

SP

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1999



Issue
1146

The Students' Newspaper at Imperial College

Imperial Staff Will Strike Tomorrow

Members of the Association of University Teachers (AUT), which includes the majority of Imperial's academic staff, are to strike tomorrow, Tuesday 25 May. The strike is likely to effect lectures and examinations, as well as disrupting other services throughout college. The strike, which is the result of an ongoing pay dispute, will only affect the South Kensington campus, as clinical staff have received a different pay settlement to other academics.

As Felix went to press, the scale of the strike's effects was unknown. It is possible that some or all of tomorrow's examinations will go ahead, with the college finding alternative examiners. Alternatively, the day's academic work could be rescheduled for

By Ed Sexton

later this term. Ms Laura Barker, IC's AUT president, hoped "that the students do not come in that day", as a sign of support for the strikers, adding that she "will stand behind students who skip exams", suggesting the college could successfully reschedule them. David Hellard, ICU President, was more wary, suggesting that if students had exams or other essential work to do, then they should come in to college. On a more conciliatory note he added "if you don't need to come in, I wouldn't bother, as a sign of comradeship". Students will not be prevented from entering the campus and, although it is likely that there will be picket lines, Ms Barker assured Felix

that strikers would merely "seek to persuade peacefully".

The strike action has the support of the National Union of Students (NUS), as well as other unions representing university staff. In a letter dated 10 May from NUS President Andrew Pakes, to the AUT, he described the 3.5% salary increase that had been offered to AUT members as "a derisory pay offer". The letter continued; "I have every faith in you and your union that you will do your utmost to minimise the impact of this action on students at exam time." Ms Barker agreed, emphasising "students aren't our target". She went on to explain plans for the pay deducted from striking staff to

be given to student hardship funds at Imperial, an action which could be seen as an attempt at compensation for the disruption.

It is unlikely that the strike on its own will achieve the AUT's objectives. Ms Barker agreed, describing it as "a demonstrative action - the start of a process". That "process" is likely to involve a four day boycott of examination administration in June, which could further disrupt students' exams, and action during the hectic recruitment period in late summer.

More on the strike on page 2
and on page 5

London Student Blows Up a Storm

London Student, the newspaper serving the students of the University of London, was threatened with legal action as a result of an article published in their issue of April 30. Professor Zellick, the Vice Chancellor of the University of London, allegedly threatened to sue London Student and its editor, as well as the University of London Union, in response to the article, entitled "Mad Prof Demands Barmy ULU Ballots".

The article in question reported that he had caused some disturbance in union circles with his judgement that the recently held ULU elections "didn't comply" with the Education Act. Professor Zellick ruled that all future elections to ULU posts had to be done with a cross-campus ballot. This was widely criticised as being impractical, too expensive (estimated cost £60,000) and logistically horrendous, since over 100,000 students would need to be polled.

According to one source the current ULU president and publisher of London Student, Matt Hyde, was pressured by Professor Zellick to withdraw that issue of London Student. Mr Hyde

By Mansoor Choudhury

wrote a letter to London Student, published in May 14 issue, criticising the article as being "somewhat misleading" in its criticism of Professor Zellick since he had not been Vice Chancellor when the Education Act was drafted, when an exemption from cross-campus ballots for ULU should have been obtained. Dave Hellard ICU President com-

mented, "If ... Matt was trying to get it censored, it was pressure from above". He also added that he believed in the freedom of the press and concurred with what had been stated in the London Student article.

Matt Hyde dismissed allegations that he tried to stop the release of the issue in question as "unsubstantiated rumours"; Professor Zellick was unavailable for comment.

The offending article disputed the practicality of the VC's proposals

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Nightline to Hold Band Night

On June 1 ULU and London Nightline are holding a band night at ULU with all proceeds going to London Nightline. Coldplay, an up and coming Indie band, are headlining the event; their first single received critical acclaim from much of the music press, and they recently supported Catatonia for Radio 1. All the band members are London students and this will be the first gig they play after completing their finals. Two more student bands, The Fantastic Super Foofs and Hal and

Roger, are supporting.

XFM are sponsoring the event, with DJ John Kennedy playing a set. The evening will finish off with sets from student DJs until closing at 2am. Tickets will cost £3 for students in advance (ULU ticketline 0171 664 2030), or £4 on the door (non-students £5/£6).

The event is being held to publicise and raise money for London Nightline, a telephone helpline run by students for students. Nightline offers

a confidential listening and practical information service from 6pm to 8am every night of term. It has been running for 28 years, originally starting in response to a number of student suicides here at Imperial. Covering 31 institutions across London, Nightline provides a service for 150,000 students.

For further information about the bandnight or about London Nightline call 0171 636 7195 or email coordinator@nightline.freemove.co.uk



Issue 1146

24 May 1999

Editor: Ed Sexton

Films Editor: David Roberts

News Editor: Andy Ofori

Music Editors: Dennis Patrickson

& Jason Ramanathan

Games Editor: Gary Smith

Sports Editor: Gus Paul

Clubscene: Giles Morrison,

Gurminder Marwaha & Joel Lewis

Want to Join an ET Hunt? Behind the Pay Dispute

Last Monday was a special day for anybody with any sort of

interest in "aliens", it was the inauguration of SETI@home ("SETI = Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence"). The ambitious project involves thousands of volunteers downloading, installing and running a screensaver that processes a chunk of data from the massive Arecibo telescope in Puerto Rico, the largest radio telescope in the world. SETI@home will run for a period of two years, analysing a section of the sky. Scientists and engineers attached to SERENDIP - Search for Extraterrestrial Radio Emissions from Nearby Developed Populations - have pioneered this project based on their belief that the best chance we have of discovering lifeforms on other planets lies in the analysis of radio signals; as the website for the project proclaims, "there's a small but captivating possibility that your computer will detect the faint murmur of a civilization beyond Earth".

The program has been designed to run as a screensaver in order to ensure that it does not eat into volunteer users' "work time" (it is also available as an ordinary program with no graphics that computes all the time), and runs on PCs, Macs and various other formats. For security, the server from which the screensaver can be downloaded has been kept separate from the data server, which does not feed out any executable code; moreover, the software can be set to request permission from the user before posting the results of any tests; the results can also be sent automatically the next time the user is online. Enough data can be downloaded via a 28.8k connection in five minutes to keep the average PC busy for a few days. The screensaver

By Sunil Rao

itself displays a three-dimensional graphical display portraying a chart of the signal; participants also have the opportunity to view a map displaying the area of sky being analysed at the time.

The data recorded from the Arecibo Observatory telescope is essentially placed onto 35 gigabyte tapes daily; these tapes are then mailed all the way to Berkeley where they are split into downloadable chunks about a quarter of a megabyte each in size. Fundamentally, the project involves a search for strong signals in a narrow band, and will analyse signals an order of magnitude weaker than any previously done. Measures are in place to detect deliberate forgeries and any "positive" results noted will be checked back at Berkeley, though, of course, the user on whose system any discovery is made will be credited as a discoverer.

Those working on the project hope that by the time SETI@home has run its course, better approaches and newer telescopes will have been made available. As Louis Friedman of the Planetary Society says, this is the first time ever in the history of the human race that the opportunity has been made available for anybody anywhere in the world to join "the scientific search for intelligent beings elsewhere in our universe". Many might be sceptical but as Dan Wertheimer, Chief Scientist for the project puts it, "you can argue all day, but unless you do the search, you will never know".

The SETI@home home page is at <http://setiathome.ssl.berkeley.edu/>, while the paper from 1997 announcing the project can be found at http://setiathome.ssl.berkeley.edu/woody_paper.html.

The reasons for tomorrow's strike stretch back to a pay

dispute that has been ongoing for several months, and were outlined in last week's issue of Felix. In a letter to David Hellard Ms Barker explained "the aim of this action is to persuade the employers to improve their offer of a 3.5% salary increase." According to AUT press releases, average earnings in Britain have increased 40% in real terms (i.e. above inflation) in the past eighteen years, while academics have only seen a 3.1% increase. In contrast, vice-chancellors' have seen their pay increase by 7% a year for the past three years.

Another issue of importance to Imperial AUT members is London weighting, a system that attempts to compensate London academics for increased living costs in the capital. There has been no increase in this figure since 1992. Ms Barker voiced London academics' concerns; "we are angry that the employers refuse even to discuss this element of our pay claim."

A third sword in the AUT's attack concerns the amounts examiners are paid. According to a news release dated 29 April, over 17% of external examiners are paid less than £3.60 an hour, a figure which prompted David Triesman, the AUT's General Secretary, to comment "you can get more for responding to the words 'Big Mac and French Fries' than to the words of a learned science PhD."

The decision facing students is whether to support the strike by staying at home, and thus risk penalisation from college for missed exams or deadlines, or to pass the picket lines and come into college. David Hellard has said that

the union will be open, and will publicise the strike as and

when necessary. He also offered moral support to the AUT, thinking "they've got a just reason [for striking]... they aren't getting paid enough." Ms Barker urged students and ICU to do more, however; "I would hope that Dave could give more active support... we would welcome the support of ICU".

Clearly most students are unlikely to support the strike by boycotting exams. Ms Barker appealed to those students to "look at the bigger picture", suggesting that the quality of future students' education could suffer if the pay dispute was not resolved. Given that further action is planned for the next academic year she may well be right, but whether or not that means students should actively support the strikers is a difficult question, and one each student will have to answer for him or herself.

Imperial College Union's

Annual General Meeting

will take place on

Friday 28 May at 1pm in the

Union Dining Hall.

