the sublime *Everlong*.

The Colour and the Shape is a very good album indeed. To describe it as rock does not do it justice. Overall it is a big, hard-sounding album, something that is not popular with the British music buying public at the moment. But with popular bands, the likes of Supergrass and Radiohead, producing a more hard edged guitar sound this may be the way ahead. (8)

Ramzi

Smog. But music is a subjective thing, we need different things at different times to reflect our changing moods. No-one's happy all the time - it's all about empathy. On the other hand, maybe they are just miserable bastards and I'm in the right kind of mood. Who knows? (7)

K.S. Pulaski

SFTW
1089/11
11
300597

GUIDO Unsophisticates

I'm going to confess right now that I think I was the wrong person to review this band and I have an unpleasant feeling that I'm about to pan an album that a lot of people will like, still here goes.

Guido is one of those albums that no-one can classify so it gets thrown into the trip-hop bin and finds itself nestling uncomfortably between Lamb and Massive Attack. The music on the album meanders around to an alarming degree stumbling from the quite nasty jazz tinklings of *Pervert* to the far more trip-hop leanings of *Straitjacket* and even a kind of bastard funk on *Riverbank*. The universal factor in these songs is the vaguely irritating voice of Neal Smart which drawls its way from harsh distortion, created by singing through a megaphone no less, to straight singing. There are also a lot of instruments here, leading to points where the songs are suddenly invaded by embarrassing blasts from horns and other songs where where it seems like there are hundreds of instruments vying for your attention.

The album is not entirely without merit, however. The band are at their best when subdued and vaguely ominous. This leaves us with an album that is predominately jazz music of the most rambling kind a sort of hideous Portishead-lounge music abortion. I can't really recommend this to anyone unless you like *Freakpower*, in which case you are welcome to it...**(4)**.

SrTW
1089/II
12
300597

Your little sister may want to be in the spice girls but Kenickie are the band you always wanted to be in, with the songs you always wanted to write. The larger than life Lauren Laverne, Marie du Santiago, Emmy-Kate Montrose and Johnny X are here espousing the joys of glitter, PVC (its waterproof) and black cherry lipstick. They have blazed a trail of destruction through the interviewers brave enough to take on these mouthy geordies. In their own words they have style and they have class; they have credibility too, already having recorded a session for John Peel. Yeah, yeah, they are probably younger than you as well.

Where have you been hiding if you haven't already jumped around your bedroom to their many shouty punk-pop singles such as *Punka* and *In your Car*? The album *At The Club* contains yet more songs fizzing along with handclaps, thighslaps, personality and wit. It is produced by John Cornfield who has also worked on Supergrass' albums, and it shares the captured youth of *I Should Coco*. There are slow introspective moments such as *How I was*

AT THE CLUB Kenickie

made on the album and although they provide balance and depth these are slightly weaker tracks - can we believe there are tears behind that all consuming confidence? It is wrong to list influences (although they claim The Manics and Aerosmith) or comparisons, Kenickie just are Kenickie. They aren't pushing back the

frontiers of music, but they are somehow still brilliant. The hidden 15th track captures their true spirit - Lauren descending into giggles whilst singing of love over fishnet tights.

It does not take a genius to predict a star-spangled future for Kenickie - and many have. Their songs reflect rather than rely on their teenage years and should grow with them. They will tour a bit now, be pushed overseas, experience more life, turn 20,

then produce another album - it will be mind-blowing. In the meantime Kenickie are teenagers and I'll just go and listen to true girl power just one more time....**(9)**

Speedy



Hardboy - Hazel's Hob

Polly Harvey-sounding track that sways with a foreboding passion.

Ballroom - Take It

They fit perfectly within the sexually ambiguous category of bands such as Suede, Strangelove etc. and, unsurprisingly, sound pretty similar too.

Beth Orton - She Cries Your Name

Naggingly catchy mellow country-type of ballad, with some great string arrangements, especially the violin intro.

Radiohead - Paranoid Android

They're back! And they haven't let us down. This is a cracking single whose tune jumps about with uncaring audacity, but grows on you nevertheless. Nearly made choon of the week, but not quite.

Vitro - Orange

Sounds like an attempt at Jesus Jones. Mediocre at best.

Nick Cave - Are You The One I've Been Waiting For?

Typically moody and oppressive. Underladen with a piano backdrop. This lament deserves recognition amongst other great emotional ballads.

Finley Quayle - Sunday Living

No, I haven't lost my senses. It was a tough choice but Finley pipped Radiohead to the post. This song has got to be huge, no doubt about it. He fuses experimental rhythms with a brilliant 'perfect for summer' hookline while his extremely distinctive voice adds another layer.

Jason

Empirion - b.e.t.a.

I normally spit in the face of techno but, horror of horrors, this is not too bad. Nice and light.

Scala - Slide E.P.

Sub-standard techno/trip-hop which has nothing new to offer. Tedious.

Northern Uproar - Any Way You Look

Fairly light-weight standard britpop fare. Rockier B-sides are better.

Tindersticks - Bathtime

F***ing weird! Imagine Barry White singing a pop song, backed by an orchestra.

Spooky Ruben - Spooky Ruben

Weird Japanese backing vocals and a strange singer over cheesy pop. Utter wank.

Sounds Of Blackness - Spirit

Nice, subtly funky soul though nothing special. Quite why they need five mixes of this I don't know.

Foil - Are You Enemy?

Quiet bit. Loud bit with pointless screaming. Quiet bit. Loud bit with pointless screaming. Quiet bit...

Bettie Serveert - Co-coward

Pleasant rock ballad with delightful vocals.

Martin

Essential Choon

IC Choir Summer Concert

"What's that woman doing on the posters?" This was the question eating away at everyone's subconscious, having noticed the new more sensual approach to advertising used by the IC Choir for their Summer concert. In fact, there was no obvious reason for this picture to be featured, but then we couldn't think of a more enticing way to advertise a choir concert ourselves, so we let it pass.