**ALL students are welcome
and encouraged to attend.**



Latest Fees Fiasco at Leeds

Following incidents at Sussex and Oxford, not to mention within London, it's now the turn of students at Leeds University to protest against the introduction of tuition fees. Thirty-nine first-year students at Leeds have received ominous letters warning them that they shall not be allowed to continue their studies following the summer vacation if they do not pay up.

Leeds University Union (LUU) is meanwhile campaigning for the defaulters to stay on to continue their education next year, their efforts taking the form of what appears to be a successful postcard-signing campaign, attracting over three hundred signatories by Monday 17 May. The campaign, which aims to induce University administrators to withdraw their threats, has also received media attention across the nation, being featured on the BBC web site, on Ceefax and Teletext and in both local and national press (Yorkshire Post, Yorkshire Evening Post, London Metro, Look North and The Guardian). The Univer-

By Sunil Rao

sity itself has shown little by way of signs of relenting, however.

Protests at Leeds aren't exactly a new thing, with last years' day-long occupation of a lecture theatre by over a hundred protesting students acting as a poignant reminder of student protests from May 1968, led by the then Leeds University Union President, a certain Jack Straw, though those protests had in reality more to do with battling controversial right-wing attitudes than with more down-to-earth issues.

The tone and timing of the letter from university management, sent out on the eve of the annual end-of-year examinations, were described by Anna Richards, Communications Officer at LUU responsible for liaising with the media, as being "very intimidating". Most of the students involved would now probably be feeling "ten times worse" about their financial problems, given that this is the reason cited by

most of the protesting freshers for their non-payment, though an intrepid few have refused to pay on principle.

Leeds remains a popular university with applicants, attracting more UCAS applications than any other institution in Britain, and the university administration had previously expressed its disapproval over the way the fee system is currently being handled, and had anticipated that a number of students would be worried about running up large debts and might even seriously consider "withdrawing from courses because of financial hardship". Leeds University has stated that it has not made it its policy to forcibly evict students from courses for not paying fees, and that every case will be treated on its own merits.

Meanwhile students refusing to pay fees at University College London (UCL) still face an uncertain future, with both college authorities and students showing little sign of compromise.

Humanities Competition

As part of its humanities programme, Imperial College is to hold a "Technical Presentations Competition". The competition is for undergraduate students, for the best technical presentation to an intelligent lay audience, and is being organised by the Science Communication Group at the Rector's suggestion.

Each of the competing departments, which includes engineering disciplines, sciences, the medical school and the management school will be fielding one individual or project group. Each presentation will last for 15 minutes, with 5 minutes for questions. A panel of college governors will judge the competition, which has a first prize of £500 and additional prizes totalling £300.

The competition will take place on Tuesday 22 June from 2pm to 5.20pm in Lecture Theatre 408, Level 4, Elec Eng. Prof Sinclair Goodlad, Director of the Humanities Programme, encourages members of the college to attend the event.

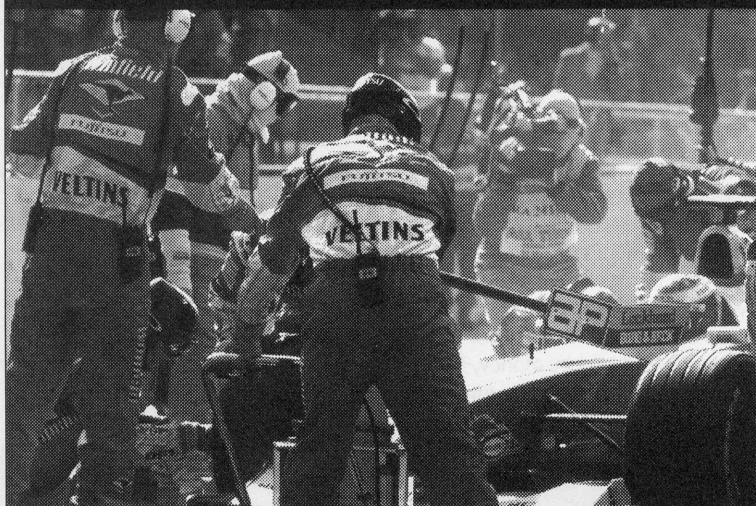
Enquiries should be directed to him at s.goodlad@ic.ac.uk or on (0171 59) 48752.

The Pit Stop Challenge

Friday, 28 May 1999, 11.00am-5.00pm,
Beit Quad

Ac Andersen Consulting

You are invited to experience the pressure of the Pit Stop using a real Formula One Williams car...



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- ability to work under pressure
- ability to work within a team
- ability to display a good sense of humour!

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Travel or LT cards?

Dear Felix,

I would like something clarified with regard to the London Transport Student Discount scheme, namely what sorts of tickets we can get a discount on. You refer throughout your news article (as does Dave in his Presidential talk-back) to "travelcards". I was under the impression that the scheme only covered LT cards and bus passes. The distinction is important: Travelcards are valid on tubes, buses and trains, whereas LT cards are only valid on tubes and buses - not trains. For those of us who live south of the river, train and tube is often the only option (Kingston to college by train and tube: 45 minutes, cf bus and tube: 1.5 hours!).

Please could you be more specific in your wording in future, as I'm currently paying ~400 UKP p.a. more than I'd need to if the student discount applied to travelcards.

helen-louise.
Physics PhD.

You aren't the only one confused - neither ICU nor the London Transport website were able to explain it to me accurately. It is true, however, that the cards CAN NOT be used on trains, as the deal is only with London Transport, and not the regional train companies. The LT website states

"[Youth LT cards] cost 30% less than the equivalent adult rate Travelcard Season, but cannot be used on most National Railways services (except on joint routes where there is inter-availability) or for Underground journeys to and from Bakerloo line stations north of Queen's Park... [they] give unlimited travel on Underground, London Transport Buses, including N-prefixed Night Buses and Docklands Light Railway services within the zones selected."

So there you have it. Exactly which routes have 'inter-availability' I don't know. Anyway, I apologise for any confusion caused. More information can be found at www.londontransport.co.uk/travel/2_4_11.htm - Ed

Pit Stop Challenge

Dear Felix,

So how many of you have watched the Grand Prix on the telly recently, watched the pit stops and thought "I'd like to give that a go"?

Well, if you have now's your chance. The Union have got together with those very nice people from Andersen Consulting to present the Pit Stop Challenge this Friday in Beit Quad. Basically, this involves getting the wheels off and back on a Formula 1 car in the fastest time.

There's big prizes for the winning

teams (last year the winners got a day's free go-karting), and prizes for the runners up and losers.

This year Andersen have invited teams from some of those other London colleges, so there'll be a special edge to the competition.

If you want to enter, there's still time - all you need is a team of 4 and a team name. You can either enter by filling in an application form in the Union Office, or on the back of the flyers or by emailing me on m.horne@ic.ac.uk. Entries must be in by Wednesday evening to be guaranteed a place on the starting grid.

For those of you who don't feel so energetic, there'll be a barbecue, the bar will be open and there'll be the biggest scalextric set you've ever seen in dBs.

Hope to see you all there.

Mark Horne
Events & Marketing Manager

All Students - £55

Dear Felix,

The Summer Ball Team would like to apologise to A. Warman for the lack of clarity over ticket prices for students. We would like to thank him for bringing this issue to our attention. Tickets are £55 for ALL STUDENTS upon production of some form of proof; Alastair will of course receive a refund subject to the above criteria. The union encourages all students whether home or international to attend the Summer Ball and look forward to seeing them at Alexandra Palace for the single biggest catered event run by any UK Student's Union.

The Summer Ball newsletter is out now and gives details of all the prize draws occurring in the next few weeks. Remember that tickets are only on sale until Monday 7th June and the sooner you buy your tickets the more prize draws you will be entered into. Members of a group of ten, booked before Friday, will enter our draw for a free two-man tent or a meal for two at Luigi Malones.

We appreciate that everyone is busy with exams but taking time out NOW to book your place at the most phenomenal end of term party, will ensure that you celebrate the end of your year or university life in true style.

Kind Regards

Summer Ball Team

Stomach GM Foods!

Signs I saw in Da Vinci's this lunchtime disturbed me; written on a piece of laminated cardboard was 'We cannot guarantee our food to be free of GM produce'.

Quite why, at this college, a veritable centre for genetic research, anyone would want this to be the case, is beyond me. It is sad that we appear to have so little control over what we can and can't do/eat, even on our own campus - rather than sound scientific minds being listened to, the ignorant rantings of the tabloid press appear to be preferred.

At such a centre for research as Imperial, surely we should be leading the way and supporting GM foods all the way. I shall never be taken for a ride with all this 'organic' rubbish the supermarkets are set to make a killing on this summer.

Support research. Vote with your stomach.

S.W. Cooper

Regulating the Internet II

Dear Felix,

I am writing in response to Mr Tse's letter "Regulating the Internet" in the last issue of Felix. I believe the basis of his letter was that if we expose children to violence through media, they become violent. I do wonder if such an assumption is true? If any readers have observed seven year-olds watching an episode of Power Rangers, I'm confident they will agree with me when I say that it is accurate to a small degree (different children respond differently). However, regulation is not a simple case of Good versus Bad, as the aforementioned author seems to believe.

The wonder that is the Internet is that Joe Bloggs can come along and tell the world what he thinks. This power is something very few of us have ever had before. A soapbox in Hyde Park won't reach more than a hundred. A book has greater potential, but it spends its life on a shelf in Waterstones (and only once the author has persuaded a publisher to publish it). The Internet is the only medium where anyone can say what they want, unaltered, to a world-wide audience. Regulation would take this power away.

Is this such a bad thing? If we pretend that last week's issue of Felix is a regulated Internet, and that it's regulator is the editor, Mr Tse has no control over the appearance of his letter. I doubt whether Mr Tse would be a happy man if he spent hours writing his letter, only to find it wasn't there. Of course, it is easy to say we'll "only regulate the porn" or "ban the fascism". All this simply means is that the regulator's morals get forced down the author's throat. Is it ethical to impose your morals on someone else?

At the end of the day our capitalist economy is driven by money. The adult entertainment businesses invest enormous amounts of money on improving network connections and developing technologies such as streaming video. Indeed, Real Networks' biggest customers

are adult websites. Online credit card processing was invented by a Canadian pornographic website. The sad fact is people want their porn: 90 - 95% of all male net users have visited pornographic sites. If children and the Internet are incompatible, it is far more cost effective to remove the former rather than regulate latter.

Martyn Whitwell.
(Physics I)

Eat, Praise, Have a ball

Sir,

I read with interest "In brief" (Felix, 17 May 1999), and in particular the Director of Estates' proposal to renovate the SCR. I note that the entire project is still waiting for funding confirmation - why? It's a catering/conference outlet! There is surely no question here - John Foster and Annette de Lima will benefit, so they should dig deep into their voluminous pockets and stump up the cash. Alternatively, Mr Caldwell should turn the whole space into a food hall (Burger King, McDonalds etc) and move the SCR to the Rector's flat at 170 Queen's Gate. The mystery of the SCR still evades me - why are staff happy to pay inflated prices for the same food which is served cheaper at the MDH downstairs? Hmmmm, and they say our academic staff are the best in the land. I remain to be convinced...

And before you put this down as another letter from a cranky old hack, can I take the opportunity to congratulate Dave Hellard on a largely successful year at ICU? I must admit to being sceptical when he took over, but he has proved to be a competent and popular President. I only hope Natasha Newton manages to keep up with the momentum he has established...

Finally, can I urge everybody to attend the ICU Summer Ball? It's a fantastic event, so great that I still can't remember what happened last year... so go. See if you can get the College Secretary drunk - it'll be worth it...

I remain, Sir, your humble and obedient servant,

Andy Heeps

**Deadline for letters for
is 12noon Wednesday.**

Letters may be edited for length, but will not be altered in any other way.

Letters need not be signed, but a swipe card must be shown when submitting anonymous letters.



To Strike or Not to Strike?

You are not at school, and lecturers are not simply teachers. Benefiting from university education requires having a good working relationship between students and academic staff, and that means that both groups should show some interest in the other's problems.

Patronising comment aside, what I am trying to say is that you can't ignore the AUT strike. Listen to the arguments and opinions, and make up your own mind. If you decide that the AUT's action is justified, at least in principle, then you are faced with a problem; what should you do tomorrow?

What follows is NOT official advice, nor Felix editorial policy, merely my own view. If you do not have exams tomorrow, do not come in to college. Lectures can be caught up, and probably won't happen anyway, and you can survive without the library for a day. Skip that lab project and watch the cricket instead.

If you do have exams, it's probably a good idea to turn up - college may well fail students who do not turn up, and neither the AUT nor ICU may be able to fight such a ruling. Having said that, if you know most of the people taking the exam, get together before hand and decide to skip it as a group. It will be difficult to validate an exam if only 10% of the students turn up and, besides, college can't afford to have that many fails

in a year - it might lose us our second place in the league tables.

If all that sounds too militant for you, then why not add a small paragraph of protest to the end of your exam answer paper? Write a brief note to the examiner explaining how you had to cross AUT picket lines to take the exam, and how you feel it is wrong for college to go ahead with exams on a strike day. Perhaps suggest that Colleges listen to their staff's demands and respect industrial action.

Such a note will either be read by a non-striking member of London University, in which case it will remind them of the action being taken, or will otherwise eventually end up in the hands of an AUT member, which will demonstrate your support. If you are not prepared to risk your degree then at least show you appreciate the issues.

The Union will be open as usual, so if you do come into college and then decide not to pursue academic work for the day, you can always relax in the bar over lunch.

As for me? I will be around for most of the day (after all, someone has to actually cover the strike!), but I am unlikely to answer enquiries and suchlike from College - not that it'll matter, as no one from the other side of Prince Consort Road ever phones me anyway.

Again, these are personal views - decide what to do for yourself. - Ed

New Frontiers in Science Exhibition

21 of the UK's top science and technology research teams have been selected by the Royal Society to demonstrate the latest advances in their work.

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Pieces by Barber, Britten, Monteverdi, Mozart and Taverner.

Friday 28 May, 8pm

Holy Trinity Church,

Prince Consort Road

The Arts Appreciation Society wishes to thank all of its 283 members for their continued support over the last year.

Some of the shows for which we intend to arrange tickets during the coming year include:

Chicago * The Lion King
West Side Story * Rent

Saturday Night Fever * Cats
...plus loads more, including other musicals, opera, ballet and art exhibitions

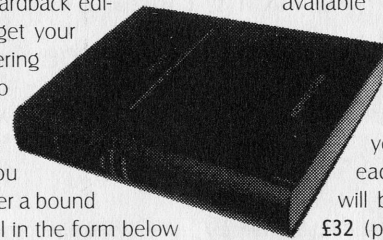
ARTSOC

Imperial College Union Arts Appreciation Society
For further information, please e-mail artsoc@ic.ac.uk



Bound Edition Order Form

Fancy owning all of this year's issues of Felix in one hardback edition? You even get your name in gold lettering on the front, so there's no confusion as to who paid for it. If you would like to order a bound edition, please fill in the form below and return it to the Felix office. Please note that bound editions will not be available before early Autumn, so it is important to provide contact details for next year. The cost of each bound edition will be **not more than £32** (payable on collection of your edition).



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(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY AS IT SHOULD APPEAR ON THE COVER)

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Deadline for completed forms is Friday 11 June,
but if you can fill it in earlier it would be very helpful.



Right Angles to the Rising Sun

The Mosquitoes and Pineapples of Okinawa

Menso-re uchinal as the locals say, or as anyone born south of the Watford Gap would have it - "Welcome to Okinawa". Oh good grief, I hear you cry, where the hell is he this week? Pray let me explain. Every year at the beginning of May, a series of conveniently-placed public holidays gives rise to the phenomenon of Golden Week during which the worker bees of corporate Japan down tools and decamp en masse for sunnier climes for a well-earned spell of R&R. This little drone being no exception, I decided to take this opportunity to head off to Japan's most southerly province to escape from the constant shuttlecock and battledore of life on the mainland. I must admit to having an ulterior motive - my girlfriend (it might surprise you to learn that even I have one) comes from Nago in northern Okinawa, and as such I could kill two birds with one stone and see her and have a holiday on the cheap at the same time.

Okinawa - in reality a collection of several little islands which takes its name from the largest of the group - is the smallest, and some would say most spectacular, of the jewels in Japan's geographical crown. Its southerly location - closer to Taiwan than Tokyo - ensures that it is also the warmest and this fact is reflected in the distinctive nature of its flora and fauna. The main island is only a shade over 60 miles from end to end, and is divided in almost equal part

between a grey, forbidding US military base and lush, mountainous forest inhabited by centipedes the size of cats. Actually that's a bit of an exaggeration - the Marines life is not quite as extensive as all that and the creepy-crawlies are really only as big as a large kitten at most. However, there is no escaping the American military presence, a legacy of WWII when Okinawa was the only part of Japan invaded by the Allied forces prior to the post-1945 US occupation of the mainland. In fact, up until its return to Japan in 1972, Okinawa was under the government of the States, and the locals actually needed passports to go to the mainland (and you thought having to pay to go across the Severn

Bridge to Wales was bad). Whilst Okinawans are now no longer foreigners in their own country, there was another difficulty associated with being reunited with the mother country. Those of you who have been State-side cannot have failed to notice that in direct contravention of all known conventions of decency and common sense, the Americans will insist on driving their cars on the right hand side of the road. By contrast the

Japanese, in common with the rest of the civilised world drive on the left, and thus when Okinawa - until then the de facto 51st state of the Union - returned to the fold, the local population in the inimitable words of Charlton Heston "had themselves a situation". But in a gargantuan feat of organisation, only outdone by the efforts of the Apollo programme, the entire population of the island

"...British food might be notorious throughout the human world for being bland and unpalatable, but the insect kingdom clearly begs to differ..."

switched from driving on the right to driving on the left overnight. Anywhere else such a dramatic realignment would have been unthinkable, but in Japan cooperative activity on this scale passes off without a hitch. In fact I sometimes get the feeling that it would be easier to get the entire population of 125 million to pick a single set of Lottery numbers than it would to get two Westerners to agree on which pub to go to on Friday night.

But there's a lot more to the place than GI Joe and astounding feats of consensual motoring. There's insects in particular. There was I, being wowed by fabulous scenery, getting my ears back on local delicacies in charming little roadside restaurants or marvelling at seas so clear and blue that they looked like a kindergarten kid's painting of "what I did on my holidays", and all the time I was slapping at swarms of the little perishers as they homed in on every square

Matt Salter

"...Okinawa was the only part of Japan invaded by the Allied forces prior to the post-1945 US occupation of the mainland..."

inch of uncovered skin, until I sounded like the rhythm track off a Snoopy Doggy Dog song. They didn't seem to bother the locals who wandered about totally unmolested, but as soon as I set foot outside the car a cloud of winged syringes made a beeline (or should that be a mosquito-line) for my pasty white flesh like something out of "633 Squadron". Maybe they saw me as a chance to get a bit of variety in their diet I don't know, but whatever the reason they were impossible to ignore. British food might be notorious throughout the human world for being bland and unpalatable, but the insect kingdom clearly begs to differ.