This year, the Summer concert presented us with a relatively modern collection of pieces, all written between 1945 and 1965. The performance started with Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* (1965). The choir were accompanied by a fair sized orchestra, with a robust percussion section, for this rampaging and complex piece of music. The number of choir members was notably reduced with respect to the usual turn-out and in the Bernstein, the choir frequently found itself overpowered by the orchestra. A highlight of this piece was the nervous but very talented choirboy soloist, Gerald Beatty, shipped in from the Choir of Westminster Cathedral.

The Bernstein was followed by a collection of five Negro Spirituals, from *A Child of Our Time* (1945/1958) sung unaccompanied by the choir and a bunch of adult soloists. Although technically well performed, the style lacked the

spark necessary to grab the listener, which you might expect this style of music to possess. The blame lies equally with the composer, Sir Michael Tippett, and the choir.

The concert ended with Maurice Durufle's *Requiem* (1947), accompanied by a somewhat reduced orchestra, and this was where we got to see what the choir was really capable of. The orchestra/choir balance was much better than for the Bernstein, and the Requiem was beautifully sung. On the whole, the IC Choir, with its new conductor, Christopher Dawe, and its slightly rejuvenated women-on-posters attitude had a pleasingly refreshed air.

Burak and Maria

Europress Language Labs: Spanish

SFTW
1089/11
13
300597

I don't know; you buy a computer and suddenly everyone thinks that you're an expert. All sorts of things start landing on your desk, such as this little package, a language tutor from Europress. The cover claims that the program uses "proven natural methods", which seems a less than promising, but lets stop whinging about the cover and load the thing up.

Thankfully the application is not too system hungry, requiring only a 486DX with 4Mb RAM and 4Mb of free hard drive space, although when it says that it needs a SoundBlaster compatible soundcard, it declines to mention that you need a microphone. However, this quibble aside, the user interface becomes immediately workable with no instruction whatsoever, and much to my annoyance I really started to enjoy it. I chose the Spanish CD, in spite of the general pleas around the office for me to try the English tutor. [*Believe me - his dulcit Tyneside Spanish sounds like someone trying to start a car but failing - Ed*]

It uses the "celebrated" and "globally praised" 'Rosetta Stone' method, which submerses the user completely in the language, and uses thousands of photographs to create the associations with the words, meaning that, if used correctly, the user thinks in the chosen language rather than translates from their mother tongue. Another major

feature is that the program gives instant feedback to your verbal, written and associative input, which gives a real 'classroom' feel. I found myself reacting instantly to the stimuli and even wanting to go faster, a desire for which Rosetta Stone caters wonderfully. I started learning at a truly astonishing rate, and I know this sounds like something an advert might quote (believe me I wanted to be nasty about this program) but it does work in exactly the way it says it will. Irritatingly, there are no irritating little features I'd like to latch onto at this point of the review; it is just nicely skeletal in its structure yet slick in its presentation, very quick to get into and a fine language tutor.

That's about it really.

Mr Trout

multimedia

Felix's summer special is out on June 18th.

Please note: there is no issue of Felix on Friday 20th June

Now Showing

Love and Other Catastrophes

Originally reviewed in *Felix 1084*, the release of *Love and Other Catastrophes* was delayed at the last minute for some reason or another. Made for around £20,000 this first film by 23 year old Emma-Kate Croghan features a day in the life of five Australian students. Every element of student life is included, from searching for accommodation and sex to trying to dodge lecturers owed work. Unfortunately the lack of money behind the film sometimes shows and there's not that much to it, but the characters are all endearing and it's an amusing way to while away an hour or so.

SFW
1089/II
14
300597

The Relic

The most decapitations since *Highlander* and a *Poseidon Adventure*-esque escapade combine in this gruesome thriller. Chicago's Natural History Museum is the setting for a battle of wits between an evolutionary biologist and the "Kathago", an evil DNA concoction of reptile, insect and human. Humourously handling extremely macabre scenes, including beheaded victims, this is suprisingly enjoyable stuff. The cat-like monster, when it finally comes out from the shadows, is refreshingly different to the usual variation on *Alien*, and would be cute if it didn't have such a fondness for certain parts of the human brain. Despite a slightly disappointing ending, the joyous way in which each victim is dispatched means this is recommended therapy for exam stress.

Absolute Power takes real moral corruption in the highest echelons of American government and turns it into a digestible thriller, in which Clint Eastwood proves once again that he is much more than Dirty Harry and "The Man with no Name". Luther Witney is an ageing cat burglar, and is set for one more high profile theft to end his career. His target is the vault of Walter Sullivan (E G Marshall),

the richest man in Washington and the financial backer of the recently elected president Alan Richmond (Gene Hackman). Witney's plan goes well until he sees Sullivan's wife with an unexpected visitor, the President. While watching the two he witnesses a bizarre murder, and an extremely amateur cover-up. Witney becomes the prime suspect in the murder investigation; the police, lead by homicide detective Seth Frank (Ed Harris), want to question him, while the secret service want to remove him since he has seen far too much.

Absolute Power starts and ends well, but unfortunately

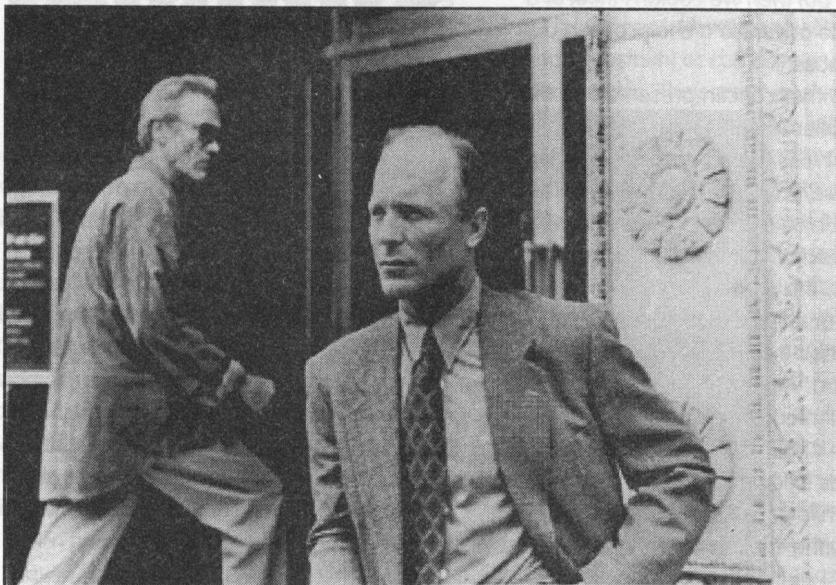
GRIDLOCK'D

Gridlock'd provides a refreshing change to many of the stereotypes found in films at the moment. It features drug addicts, but they're neither glorified nor patronised. It's about two buddies, one black and one white, but it's the black bloke that's the level-headed sensible guy and the white one that's the crazy ass dude.

The two are Tim Roth and Tupac Shakur, playing Stretch and Spoon. If they sound like a jazz band that's because they are, along with Cookie, Spoon's girlfriend. When Cookie OD's and ends up in a coma the two friends decide that it's finally time to kick the habit and get clean, and the film tracks the day that follows. A series of mix-ups means they are also wanted by the police and two villainous dealers but there's something even tougher in the way of finding help - the System. Bureaucracy. Forms. Queues. More forms. Spoon takes his mate under his wing as they search for the Holy Grail - rehab.

Falling somewhere between a comedy and cutting social commentary, Gridlock'd is an impressive directorial debut by Vondie Curtis Hall. He extracts believable performances from his stars and has created a very individual,

ABSOLUTE POWER



Master-thief Clint Eastwood sneaks past detective Ed Harris in *Absolute Power*, released today

a subplot concerning Witney's estranged daughter is added to show he has morals despite being a thief. At times Witney's antics are slightly outlandish, entering his daughter's and Seth Frank's houses with such ease that you wonder if their front doors were purposefully left open. He also sneaks around the White House, donning an awful fake beard and moustache, in order to leave

taunting messages to those who committed the crime.

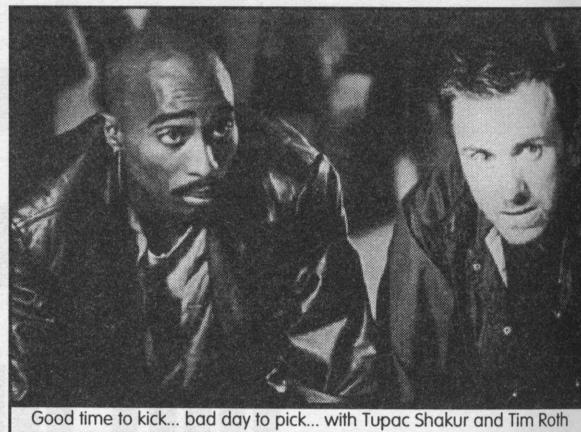
Gene Hackman's gives an impressive portrayal of the disturbing President as his henchmen cover up this inconvenience. He stands in front of the nation openly supporting the bereaved and the apprehension of the culprit, and he has no qualms in ordering the execution of a witness just in case she knows too much. Both characters are similar to those portrayed in *Unforgiven*, the reformed judging the immoral. After the initial tension, the film's pace slacks until right at the end, when it finishes amazingly abruptly.

Magpie

stylish film. Much of the sardonic script is spot-on and he combines this with some truly hilarious moments. At one point the only way the friends can get into hospital and hence rehab is to have a critical injury. As a result Stretch has to repeatedly stab his pal with a blunt pen knife in a scene reminiscent of *Pulp Fiction*'s needle-into-heart classic, but far funnier.

If there is one criticism of the film it's that it's slightly lightweight, with too many shots of the duo fleeing from the police and wandering the streets, rather than developing the plot. However, it's still a very enjoyable film, if only for the great dialogue in places.

Chris



Good time to kick... bad day to pick... with Tupac Shakur and Tim Roth

The Spitfire Grill

The unlikely-named heroine of *The Spitfire Grill* is Percy Talbot, played by Alison Elliot, a young woman just released from prison. She heads for the town of Gilead where the local sheriff arranges for her to work at the Spitfire Grill, a restaurant which is owned by Hannah Ferguson (Ellen Burstyn). One is left wondering why Hannah is so willing to give Percy lodgings and a job considering that Percy is treated with so much mistrust and prejudice by the rest of the town. Perhaps the fact that Hannah's dog takes to Percy is a major influence on her!



Typical American small-town gossipy women star in *The Spitfire Grill*

Despite being a hopeless cook events lead to Percy taking over in the running of the restaurant, along with Hannah's nephew's wife, or something like that. The two become friends and a bit of female bonding occurs before secrets are revealed, such as the circumstances which led to Percy's imprisonment and an explanation for Hannah's apparently bizarre act of leaving a sack of food each night outside the restaurant. It's not all happy families, however, as some money goes missing from a safe, triggering events which culminate in tragedy.

Light on plot, *The Spitfire Grill's* main dramatic driving force is Percy's struggle to destroy the townspeople's prejudice and her search for a sense of belonging. The film's strengths lie in the beautiful naturalistic scenery and sympathetic heroine, with Jodie Foster look-alike, Elliot, being an actress to look out for in future. Our sympathy for her is made stronger by the fact that very few people are on her side throughout the film.

Ultimately, however, the film is a little predictable and overlong. It would perhaps work better on television than on the big screen and probably will do little to satisfy modern cinema audience's desire for mainstream Hollywood fare.

Jenny Ho

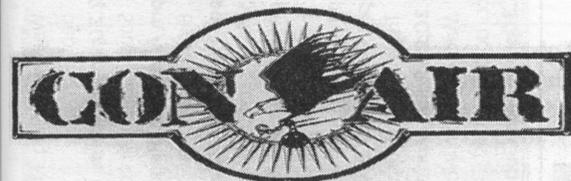
Beavis and Butthead Do America

The idiotic duo hit the big screen as they leave MTV for the first time. After the catastrophic theft of their TV they find themselves travelling across America with the FBI hot on their trail, laughing at funny-shaped buildings and regretting their unsurprising inability to pull. You probably know if you'll like this film before you see it. If you're a fan of MTV's most intelligent music presenters you'll love it, otherwise it's not for you.