This profusion of (sometimes unwelcome) wildlife comes about as a direct result of Okinawa being situated in the sub-tropics and, whilst this can lead to occasional bouts of temporary anaemia, it also makes for scenery which is really something to behold. Driving around the coastal roads (on the left of course) I was struck by the sheer variety and lushness of the greenery that seems to overwhelm every spare patch of countryside. It wasn't just that there was a heck of a lot of it that surprised me, it

was that pretty much all of it were totally new to me. There were spiky plants and twisty plants, plants with huge, broad leaves that looked like they had grown upside-down, and trees that resembled 30-foot tall broccoli florets covered with thick creepers that would have had Tarzan of the Apes nodding with approval. It was a bit like being on the set of Jurassic Park. At one point, looking out over the wide expanses of verdant forest from my vantage point of a mountain-top café that was accessible only via long winding roads the width of a human hair, I was struck anew by the unbelievable density and variety of the vegetation which, I felt sure, must conceal an army of majorly gigantic

spiders.

It's not just the inedible foliage that is different over there. On another occasion, whilst driving across country I asked my girlfriend - who had bravely opted for what my father used to call the "suicide seat" - what all the odd-looking bushes growing in the fields were. "Pineapples" she replied, faintly irritated that anyone could ask such a stupid question. I think the next field contained a crop of mangos, but I wasn't about to open my mouth and run the risk of looking even more of a berk. What goes for the fruit goes double for the fish and seafood. One afternoon we went to a friend's house for a barbecue the star attraction at which, apart from heroic quantities of succulent Pacific crab, was a bewildering array of tropical fish caught fresh off the reef that very morning. They weren't your usual cod, haddock and skate, these were pukka "Jacques Cousteau's Amazing World of the Deep" fish complete with peculiar fins and long wispy feelers, and colours so bright and vibrant that they looked for all the world like they had been caught up in an explosion in a paint factory. Some of the less lurid

"...the local brew which, as far as I could make out, consists of 2 parts lighter fuel to 1 part pink paraffin diluted with mineral water..."

amongst their number were wrapped in foil and slapped straight on the grill whilst the rest were cut up there and then, marinated perfunctorily in soy sauce and lemon juice, and eaten raw washed down with large glasses of the local brew which, as far as I could make out, consists of 2 parts lighter fuel to 1 part pink paraffin diluted with mineral water. I now know what really fresh fish tastes like and it ain't Harry Ramsden's.

During our al fresco feast one of our party proudly informed me that Okinawa boasts the largest number of centenarians per head in the whole of Japan and after what I'd seen, smelled and tasted in my all too brief visit I would have thought that 100 years was probably too short a time to spend in this place. I've already booked my next trip when I shall come armed with twice as many rolls of film as this time, my swimming trunks and a fishing rod. And an industrially-sized tube of mosquito repellent.



The Importance of Coffee

There is a lot of truth in the old joke that mathematicians are devices for turning coffee into theorems. In fact Kevin believes coffee is the fuel, the raw material for much of the work which goes on within IC. Students can often be overheard talking to each other about the effects of caffeine addiction; withdrawal; and as exam time approaches worrying about the possible side effects of their increasing caffeine intake. Two branches of the brilliant Starbucks, within a few minutes walk of the South Ken. campus only encourage the habit. Kevin has heard of some students being lucky enough to get tutorials time tabled at Starbucks! However due to the rather cosy size of the place, if this becomes common practice double bookings could be problematic. Perhaps Starbucks should be incorporated into the IC room booking system, so as to ensure the comfortable seats are free. Coffee addicts looking for accommodation for next year may be interested to note that the flats above Starbucks on Kensington High Street are up for sale at the

moment. Kevin sees this coffee culture as quite ironic - for an institution which was once proud to be known worldwide as "The PG Tips College".

New Phone System

Internet access at home for all IC students could soon be a reality. College is presently holding discussions with the communications company Ericsson over a "private finance initiative" which would provide IT / Phone services to the South Ken campus and Halls of Residence. Ericsson stands to make a lot of money out of IC students in the long term, and it is vital that we as students make sure that we get the best deal we can. Kevin, who has experience of problematic commercial phone systems in many institutions has the following, realistic wish-list: *All phones should receive incoming calls irrespective of whether or not the student decides to subscribe to additional services such as Internet or outgoing phone calls.

*The phones should act as IC internal telephones, ie. Phone calls between the new Ericsson phones, and to other university phones should be free.

*Students should be free to cancel their agreement with Ericsson at any time, they should not be committed to a year / term's worth at a time.



A Mostly Harmless Column by Kevin, a random entity who knows nothing about nothing

*Ericsson billing should be entirely independent from accommodation billing.

Ericsson are quite open about the fact that they are only in this to make as much money as they can. Having already stated their intentions to expand their services to IC's other sites, even to students in private accommodation and alumni wherever in the world they might be! This

puts both college and us, the students in a very good position in negotiations. Don't be an apathetic lemming: "Make your self heard". The student representative in discussions with Ericsson is Chris Ince; dpfs@ic.ac.uk

Lights Out

Kevin has noticed yet another example of technics going wrong in IC. This time trying merely to accomplish the simple procedure of turning the board lights on in a Lecture Theatre. Faced with a lectern adorned with more buttons than your average scientific calculator, the lecturer was out of her depth. She decided to attempt to explain the reason for the flickering lights to the students: "It's taking about thirty seconds for the information to get from the switch to the lights. Which of course means when I turn them on, by the time they come on, I've turned them off again."

Send ideas and contributions to kevin_mishmash@hotmail.com

Presidential Talk-Back

David Hellard, ICU President

Tomorrow AUT members are going on strike. The NUS have already given the action their full backing, but as a President who has to deal with real issues and not just give sound bites against them I would advise students not to boycott exams. Although some may interpret this message as one of opposition to the strike, my advice to all students was to pay their tuition fees, despite how much I disagreed with them.

This Friday is the Annual General Meeting at 1pm in the Union Dining Hall; it is the most important meeting in the Union calendar. For the meeting to be quorate (to have the number of people required to make the meeting legitimate) we need to have 200 students attending, so please come along and bring your department with you.

The Annual General Meeting is your one opportunity in the year to question any of the officers on what they have done throughout the course of the year. The Union will present its Annual Report, outlining what the Union has achieved in the year and review what services it offers its members. The Officers of the Union for next year will then be voted in, every student there gets a vote. These officers have their own areas of specialisation, but all receive a vote in the Union Council, the sovereign body of the Union, in which all major decisions and poli-

cies of the Union are made. If you want to stand for any of the positions, all you need to do is sign up on the notice board outside of the Union

Office, with a seconder and ten proposers.

In celebration of this great event Anderson Consulting are holding the

Pit Stop Challenge, in which you can play on a giant skelectrics set, change the wheels of a formula one car and take advantage of the all day bar. If the Annual General Meeting is Quorate, I might even buy one lucky participant a free pint.

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Cycling in Nepal

From personal experience Oliver Hawkins describes the pitfalls of cycling in this hilly and logistically difficult country

Described as "the Mecca of world mountain biking", the Himalayan kingdom of Nepal offers lots of challenges to adventurous cyclists. Unlike its two sprawling neighbours, India and Tibet, much of the country and sights, including ancient Buddhist and Hindu temples and views of Mount Everest, are in easy reach from the cities of Kathmandu and Pokhara. Also, it is said that you are ten times more likely to be involved in a car crash in Nepal than in Britain, and only limited areas of the country are open for trekking. Cycling allows close contact with the famously friendly and tolerant Nepalese people, as well as affording greater freedom than buses and cars in where to go, making it a very attractive option. Therefore, with the help of some of the pupils at the school in Kathmandu where I was teaching, and along with four other British volunteer teachers, I bought a mountain bike from a local shop. From the many experiences we had and mistakes made, here are the things to be avoided...



Nepali life. The reality for most Nepalis today is complex and varied, not as simplistic as the 'mountains and mysticism' portrayal in some tourist publications. Noticeable aspects include the rapid modernisation, distributed unequally through the country, alongside harsh rural poverty and a strong influence of tradition, family and religion.

3 Natural Disasters

Obviously good to avoid, but it should be remembered that the contrasts in the climate are great in Nepal, with only two seasons, the Monsoon and the Dry Season. Getting caught cycling in a Monsoon downpour can be very dangerous, especially on mud paths. However, you can usually see the rain coming, sometimes literally as an advancing wall of water, so you have time to find shelter.

Freak weather can also happen during the dry season. On one occasion, one of our bikes broke a few hours into a three-day journey to a remote village called Palanchowk Bhagwati, in the foothills near the Tibetan border. As we started to look for a repair shop, we noticed that a tornado had formed close behind us, so we quickly flagged down a passing truck, threw our bikes into the back and climbed onto the roof. This was probably no safer than staying near the tornado however, as we spent the next ten miles hanging on to the single roof bar to avoid getting thrown off as the truck sped around corners.

4 Admiring the View

The reward of struggling to the top of one of the Himalayan foothills is incredible views of some of the most spectacular scenery in the world. However, the mountain roads often have drops of hundreds of metres off one side, with no protective barriers, so the descents, which can be very fast and exciting,

must be taken with care. Two of these we took were almost a kilometre height difference between the top and the bottom, and on one, a friend crashed at speed after his brakes locked, and he was incredibly lucky to escape with only cuts and a few bruises.