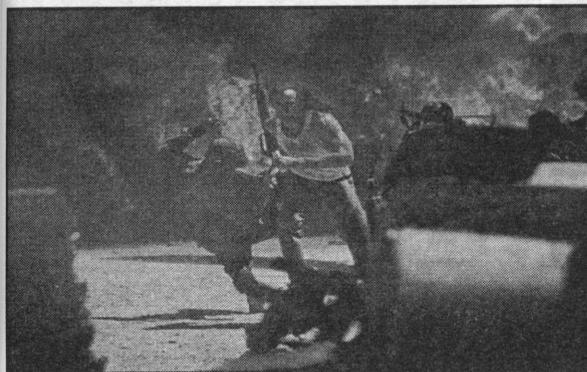
Anna Karenina

An awful film. Harsh, but true. Leo Tolstoy's classic romantic novel was filmed entirely on location in St Petersburg, but even the picturesque backdrop can't compensate for the extreme tediousness of this one. Sean Bean would be wise to stick with *Sharpe*.

(we can't) Give it Away!



The first blockbuster of the Summer arrives next Friday, *Con Air*, starring Nicolas Cage and produced by Jerry Bruckheimer, the man responsible for *The Rock* and *Crimson Tide*. Cage is the unlucky man stuck on a flight containing the most dangerous and notorious prisoners in the US, when one of them, Cyrus "The Virus" Grissom, successfully hijacks the plane. What follows is one of those "roaring roller coaster rides from start to finish" that looks like being one of the most successful of the Summer's films. The sun is shining, the birds are singing and we're all feeling happy because exams are nearly over, so we're giving away some *Con Air* goodies.



Nicolas Cage, saving the world from despicable villains in *Con Air*

This time those student-friendly chaps at the Odeon Kensington have really surpassed themselves. The prizes they have donated for the winners include:

- 2 sets of Army trousers**
- Special edition film T-Shirts and lighters**
- A large US style poster for the film**
- 5 pairs of tickets to see the film at our favourite Odeon**

To enter this "Competition of All Competitions", simply write the answer to the following on a scruffy bit of paper and drop it into the Felix Office by next Wednesday. If you add your e-mail address we can let you know on Friday if you've won so you can see this great film straightaway.

"Which incredibly famous superhero is Nicolas Cage lined up to play next year?"

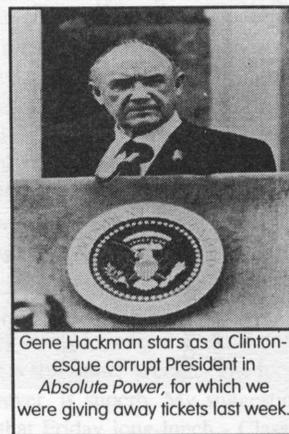
Last week we had a competition to win one of five pairs of tickets to see *Absolute Power* at the Odeon Kensington. The question was, "In which multi-Oscar winning western did Eastwood and Hackman star with Morgan Freeman?" The answer was the brilliant *Unforgiven* and the five winners are:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| Mark Saunders | St Mary's |
| Gavin Summers | Biochemistry |
| Stewart Jones | Maths |
| Ben White | Civil Engineering |
| Chris Gibbs | Biology |

Pick up your tickets from the Felix Office whenever you want, or drop us a line to get them in the internal post.

SFTW
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ODEON
CINEMAS



Gene Hackman stars as a Clinton-esque corrupt President in *Absolute Power*, for which we were giving away tickets last week.

Friday 30th May

**IC WARGAMES
MAGIC TOUR-
NAMENT
5TH EDITION
BOOSTER
DRAFT
STARTS
1.30PM SUN-
DAY JUNE 1ST
TABLE-TENNIS
ROOM, ICU**

12.00pm Felix News Meeting

Felix Office Beit Quad.

1pm Hamsoc (Regular)

Top Floor, Union Building.

1pm Photo Soc (Regular)

Southside Lounge.

1.10pm RAG Meeting (Regular)

dBs.

1.10pm Islamic Soc (Regular)

Friday Prayer, Southside Gym. (Brothers and Sisters).

1.15pm Labour Club (Regular)

Southside upper Lounge.

1.30pm Felix Reviews and Science meeting

5.30pm Fitness Club (Regular)

STEP Aerobics (advanced), Southside Gym.

9pm Shaft

One last glitter balled visit to ...Shaft. Bringing you the very best (and a fair selection of the worst) disco, pop and general trash from the last two decades, tonight is the perfect soundtrack to celebrate the end of exams. Come ready to boogie, and leave your musical pretensions at home. Plus, if the disco inferno gets a little too hot, you can chill out in our cocktail bar. Union Building. 9-2. Free before 9/ £1 after.

Free Women's Minibus Service

First run at 12.00 midnight.

Last run at Union closing time.

Saturday 31st May

12.00pm Standing Room Only

The world cup qualifier, live on the DaVinci

Big Screen - England V Poland. Coverage

from 7, bar open from 12.30.

Monday 2nd June

12.30pm Artsoc (Regular)

SCR, Union Building

12.30pm Ski Club Meeting (Regular)

Southside Upper Lounge

12.30pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Circuit Training, Southside Gym

2pm Deadline for Diary, Soc. Pages

5.30pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Aerobics (beginners), Southside Gym

5pm Felix News and Features meeting

Want to write and never had the chance? Well, now is the time to discover the budding journalist that's been hiding away for so long! Felix Office, northwest corner of Beit.

6pm IC Methsoc (Regular)

All faiths welcome, Basement 10 Princes' Gardens.

6.30pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Aerobics (intermediate), Southside Gym

7.30pm IC Sinfonia (Regular)

Great Hall, All players welcome.

Tuesday 3rd June

12pm Cathsoc (Regular)

Mass and lunch, Leon Bagrit Centre, Lvl 1 Mech Eng

12-2 pm 'Fair Trade' Stall (Regular)

Union Building Foyer. Fairly traded goods

for sale: stationery coffee, chocolate.

12.15 Yoga Soc (Regular)

Yoga Classes, Southside Gym

12.30pm African-Caribbean Soc (Regular)

Weekly meeting, Rm G02, Materials dept. RSM

12.30pm Parachute Club (Regular)

Southside Upper Lounge

1pm Audio Soc (Regular)

Brown Committee Room, Union Building

1pm Yacht Club Meeting (Regular)

Physics Lecture Theatre 3, Lvl 1.

3pm Pakistan Soc (Regular)

Basketball in the Union Gym, anyone welcome

5pm Circus Skills Soc (Regular)

Table Tennis Room, Union Building

5.30pm Radio Modellers Club (Regular)

MechEng Main Workshop (Rm 190), e-mail rcc.radio@ic.ac.uk

5.30pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Aerobics (advanced), Southside Gym

6pm Bridge Club (Regular)

Clubs Committee Room, Union Building

7pm Canoe Club (Regular)

Canoe Club Store in Beit Quad, or at the swimming pool at 7.30pm

7.30pm IQ (Regular)

Brown Committee Room, Union Building

8pm ICCAG (Regular)

Soup Run for the homeless Meet Weeks Hall Basement

8pm Da Vinci's Bar Trivia

Get the windmills of your mind turning ... DaVinci's Bar Trivia. £50 cash prize for the winning team, plus other prizes. Quiz starts at 8.30 - be early and don't forget your pens!!

Wednesday 4th June

12.30pm Islamic Society (Regular)

Sister's Circle, Prayer Room

12.45pm Sporting Motorcycle Club (Regular)

Southside Upper Lounge

1pm Wargames (Regular)

Table Tennis Room, Union Building

1pm IC Rifle and Pistol Club (Regular)

Sports Centre.

1pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Aerobics (beg/inter), Southside Gym

2pm Photo Soc

Lessons, Darkroom

5pm Fitness Club (Regular)

STEP Aerobics (inter), Southside Gym

6.30pm Chess Club (Regular)

Brown Committee Room, Union 3rd Floor

7pm Shaolin Kung Fu Nam Pai Chuan

Beginners are always welcome, Southside Gym

7.30pm IC Symphony Orchestra (Regular)

Great Hall

8pm Frolix!

Midweek fun and ..Frolix! Party sounds to cheer the saddest mind. 9-12. Free.

Thursday 5th June

12.30pm Amnesty International (Regular)

Forget exams.....do something worthwhile with your life e-mail s.trivedi or ns.trasi

12.30pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Body Toning (beginners), Southside Gym

1pm Consoc Meeting (Regular)

Southside Upper Lounge

1pm Fell Wanderers (Regular)

Southside Upper Lounge

1pm Gliding Club (Regular)

Room 266 Aero Eng.

1.10pm RAG Meeting (Regular)

dB's

5.30pm Fitness Club (Regular)

Aerobics (intermediate), Southside Gym

6.15pm IC Choir Rehearsals (Regular)

New Members Welcome, Mech Eng 342

8pm ICCAG (Regular)

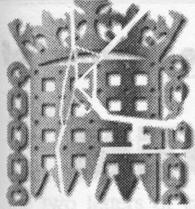
Meet Weeks Hall Basement

8pm Da Vinci's Cocktail Night

Relax and enjoy a night of glamour and bits of fruit...DaVinci's Cocktail Night. Special happy hour prices and special drinks all night. 5 - 11

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Westminster Eye - Hamish Common



Last Thursday, Mr Blair invited Mrs Thatcher round to 10 Downing Street for advice on policy and strategy. In most other jobs, incumbents would expect to get some advice from their predecessors, but the office of Prime Minister is not "most other jobs". This meeting went unpublicised until Sunday when Labour leaked it for some good publicity. It is a shame that it came out this way, because the meeting was a wholly sensible idea for someone new to the job. Mr Blair has already sought the advice of Paddy Ashdown, and although he declined John Major's offer of advice on how to handle the IGC conference, he did consult him on Northern Ireland. Indeed, Mr Blair is going one step further in inviting President Clinton to address the Cabinet, the first foreign leader to do so.

So what are we to make of this? Some people were not slow off the mark with their opinions, notably Denis Healey, who criticised Mr Blair for seeking the advice of Labour's greatest enemy for over a

decade, calling it "a bad choice" to talk with a woman who had been a "disaster" and had "destroyed British influence in Europe". On Tuesday *The Guardian's* quite charming cartoonist compared Thatcher with Reagan, Hitler, Napoleon, Genghis Khan and what seemed to be Hannibal Lecter, in an array of personalities Mr Blair was inviting in for a chat. Quite apart from its usual sledgehammer subtlety, *The Guardian* is missing the point. Mr Blair is not advocating Mrs Thatcher's policies, but simply recognising her immense political experience on the world stage. Not even her most ardent enemy can doubt that she has amassed a wealth of experience and contacts, and association with her will impress many foreign leaders, especially those in Asia, who particularly admire her.

During the meeting they discussed a wide variety of issues, with a spokesman saying "she has strong views. She was opinionated and it was stimulating ... he didn't find her short of opinions." Her most conspicuous advice was "Choose your ground carefully. Make up your mind

what is important. Don't fight on ground on which you cannot win." Mr Blair had decided on the meeting because he liked her on a personal level, and that she still is "a figure on the world stage and knows many of the leading players." It seems perfectly reasonable for the pair to discuss foreign affairs.

There are, of course, a number of subjects on which Mrs Thatcher is vehemently opposed to Labour's plans: Europe springs instantly to mind. But although it may be difficult for the Labour party to admit, Mrs Thatcher was right about a number of issues long before anyone else saw them. She had built up a close relationship with Mikhail Gorbachev during the 1980s, culminating in her 1987 trip to Moscow. She is widely respected in Eastern Europe as one of the first Western leaders to see the importance of the reforms and democratic movement there during the 1980s.