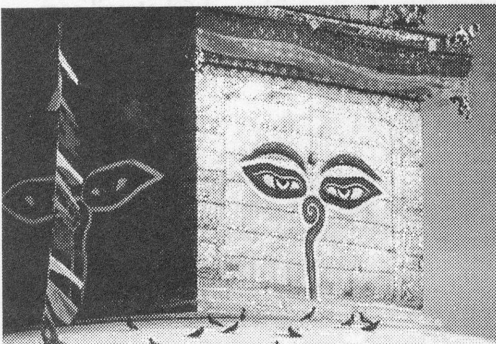
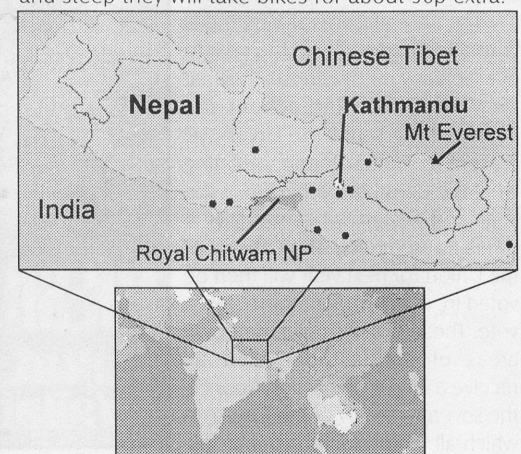
5 Cows

Cows are sacred in Nepal where the majority of the population are Hindus, and killing a cow can result in jail sentences of up to 10 years. Avoiding a collision is therefore very much advisable, although the cyclist would probably come off worse. Nepalese cows are mostly urban animals, preferring the busy, dirty city life, where they can scavenge the roadside rubbish heaps, to the peaceful countryside, so traffic can become a slalom around the animals on even the crowded city streets.



6 Buses

My only crash was into the back of a stopping bus, at about 5 to 10 miles per hour. Buses are renowned for their aggressive driving and for being so full that people often hang on to the outside or sit on the roof. Sitting on the roof with the luggage tied on is often more comfortable than inside, especially in hot weather, although it is in theory illegal and dangerous as there is usually only a roof rack to hold on to. Buses are however frequent and ridiculously cheap, costing as little as 3p for a five-mile journey, and when your bike has broken or the hill is just too long and steep they will take bikes for about 50p extra.



1 Cheap Bikes

Our first trip was a steep learning curve and a lesson in the false economy of buying cheap. Between us, we suffered eight breakdowns of some form or another in two hours, although we persevered until a friend was thrown in a somersault over his handlebars, fortunately escaping unhurt. Although the many cycle shops are helpful and virtually free, they are not equipped for geared bikes and on several occasions they used a brick to hammer handlebars into shape. My advice would be to spend the extra rupees and hire a much more reliable bike, such as those from 'Himalayan Mountain Bikes' in Thamel, Kathmandu.

2 Guide Book Authors

Our guide for some of the trips we made was James Giambrone, through his book 'Kathmandu Valley Bikes and Hikes'. We got some good ideas on places to visit, but his "intrepid routes" invariably ended in a dead end or a path washed away by the recent monsoon, a problem common to even the major roads in Nepal. Getting lost is not all bad though, as long as it is not getting dark, as you can find yourself in places off the beaten track and more fascinating for it. People were often very willing to invite us into their homes, allowing an insight into rural



Tues 25th

ICU presents....

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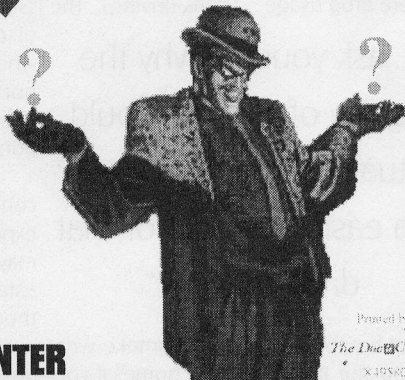
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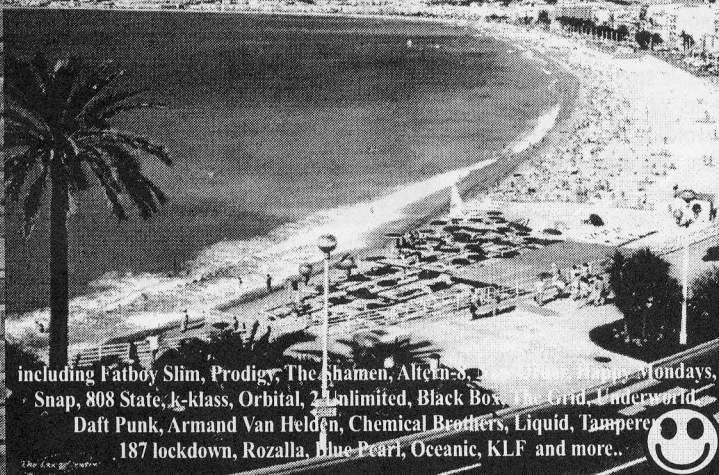
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What would Legalisation Lead to?

Attitudes towards drugs are as diverse as the people who hold them. In the first of a two part feature, Felix examines the attitudes and arguments for and against the legalisation of drugs. This week Andrew Vivian explains his view that cannabis should be used for medical applications under strict regulation, whilst remaining commercially illegal.

Following the respectable comments proposed by Mr 'Anonymous' (coward) last term and in the aftermath of the recent pro-legalisation march I feel that it is time to present arguments against the legalisation of cannabis.

May I first utterly refute the claim made by Howard Marks published in last week's article that two thirds of all under 25s take cannabis. Perhaps he assumed that the statistics of his friends and colleagues were applicable to the British youth as a whole...

As I see it the main problem with legalising cannabis is that it would unequivocally lead to an increase in all drug usage. Commercial marketing through wide-spread advertising would increase the awareness and availability of all drugs (not just cannabis) to the entire populace. Attracted to the relative safety of cannabis new smokers would arise, most of whom would no doubt enjoy the experience; some of these new arrivals would branch out into other forms of drug use in search of different inducible experiences. Kids who get a kick out of breaking rules or through trying to impress others will use harder drugs if cannabis is legalised and loses its coolness or even 'hard' symbolism (lets be honest, - this is how some of you started smoking in the first place).

Sure, some kids are already on hard drugs but numbers would rise. The last two points are basically the results of different forms of peer pressure. A tiny minority may crave new challenges and even hold that if the government relents on cannabis then they can get away with more moderate crimes (I'm not suggesting anyone at IC would be stupid enough to think that though!); imagine if the government were actually to give in - a whole new generation of protesters would emerge pressing for slackness on other issues - just how far would this

"Commercial marketing through wide-spread advertising would increase the awareness and availability of all drugs..."

"Keep cannabis commercially illegal, although exploit any medicinal benefit it may have..."

go? (c.f. suing actions in the USA)

Let us consider the scenario where drug usage increased but knock on effects were themselves insignificant. What grounds are there for opposing increased drug usage - surely it is the individual's choice if they partake? Well, actually that's not the case. You're forgetting the non-smokers.

The users are content but the non-users lose, subject to the behaviour, influence and smoke released by the smokers. Some of you may recall the letter I submitted last term requesting at least a small area of the

union to be designated non-smoking. My thanks to the Union officials who didn't even bother to reply.... bastards. Our Union is a classic example of non-smokers being subjected to the whim of those who smoke. Legalising cannabis and increasing drug availability will increase the already high

number of such situations, - not good for the non-smoker who quite rightfully wants to have a social life without unnecessary health hazards. Not only that, but drug usage isn't exactly aesthetically pleasing. While being boxed in behind a smoker around the pavements of Piccadilly with no way of avoiding the smoke 'catchment area' may drive me positively livid, the sight of cigarette butts

everywhere is horrible, especially in areas of otherwise natural or indeed artificial beauty. These circumstances should be actively reduced and not encouraged by promoting further drug use through cannabis legalisation.

You may argue on this account that I would have to concede that tobacco and alcohol should also be illegal. Well in the case of tobacco I agree whole-heartedly, as for alcohol it is less rational (and I'm not saying that in bias - I hate the taste of alcohol and very rarely drink) even though it has its

fair share of related damage to innocent citizens (drink-driving). The issue is that the consequences of cannabis can be foreseen whereas for tobacco they were not (and in the ignorant 60s tobacco was even regarded as good for your health).

Solutions? Keep cannabis commercially illegal, although exploit any medicinal benefit it may have in controlled medical establishments. Quite frankly though, I would be happy for you to smoke whatever the hell you want in your homes if you consented to never doing so in public - and then strictly adhered to such a compensation.

You may still completely disagree with what I have said, but then ask yourself why the legality of a drug should actually bother you if you can easily get hold of that drug anyway? Cannabis is not high on the police's agenda as the blatant usage during the pro-legalisation march proved, and I can only think that if any of you are still for legalisation then you must either be selfish or have business propositions...



The highs and lows of cannabis: Above, protesters at the Mayday march in good spirits. Below, the soporific effects of over-indulgence



Next week Danny Kushlick, spokesman for Transform, a pressure group who believes that current British drug laws should be re-examined, presents arguments for the legalisation of most, if not all, drugs.

Reviews

Best Laid Plans ★★★

Starring : Reese Witherspoon, Alessandro Nivola, Josh Brolin
Director : Mike Barker

Indie-thriller... dark and broody... twisty-turny plot... trying to escape small-town America... murder... decent cast of young, sexy, next-big-things types... intricate plan goes wrong... Sound familiar?