Among the natural differences between Thatcher and Blair, there are certain similarities which Blair would quite happily see confirmed. Both used their time in opposition to

plan for Government: witness the speed of reform in the first few weeks of this Government if any of you have any doubts. Both moulded the party in their image, and both have engendered a sense of trust in the population, confirmed by their comfortable mandates. I'm sure Mr Blair would like to see Mrs Thatcher's reputed understanding of British interests abroad, strong leadership, the youth vote and a firm hand with her party, added to the list of common attributes.

Blair is looking to be seen by history as a statesman rather than a politician, much as Thatcher is already seen today. He has the advantage that his direct predecessor never had: the chance to implement fresh policies and break new ground without U-turning on archaic policy. Blair's policies have different roots to those of his predecessors: Thatcher pulled the centre of gravity of British politics so far to the right as to precipitate a wholesale change in the Labour party, and ironically shatter the Conservatives. Mr Blair is one of Thatcher's children as much as any of us.

Having made one slightly askew election prediction this year, it was reassuring to find that my psephological skills have not completely deserted me.

The latest Presidential election went absolutely to form, and I can't say I'm surprised or disappointed. Commiserations must, of course, go to the defeated candidate, but the flippancy of her campaign sealed her fate a log time ago. Call me an old cynic (everyone else has), but it had CV bolstering written all over it. If the list of names bandied around for the third run are correct, I feel confident that we should have a satisfactory outcome before Christmas.

The scarcity of talent this year does raise an important question. If we fail to elect someone in the next ballot, is it time to move to a non-sabbatical president? I can almost hear the sharp intake of breath by the hacks. Scrap a Sabb? Thin end of the wedge! Next you'll be suggesting cutting the Union Council to a sensible number. The problem seems to be that too much has been dumped at the door of the President, necessitating the full-time nature of the post. Surely the role of the President is akin to that a board chairman - chair the key meetings, represent the

Union and help formulate policy.

The daily grind of paper work is surely more the task of the permanent Union staff and the Deputy presidents etc. Before Piers and Sarah seek me out with a meat cleaver, I would argue that this is where a sabbatical post would be better placed. They are, as I well know, not sitting around with their feet up, and nor is Eric (as for the editor of this august journal...).

Moving work from the President to the DPs and their staff seems a possible solution. In this way, people would not be deterred from the

presidency on the grounds that they could not afford to defer a job or such like for a year. An unexpected knock-on benefit of this could well be to open up the position to a wider body of students, as hinted at in A Swift's letter last week.

While the charges made against Eric were unfair, the broader point about the cliquey nature of ICU was well observed.

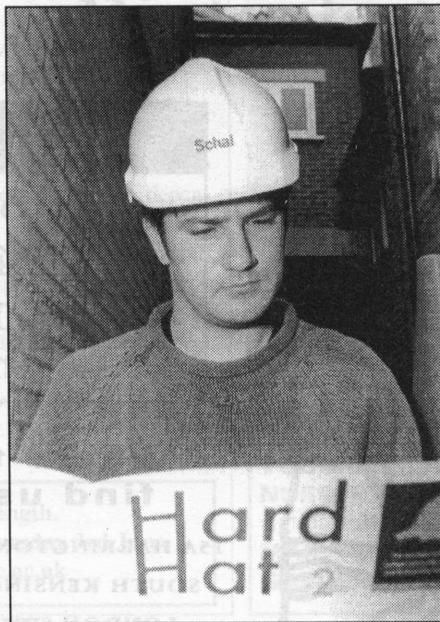
The ability to recite the Union Constitution verbatim is not a strong quality in a candidate. Indeed such a slavish adulation of rules, regulations and the sound of one's own

voice should ensure that such people never make it past the Tiddy Wink Soc Social Committee. However, all of the above may be of mere academic interest if some of the excellent potential candidates throw their hats into the ring. Cometh the hour, cometh the man.

Couple of quick points before my fingers seize up from all this typing. Some of you who regularly visit Luigi Malone's may have noticed a change in their attitude towards large groups at lunchtime, namely the refusal to accept bookings for more than ten. A shame indeed, given their incomparable Santa Fe chicken pizza.

Ever keen to bring you, dear reader, the highest level of service, may I recommend The Rat & Parrot on Gloucester Road, on the site of the old Harrington public house. The transformation is magnificent in every sense, save for the fact that the beer is still rather average. The food, however, is superb. My suggestion for that Friday long-lunch - Classic Club sandwich at said establishment, followed by a couple of quick pints of divine summer ales at Southside before closing time. SCR? Who needs/wants it?

Simon Baker



voice of reason

The ability to recite the Union Constitution verbatim is not a strong quality in a candidate. Indeed such a slavish adulation of rules, regulations and the sound of one's own

Applications are invited for the position of

SUB-WARDEN
in
FALMOUTH KEOGH HALL

Falmouth Keogh Hall is situated residence in Princes Gardens, which houses undergraduate and postgraduate students. Every year Falmouth Keogh runs a lively social programme of events, and a team of wardens and subwardens facilitate this social programme and provide pastoral care to residents.

We are looking for a subwarden to join the wardening team in September 1997. Applications are welcome from all members of College, although the position is particularly well suited to postgraduate students with at least 18 months to completion of their course. Applicants should be friendly, resourceful, possess energy and a high degree of personal maturity. Rent free accommodation will be provided to the successful applicant.

Application forms are available from the Student Accommodation Office, 15 Princes Gardens.

Completed application forms should be returned to the Warden, Dr Andrew Livingston, Department of Chemical Engineering, by 5pm on

Friday 6th June 1997

Applications are invited for the position of

SUB-WARDEN
IN FISHER HALL

We are looking for a friendly, resourceful and responsible individual to assist the Warden in the day-to-day running of the Hall, in return for a single person.

Application forms are available from the Student Accommodation Office, 15 Prince's Gardens and should be returned to Dr RJ Murphy, Department of Biology by 5pm on

Monday 2nd June 1997

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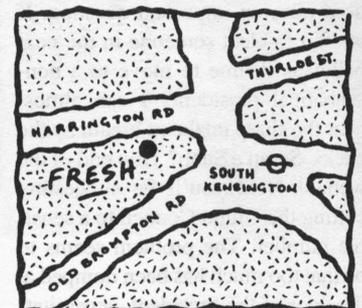
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1 minute walk from

South Kensington Tube Station!!



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LETTERS TO FELIX

Dear Alex,

Having read the letters page in last week's *Felix* I feel I must respond to the two letters of criticism, namely the letters from the Beit Hall residents and Mr A Swift.

I would like to assure the residents of Beit Hall that the Union is indeed taking steps to ensure that the Albert Hall authorities are aware of the impact of the work upon the residents. whilst it is indeed true that the Union was not represented at the meeting on 15th May we have been represented at the similar meetings over the previous year and found them deeply unsatisfactory forums to discuss the obvious issues of concern.

Currently the College and the Union are having discussions with the Royal Albert Hall to ensure that the work starting in September this year has a minimal impact on the College and its students. It is true that we would be derelict in our duty to our members not to be voicing our reservations to those who may choose to listen.

As for Mr Swift's rant, I am sorry that he has allowed his prejudices to get in the way of objectivity. It is fairly inevitable with any organisation such as ours that those whom the members of the Union choose to represent them are seen as being part of clique. However all Union meetings and elections are open to all members of the Union, save for a couple of understandable situations such as the Union Disciplinary Committee.

Mechanisms exist for members to hold the Union's officials, policy, decisions, elections and constitutional principles to account. If we were doing a bad job on your account, with your money and in your name then I would hope that the membership had the courage to seek corrective action. However, if people wish to sit bleating on the sidelines without participating or providing constructive suggestion then could I respectively suggest that they either

put up or shut up.

The remainder of the inaccuracies in M. Swift's letter seem to be reasonably covered by Mr Roberts editorial comment below the letter, save for Mr Swift's identity. It may simply be a typo, but Mr A Swift of Mech Eng II does not seem to appear in the College's list of registered students. It would be a fairly sad day if students felt that they could not criticise their elected officials without having to assume a pseudonym.

As I am sure that most readers of *Felix* do not wish to see the letters page clogged with epistolary duelling on this subject may I suggest to any potential respondents that they save their comments or criticism for my face, in-tray or Email address, eric.allso@ic.ac.uk. However, the best solution would be to attend the Council meeting on Tuesday 3rd June at 18:00 in the Union Dining Hall (papers will be available at the Union Office from 09:00 Monday 2nd June).

Yours sincerely,

Eric Allso ICU President

Dear Students,

Berhanu International Travel Agency (BITA) are looking for students for employment over the summer. This is what they said,

"The jobs are:

- Two students with an excellent knowledge of English language. For preparation of a catalogue. Average Czech wage (Including Accommodation)

- 20 students. For recruiting tourists from different transportation terminal and escorting them to Berhanu Hostels. Wage are dependent upon the number of travellers recruited. (No skill is required) Accommodation depends on the type of agreement."

For further details contact BITA at bts@terminal.cz please mention Felix and IC when writing.

Stuart Cook

Materials II

Letters may edited for content or length.

The deadline for letters for the next issue is Tuesday 3rd June.

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



Editor Alex Feakes / Advertising Manager Mark Baker

In the present climate of competitiveness and an abundance of league tables for the public to digest, here at IC we may take a small crumb of comfort from the fact that we're gradually getting closer to Oxford in *The Times* University League Tables.

It is there in black and white for everyone to see: Cambridge, Oxford, Imperial, LSE, Warwick, York, UCL, St Andrews... except that most of Jo' and Flo' Public go glassy-eyed after the first two (and that's if they get this far through the paper)! Which is a shame, because there is no point in having a reputation as good as ours (as borne out in the league tables), if nobody has ever heard of the damn place.

It should be the case that, as in any form of league, the top five are well known favourites of the public. There should be friendly inter-university rivalries between streets and regions. Estates bedecked in their higher education institution's colours would challenge the scarf bearing graduates of another. The annual publication of *The Times'* League Tables would be anticipated like the FA Cup.

Unfortunately, whilst other insti-

tutions have a high profile, Imperial's attractions have gone unnoticed by the press and public alike. That's not to say that Professor Smith gets on the *Today* programme or that Dr X is interviewed on the *News at Ten*, but we do lack the wonderful glitz and pazzam that say Professor Dawkin's occupation of the Chair of Public Annoyance and Iconoclasm at Oxford or Professor Hawking's sage-like pronouncements on the universe from his lair in Cambridge seem to manage.

But as I said at the start, we can only pause briefly to relish our achievement of drawing closer to Oxford. The London School of Economics is breathing down our collective necks (and how sweaty it is too)! We must man the battlements, research deep in our libraries and laboratories, draw our scarves closer round ourselves and above all get some better accommodation.

All in all, the College may get a good solid third, but it looks as though we'll have to get more 2:1s and firsts to pull ahead of our London rivals and close the gap on the Oxbridge duo and the acclamation that they receive.

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NEWS: ROBIN; PHOTOS: ROBIN; MUSIC: JASON AND ALOK; FILM: CHRIS;
GRAPHICS AND LAYOUT: DAVID;
COLLATING LAST ISSUE: DAVID

EVERY LITTLE HELPS

ALL STUDENTS AND STAFF SHOPPING AT SAINSBURY'S PLEASE ASK FOR THE FREE SCHOOL VOUCHERS, AS THE IMPERIAL COLLEGE DAY NURSERY CAN USE THEM IN EXCHANGE FOR TOYS. JUST PUT ANY VOUCHERS IN THE INTERNAL MAIL TO SUE THORNETT, DAY NURSERY, 8 PRINCE'S GARDENS. MANY THANKS!