Eventually all these movies begin to blur into one - one big, unpleasant vision of a crime filled world, where everything turns out for the best, yet everyone gets hurt. In this case, that image is imposed onto Nivola and Witherspoon, as the boyfriend/girlfriend duo who come up with an incredibly contrived plan to raise the money which will pay off Nivola's debts to a local gangster. Having persuaded Witherspoon (who, worryingly, looks 17 despite being 23) to seduce Brolin in order to rob his house, the plan goes pear-shaped when Brolin goes mental and locks her up in the basement. Cue much swearing, anguish and, of course, blind panic.

Generic it may be, but thanks to a constantly swirling plot and appealing acting from the leads, it's an engaging tale. Sadly the ending fails to surprise, despite trying hard to confound your expectations, yet the plot as a whole is far enough



America, where all the streets are paved with gold...

removed from anything else you'll have seen to keep you engrossed from start to finish - despite being an essentially morality-free zone. Moreover, the movie's success in the US will undoubtedly pave the way to future stardom for the leads - particularly Witherspoon, who, with three

more movies due this year, has been picked out as one of the faces of 1999.

Sacrificing genuine originality and depth for style and appeal, *Best Laid Plans* is nonetheless a decent and entertaining - albeit downbeat - movie. **F**

Dave

Win tickets to She's All That with the

ODEON

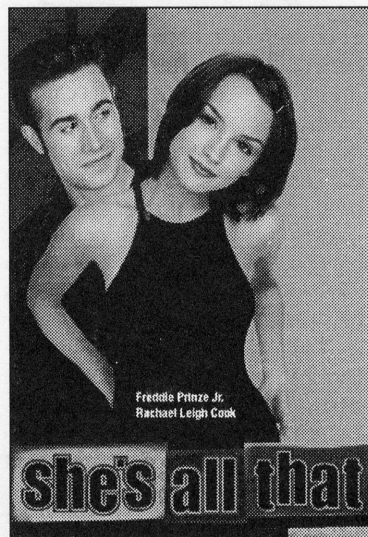
KENSINGTON

This week's competition centres around upcoming indie comedy *She's All That*. Starring unknowns (Freddie Prinze Jr, Rachael Leigh Cook) in the lead roles, alongside a few bigger names (Mathew Lillard, Anna Paquin), it promises to be entertaining - if not entirely original.

If you'd like to see it courtesy of those lovely people at the Odeon Kensington, just answer the following question:

Which vampire hunting actress makes cameo appearances in both *She's All That* and *Scream 2*?

Just email your answer to film.felix@ic.ac.uk before Wednesday evening. The first ten names out of the virtual hat will win a pair of tickets.



As ever, a packed mailbag was the response to last week's competition, with almost every one a correct answer - spotting that *Best Laid Plans* star Alessandro Nivola appeared alongside Nicholas Cage and John Travolta in John Woo's *Face/Off*. The first five names out of the hat were:

Janice Lonsdale
 Narisara Intrachandra
 Beatrice Dereume
 Richard Powell
 Clive Parker

You've each earned a pair of tickets to see *Best Laid Plans* for your trouble - please drop into the *Felix* office (in the corner of Beit Quad) ASAP.

SOUND NEW RELEASES TRACKS

The Waterboy

This surprise US box office hit comedy features Adam Sandler playing Bobby Boucher, a lowly water boy for his local university football team. Although he's a bit 'slow', BB thinks that the dispensing of the halftime water is the greatest thing he's ever done. However, a series of blunders costs him his job and so the scene is set for BB to take his local town by storm.

Not content with being a Hollywood star, Sandler is also a recording artist in his own right and has sold well over 31.5 million albums. He also understands how important a soundtrack is to a film and *The Waterboy* soundtrack is no different, featuring a remarkable mix of rock classics by ELO, John Mellencamp, Lenny Kravitz, Rush and the Doors with more contemporary artists such as Goldfinger, Candlebox and The Candyskins. The CD is out now.

Blast From The Past

Eclectic or eccentric would be the nice way to describe this one; uninspired would be the less kind way. Mixing REM, Randy Newman, Perry Como and US 'Alternative' bands (with such 'hilarious' names as Squirrel Nut Zippers, Cherry Poppin' Daddies and Dishwalla). Somehow, it ultimately blends together surprisingly well (in a cheesy, happy kinda way) but nonetheless it's definitely not the kind of thing you're likely to want to buy.

At First Sight

Composer Mark Isham is best known for writing jazzy scores and for his proficiency on the jazz trumpet, and consequently it's hardly surprising that he stirs a lot of jazzy piano-tinkling into the unashamedly soppy score for this Val Kilmer/Mira Sorvino starrer.

Drifting between gentle musing and haunting restraint, it's designed to accompany a candlelit dinner, rather than a lengthy Quake session, and mixes seven original songs with some classic Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong. Pleasant enough if you like that kind of thing...

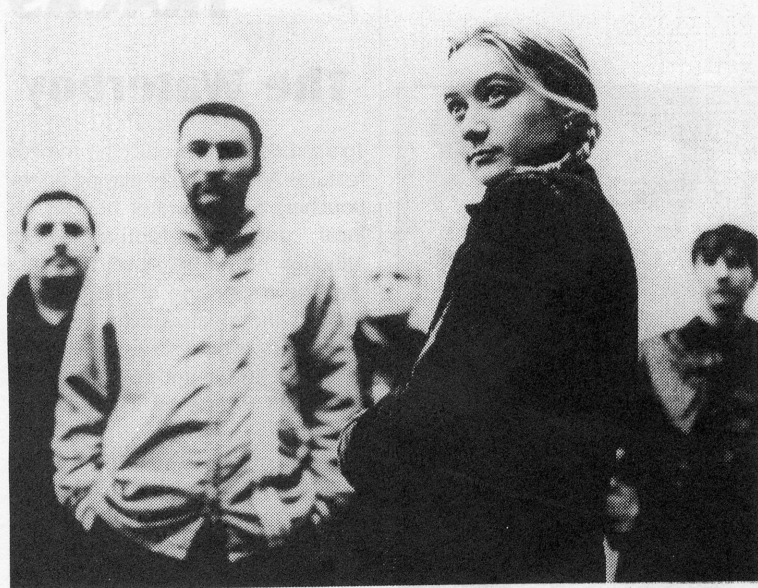
Gurm & Janine



Albums

PROLAPSE

Ghosts of Dead Aeroplanes ★★



Prolapse spot another Jumbo going down

It's funny how you pick up an album of an unknown (or let's just say relatively low-key) band and expect to be talking about how their debut album is going to affect the music world only to find out that it's actually their fourth album. Well that's the case with the six-strong Scottish Prolapse and I have no idea what their earlier works sound like,

although I have reason to believe that their style is Stereolab-ish and The Fall.

The opening track of *Ghosts Of Dead Aeoplanes* wasn't as loud as I was expecting but a very slow, mellow, almost instrumental tune. The vocals are strongly accented but that's not the reason why they do not complement this track at all. Just music would have been

much better. Talking of accents, co-vocalist Linda Steelyard has a thing about them; so she likes Oasis from Manchester but hates Blur.

Anyway, their recently released single *Fob.Com* is a very catchy number. The other vocalist Mick Derrick sounds a bit like Ewan McGregor on *Choose Life*. Indeed the lyrics are sung in that fashion. Linda's sharper vocals adds a little freshness to a melody that, perhaps, has already been heard.

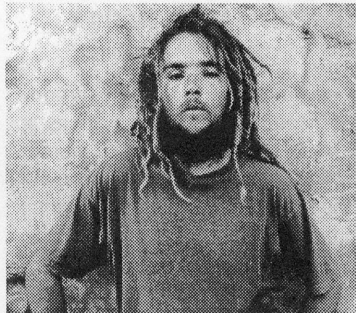
There's very little potential for future singles on this album with most of the tracks being un-moving, monotone driven. But they have to release something so I guess they could possibly get away with *One Illness*, which at least has a little life. They are strongly advised to quickly retire to performing live where they can take the emphasis off their music and onto their manic stage acts of the vocalists. Prolapse are reputed to perform astoundingly on stage.

Musically, this album is difficult to categorise. Let's just settle with soft-rock plus indie-pop. This isn't a combination that works for me and apart from *Fab.Com* (which is a fantastic tune) there is nothing else on this album to make you rush to the record stores. **M**

Asad

MISHKA

Mishka ★★★★★½



He's got the obligatory dreads and beard but not because they might be cool, just because. He lived on a boat, sailing round the Caribbean from the age of three. He competed for Bermuda in the world windsurfing championships twice. He lives on the island of Nevis, where Alan McGee 'discovered' him. He's not your usual recording artist. So sure, he's going to get all the attention because he's on the same label as Oasis and he's a white man singing what sounds like reggae. But don't judge Mishka until you've heard what he has to play.

When you do hear it be prepared to enjoy it and to be surprised. This album is such a change from what's in the charts at the moment that everyone should listen to it at least once, but once may not be enough. You'll either love it or force yourself to listen a second, then a third time until you do. It's the kind of music that grows and grows as you absorb it more until you find yourself feeling incredibly at ease. Forget all your Fatboy Slims and your Steps, this is the quiescent sound of the summer. It's so laid-back and relaxed that nothing will phase you when you're listening to it. Perhaps it has something to do with the husky, slightly melancholic voice like on the current single *Give You All The Love*, or maybe it's the stripped down guitar and harmonica on *One True*, or it could even be that reggae organ on *Lonely*. Whatever it is, Mishka is a supremely chilled album containing tracks that Marley would be proud of.