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

FRIDAY MAY 30th: SHAFT-ED

Due to the licence for this event being refused by the Local Licensing Authority, the Union bars will have to close at 11pm this evening.

We apologise for any inconvenience this will cause.

Admission will now be FREE

FELIX SPORT

A triumphant season for the handsome young lads of ICAFC fourth team

Season 1996-97 was one that nobody connected with the Fourth Team will ever forget. It ended in glory; promotion to ULU Division III, and the Division IV Championship. Albeit, the top spot was achieved by the narrowest possible margin- level on points with Royal Holloway, but having a better goal difference by

recalculated, the truth was realised: Imperial Shit On The Holloway! (All together now.... If I had the wings of a sparrow...).

Perhaps not very sporting, but if there's one team I hate (more than Bolton Wanderers) then it is RH. And so it was all the sweeter that earlier in the season our biggest win was

top players were out for various reasons- and for one game we were missing nine first-choice players, needless to say, we didn't win.

We played in some remarkable games this season, for example when we were 2-0 down in the first game versus Goldsmiths with only three minutes to go (honestly). We won. Or 2-0 down halfway through the second half versus UCL V; we won. Thirteen goals were scored in two games against UMDS, eight against SOP, with none conceded. At home we totally outplayed LSE who finished third, thrashed the fourth placed team, QMWC IV, away. What a season!

In BUSA we had a remarkable sequence; in the London group matches, often playing against teams in higher divisions, we won our group. The reward for this was a home tie versus the University of East Anglia. On another day we might have won, mistakes put us 2-0 down early on, and although we pulled it back to 3-2 down, another break-away goal finally put paid to our gallant efforts. The ULU Cup for which we were the favourites- borne out by the fact that the final was between RH V and QMWC IV- didn't go well. In fact, we were defeated in the first round, at home, against a team who would only win one other game all season and finish bottom of the entire London League- proverbially 92nd in the Football League!

Perhaps it is wrong to single out individuals since this was a com-

bined effort, but the thirteen players on the team photo, along with Jamie, were the core and casing of the squad. The young Tippayawong, player of the year, simply a superstar in midfield, Darren, who scored 26 in 17 games, Sion and his stunning hat-trick; the third of which we'll never forget. When we were down to ten men, the left back appeared in the right winger's position, swung his trusty boot (the one not held together by tape) and then glory was his!

Morgan, the second highest scorer with 13 goals, produced a great contribution which culminated in him scoring the crucial third goal in our last game, effectively winning us the Championship, which he keeps telling us, though we know it was a combined effort. Andy, David, Jamie, Paul, Ryan, Adam, Pete, Chris, Mike as well as the other 18 who played at some stage during the season all deserve massive credit. Which just leaves me; the 'keeper for whom the phrase, 'Harlington Howler' was written, made far too many mistakes to mention here, but I don't care; we've got the medals; we've got the Championship. Just remember, 'I'm Stu...'

Onto the future, Morgan, Mike and Sion will soon be signing on, Pete will be dazzling Europe next year and Andy will lead the fourths to carry on the fine traditions of IC football.

Good luck everybody and thanks to everyone at ICAFC, especially those wonderful second-teamers.



Back: Nak, Paul, Adam, Morgan, Pete, (withheld), Dan, (withheld).
Front row: Ryan, Darren, Stu, Andy, Geordie.

one, that's one, goal! But so what- we've got the medals!

Going into the last game of the season versus Goldsmith IIIs we thought only a victory would give us the Championship, so after a topsy-turvy game which saw us go 1-0 up, 2-1 down, miss a penalty, then 3-2 down before finally equalising in the last minute we were despondent. It was not until numerous 'phone calls back and forth to Holloway HQ and then an agonising wait whilst the goal differences were calculated and

over them and at the same time emphasising our superiority over the rest of the division. It was the first game after the mid-season break (aka Christmas Hols) and IC produced their most fluent, skilful performance with their full-strength team to win 6-1. It could have been a lot more.

The league should have been won by a more convincing margin, and would have been if a full-strength team had been available more often, but events conspired against us to such extents that for many games our

A third sports editorial

With the summer approaching and thoughts of sports mainly drifting from our collective minds it's nice to reflect on what has been achieved by the brave and bold sportsmen of IC. Above is an extensive account of the season of the football fourths. If any other teams want the opportunity to have your pictures and a retrospective of your season in Felix then all you have to do is write from one to eight hundred words (or get someone to write them for you, rigger players) and hand them in with or without a picture to the *Felix* offices in Beit Quad. Simple, really.

I must mention the Thursday night skate as it really is jolly good fun. It meets at about a quarter to ten pm outside Mech eng and finishes at some point in the morning in Trafalgar Square. Inbetween there are fun and frolics suitable for expert skaters down to people who can go along and stop but nothing else. This really is a unique and exciting evening that allows you to skate the streets of London with some tip-top skaters who are willing to help you to improve. So either turn up at nine forty five or look on the notice board on the Sherfield walkway. Bye.

Cricketers conquer UCL

Just ten men, that's all it took! The day started badly with two last-minute cry-offs so we went up to Scotland, or somewhere North of the M25, without a full team. We lost the toss and were put into bat on a slow, damp, wet pitch with drizzly weather conditions which meant the match was reduced to a 35 over slog.

A solid start was made by the two openers scoring 48 off the first 13 overs. Then a typical middle order collapse saw us staring 54 for 4 in the face. The inning was then stabilised by a veteran and a majestic 61 from our Sri-Lankan/West Indian, Jay.

The score was pushed along and after the final five overs were twatted by Jameil Akabar we were in the strong position of 197-6 off the 35 overs. And all this with only ten men!

UCL's innings saw us take the field in a confident mood and we set to the task of reducing them to what they were - stinking pools of putrid jelly without a cricketing bone in their invertebrate bodies. With 20 overs left we had won the game easily - thanks must go to our two leg spinners Barry Richards and Jon Ainsworth. In the end our first win of the season was a demolition of UCL.