On the first listen when you're not 'with the vibe' (man), the tracks do seem to have the annoying habit of sounding the same. On further listening though, it's the clever nuances between tracks that make them stand out, like the church bells, the subtle use of synth and harmonica. Okay, the songs are mostly all on the same subject of love and either how great it is or how crap it is, but the way it's sung, you don't care. Mishka has all his shit together, and his debut album might help you get yours together, too. **M**

Christian

LAMB

Fear of Fours ★★★★★



Fear of Fours? They're safe watching England then.

Why is the internet so crap? I went for a bit of a surf on the subject of Lamb and ended up with reams and reams of rubbish about how wonderful Polydor is and did I want to buy albums by Hovercraft, Lambkin and Bush? I really don't understand it.

As it turns out, Lamb are a Mancunian pair in the form of Andy Barlow and Louise Rhodes who specialise in the mellow grooves of the slowed up drum'n'bass favoured by such bands as the Sneaker Pimps. Their first, self-titled album was met with much admiration by those in the know and subsequently their debut single *Cotton Wool* was remixed more than once. But what of *Fear Of Fours*? What indeed.

The opener is a track called *Soft Mistake* that is anything but. It's a laid-back instrumental that sets the scene for the mood of the whole album. That mood is generally a relaxed one although there are some classic jungle stylee booty shakin' frantic beats. That's okay, we can let them slide because we've got such crackers as *Bonfire*, *Five* and the current

single *B-line*. The flavour of the album has a distinct Eno sound about it: in *Fear Of Fours* there's a very prominent bass sound that is characteristic of Eno, as is the whole theme of chilling out. If you've never listened to *Apollo* by Brian Eno I suggest you do.

The only niggle I've got is that although the tracks on *Fear Of Fours* are undoubtedly an excellent selection, all of them stick to approximately the same formula. The intro is a swirly mix of strings, angelic vocals and soft beats followed closely by rolling breaks, low-down tummy rumbling bass and acid jazz vocals. I know that almost every band adheres to some kind of formula, whether they are conscious of it or not, but I noticed it in particular here. It also came as no surprise that track four is non-existent (*Fear Of Fours*?).

I surprised myself by actually admitting that it was good, rather than just okay. The use of samples is about right, the vocals are spot on and the production is excellent. It's still not my cup of tea, though it would be an asset to any music collection. **M**

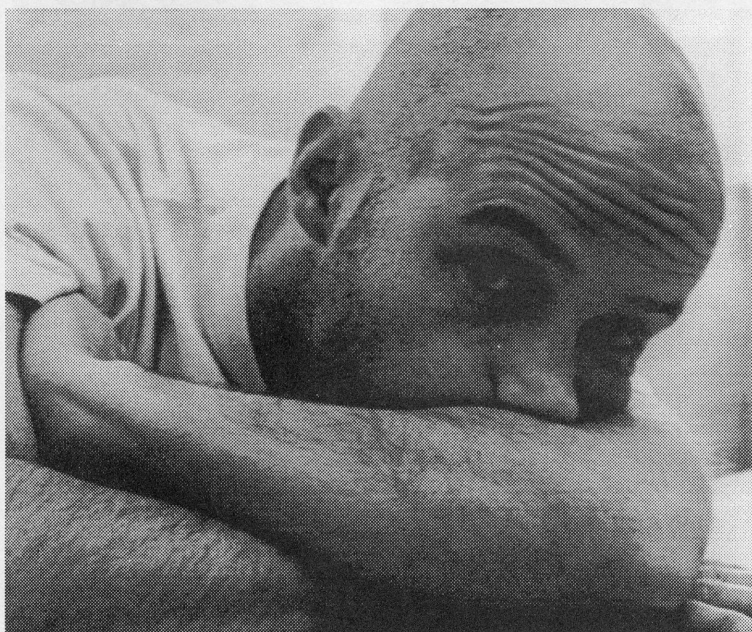
Christian



Albums

MOBY

Play ★★★



Moby - thrilled to bits.

Richard Melville Hall is the great-great-grand nephew of Herman Melville, thus the moniker Moby and the imperative need, for the sake of originality, to avoid the use of any maritime similes or metaphors to describe this whale of an album.....arrh, bugger!

A whale of an album it is though; a plethora of styles spreading across 18

tracks of epic vision and substance. Previous misdemeanours with techno and trashy rock have been honed and further infused with blues, folk, bluegrass, gospel and the kitchen-sink to create an electronic cornucopia.

There's the gospel tinged *Why Does My Heart Feel So Bad?*, whilst *Find My Baby* is The Rolling Stones with drum loops. *Honey* is a sassy piano-driven tune

with hip-hop beats and slide-guitar and the closing song *My weakness* sounds like an aural Ascension.

It's an album of blissed-out, mellow, ambient tracks interspersed by glorious dance tracks; and that's dance in the sense that you can dance to the music, there being lateral rhythms to which you can glide; not dance in the sense that to dance to the music one must assume the actions of a chicken-necked android, whilst vainly trying to pick out a melody that has all but been bludgeoned to a messy pulp by a deranged drum-machine.

That's not to say the album is particularly forward looking. Many tracks echo the sound of Robert Miles (this is very bad), others could have been lifted wholesale off the Tim Booth and Angelo Badalamenti collaboration *Booth and the Bad Angel* (this is very good) and many tunes could be passed off as surfacing during the second summer of love in 1988 (which isn't such a bad thing either). Now if that was the long and short of it we'd be looking at maybe four stars but at various junctures it all gets a bit ugly, that confounded-bastard-son-of-House Techno shows its pitiful mug and objectivity is debunk, rationality is cast to the wind; so in the interest of not exhausting my well of spiteful polemics we'll leave it at that. **M**

Chris

THE ROOTS

Things Fall Apart ★★★

Make no mistake, this is hip-hop. These are musicians. These aren't some bunch of guys who got lucky and busted there way into the studio, made a funky video and got to number one. This is all about stories and beats and rhyme. This album has all in abundance and more. Put simply this is simply the best hip-hop album I have heard all year.

Standout tracks. Well, it's very hard. The problem with a band like the Roots is that they are in real danger of burning themselves out - with each track you wonder if it can possibly get any better. At a push, I would pick *You Got Me* (featuring Erykah Badu) with its wicked jungle dying moments, *Act Too* (*The Love of My Life*) which is just too smooth and *Dynamite!* - that last one just swings.

The production is a breath of fresh air in the increasingly electronic sounding industry. This sounds fresh and real - The Roots have managed to translate their live sound into a recording.

The only gripe with this album is that its purchase will inevitably make the rest of your collection sound poor in comparison. This is a great yardstick for aspiring rappers and all to aim for - The Roots have set the pace for 1999 - can anyone match them? **M**

Joel

Singles

Charlotte - *Skin*

This song brings back memories of those half-pop, half-dance numbers with a yelping female singer on it that were all the rage when I was about fifteen. So, it's alright, but a bit behind the times.

Snow Pony - *Easy Way Down*

Some really relaxed indie rock that mellows you out and seems to include bits from just about every Stone Roses song I know. And somewhat strangely, the singer is a woman. Even weirder, it works.

3 Colours Red - *This Is My Time*

There was a bit of a stir going on when *Beautiful Day* was released at the beginning of the year. It certainly appeared that 3 Colours Red were going to have a successful year. However, the subsequent release of their more traditional rock-metal efforts was met with general apathy. So, it's back to the 'slowies' in the search for that elusive top ten hit.

Jamella - *So High*

A bit like Shola Ama but with nowhere near the vocal talents and with some Missy Elliot-style ad libs thrown in. So just your basic R 'n' B track really.

THE ESSENTIAL CHOON

Supergrass - *Pumping On Your Stereo*

Judging by the critical acclaim but poor sales for their last album, it's hard to gauge the ensuing reaction to this single. It's described by the band as being in the vein of *Rebel Rebel* -era Bowie, but that's only half the story. Like so many Supergrass songs, this track is alive with energy and extremely enjoyable to listen to.

Blondie - *Nothing Is Real But The Girl*

Their comeback single *Maria* proved that Deborah Harry could still sing and the band could still play, but the general disregard for the accompanying album showed that the public thought it just a one-off. And they were right too, for this song is weak and dull and the vocals are strangled and flat.

Stereophonics - *Pick A Part That's New*

The obvious joke is to say that it's hard to pick a part that's new from this song. That's the problem with the Stereophonics, their songs are all very similar. We're becoming familiar with the now clichéd Kelly Jones vocal, that stretches out the last word in each line.

Laptop - *Nothing To Declare*

For a band with a rather modern name (unless referring to some seedy strip joint) these guys are firmly stuck fifteen years in the past. This song perfectly mimics Talking Heads, even down to cunning lyrical twists such as the line 'I've got nothing to declare, except my loneliness.' Retro but great. **M**

Ed J.



CLUBSCENE

Shifting Gears @ Mass

St. Matthew's Church, Brixton. £10/£12, 10pm - 6am, monthly Fridays. Capacity = 1,000. Dress code = none.

You'd expect this night to be a bit of a corker seeing as how one of the members of the seminal band Leftfield has a hand in it. However, seminal is not how I'd describe this night. If you've been a regular reader of Clubscene then you will know what a great venue Mass is, and how nights such as Nymph use it to its full potential. The Shifting Gears people have something to learn from them, I feel.

Half empty venues, monotonous, non-descript house, and seemingly pissed off punters does not really make for the ideal night on the tiles. Also, the backroom was devoted to some sort of perverted cross between dance music and the early 80s music. This is a worrying trend, which must be stopped dead in its tracks. Disco house may be a welcome addition to the increasingly wide genre of dance music, but any association with that most unfashionable of decades can only be harmful to a scene, which is, after all partly driven by fashion.

But I'm not going to be totally harsh on the Shifting Gears people. There was potential there, and their subsequent move to the glorious Scala club, may help them to really take off. I just hope they bin the 80s fixation on the way.

First gear all the way

Want to be a Model?

Status @ The Double Bass Nightclub, 162 Earls Court Rd, beginning on Saturday the 29th of May, and thereafter the last Saturday of the month.

So you want to be a model? Well you might get your big break at the opening event of the underground house/garage night Status @ The Double Bass Nightclub on Saturday the 29th of May. Roof Top Promotions (run by ex-Clubscene reviewer Jo Public) will be teaming up with the established publishing and promotions company Players In Music & Fashion Promotions, to find the new faces of 1999 (both male & female). So if you think you are all that, get yourselves down to the luxuriously plush surroundings of the Double Bass Nightclub, 162 Earls Court Rd, SW5. You never know, it could make you famous. But I doubt it very much.

Regardless of that small problem you will, of course, be treated to the very best in garage grooves, expertly spun by some of the best DJs London has to offer. Two of the residents just happen to be Clubscene's very own Jo Public and DJ Rowst, and on the launch night they'll be joined by DJ Para (the ladies choice, apparently) of the highly respected garage label DEA Project. The rest of the DJs will be the cream (oo-er) of London's premier underground garage station UPFRONT 99.3fm, including the prolific producer DJ South Central (Large Joints, Groove Merchants, D-Base, Deadly Dubs, Big Buds), MC Spidey G (G-Men Records), and DJs Rox & Skattle. And, as if all this wasn't enough they are even offering pub price drinks all night (how generous!). What more could you want? So all in all this is going to be a night not to be missed.

If you require further information or guest list places, call Roof Top Promotions on 07887 90683. As a special offer to all Imperial Students, if you call the Info number and mention Clubscene you'll be added to the concessions guest list.

Carwash's 10th Birthday @ London Astoria

10pm - 4 am, £15, Saturday 1st May, capacity = 2,000. Dress code = very very glam.

You'll have seen our review of this extra-glam disco/funk night a few months ago. And you know what we thought of it here at Clubscene. Absolutely fantastic - the only place to be seen strutting your stuff whilst donning your (or your parents) finest 70s attire. So it'll come as no surprise that when we were asked along to their 10th b'day party we had another stunning night.

It had all the best aspects of any Carwash Saturday night, but it was, of course, very much bigger, and personally, that little bit better. But, of course, you'd expect that on anyone's b'day, now wouldn't you? It appears that size does matter after all.

The London Astoria is an old converted theatre, and this is still reflected in the layout of the club. It is very much like The Fridge in Brixton, with a huge balcony-style upstairs area looking down on the huge dancefloor, and the gigantic stage. Plenty of room to pose above the rest of the crowd - as everyone likes to do on these type of occasions. And, after all that's what Carwash is all about. Being as extrovert (in a 70s kind of way, of course) as you want to be and just letting it all hang loose for the night.

A great night for all you Saturday Night Fever freaks out there, which continues every Saturday at its usual London Astoria 2 venue. Go along and make Tony Moreno (aka John Travolta) proud with your funky moves.

Good Clean Fun

Big Beat Boutique @

The Scala

275 Pentonville Road. Monthly Fridays, £12/£14, 10pm - 5 am, capacity = 1,000. Dress code = none.

Frankly I'd rather beat my own meat than ever go back to this night again. Just don't even bother going to listen to such a bastardised version of what is good about house music. One to avoid. Shame though 'cos the Scala is a great new venue. Watch out for reviews from some other potentially good nights there.

Just Dull

All reviews by Roobarb



Albums

Galaxy Weekend 'Various' (MOS)

Another top compilation from the people at Ministry of Sound. Galaxy Weekend is a double CD album that features the high quality music which has made the Galaxy radio network one of the premier networks in England. The first CD is mixed by Boy George and is not very good - no surprise there then. The second CD, mixed by Allister Whitehead, is much better featuring artists such as Underworld, Mr Oizo, Phats & Small and James Brown. This album is more funky than the trance one and there's more variation to it as it covers a huge amount of dance music, from the classic tunes to the underground dancefloor anthems by some of the finest names in dance music. If you like the music they play on

Galaxy then this album is for you. Very good compilation album.

Out now.
★★★★★

Reactivate 14 'Various' (MOS)

React's massive series continues with the fourteenth album in this already massive collection. Reactivate 14 gives Trance Nation some top competition and it's hard to choose between the two. This album is a dou-

Album of the Week Trance Nation volume 1 Mixed by system F (MOS)

Not content with producing so many top compilations, Ministry of Sound have come up trumps with a new series - Trance Nation - which features 2 CDs with nearly forty tracks of the very best trance music around. Some of the tracks featured include Robert Miles' 'Children', and the hits for the summer such as 'Happiness Happening' by Lost Witness and ATB's massive '9am'. Both CDs are mixed by trance guru System F. As you'd expect from Ministry the quality is high. A compilation that you simply have to buy.

Out now.
★★★★★

ble CD mixed by Cream's monthly resident and general trance music legend John '00' Flemming and features

the biggest European Trance, techno and hard house tracks including the latest material from Push, Transa, Vincent de Moor and Digital Blondes. This album also features essential, rare and exclusive tracks - many of which have not been released. Begs the question 'why the fuck not?'

Out 31st May.

★★★★★

Live at the Heavenly Jukebox Volume 3 'Various' (React)

Mixed by Andy Weatherall and Richard Fearless, this is a high quality compilation album featuring the music you can hear at one of London's premier nights. Once again it is a double CD with a huge range of tracks mixed by the above DJs. Lasting well over two hours it fuses fast beats, phat bass lines and uses the full spectrum of dance music.

Out 31st May.

★★★★★

Singles

Olmec Heads 'Spiritualised' (Neo)

When Paul Oakenfold, Pete Tong and Paul Van Dyk are playing a tune, you instantly know it is the dog's bollocks - and that's what this tune is. This single is a massive progressive tune opening with some amazing 303 sounds followed by a catchy piano beat and culminating in a massive first break down before launching into one of the epic tunes of the year. There are a couple of mixes, one providing the uplifting eversion whilst the second gives a very deep and dark variation. 'Spiritualised' will be one of the hits of the summer and it's not hard to see why.

Out 1st June.
★★★★★

Nightmares on Wax 'Finer' (Warp)

Taken from the highly acclaimed 'Carboot Soul' album and featuring mixes from Paul Nice and Alex Gopher this is an excellent double 12" package. The track itself is a very uplifting, soulful ballad featuring the delicious vocals of diva Sara Winton. But the strength of the single lies in its remixes

with hip hop and French house influences. Also featured is the much sought after DJ spinna mix of Les Nuits.

Out 14th June.
★★★★★

Vengaboys 'Boom Boom Boom Boom' (Positiva)

With a chorus that goes 'Boom Boom Boom Boom - I want you in my room....' the Vengaboys have pulled out all the stops on this cheesy summer anthem. The tragic thing is that the bastards actually sell loads of this cheesy party drivel, and it's so catchy that you will end up dancing to this on the dancefloors across Europe this summer. To be honest, the single is actually quite good and would be better with no vocals!

Out 14th June.
★★★★★

Elementz of Noize 'Big Foot' (Emotif)

More high quality D&B this time on the Emotif label. This is actually a double A side single with the second track 'The Arrival' being just as good, if not better than 'Big Foot'.

Out 31st May.
★★★

Future Engineers 'Timeshift' (Good Looking)

Very progressive D&B track and a regular in LTJ Bukem's sets. A very dark track, it starts off slowly and eerily before kicking in with deep beats and a haunting melody.

The filtered pads form the backbone for the spritely breaks, swirling sci-fi effects combined with the melodies give a real dancefloor anthem. Watch out for the flip side which features a deeper ride through D&B music.

★★★

Astrotrax 'You Are My Everything' (White Label)

Shola Phillips provides the vocals on this very tasty slice of MAW inspired garage track. The 12" comes with a quartet of remixes giving the track a soulful, uplifting garage, house versions. The vocals are sweet and innocent whilst the beats and bass lines allow the single to flow into a dancefloor anthem. Not your usual commercial rubbish but more of your high quality garage.

★★★★

De-ryus 'Grass Ain't Greener' (Boiler House)

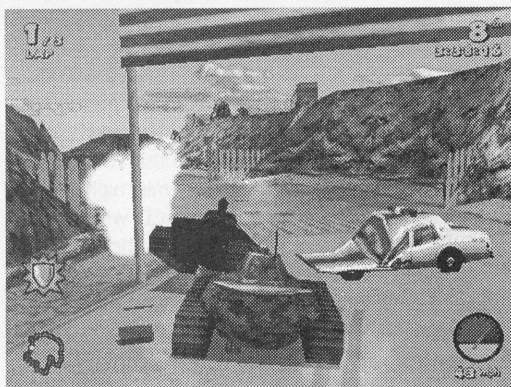
Debut single from De-ryus featuring a couple of top mixes from MJ Cole and CJ Macintosh. It's a smooth garage track with a hint of soul to it. The Cole mix brings out the best of the silky vocals whilst the CJ Mac. mix uses a smooth filtering melody with strong drums and a deep sound. The B side offers 'Times Together' with its great guitar lick and laid back groove.

Out 7th June.
★★★★★



Tank Racer (PC)

Grolier Interactive ★★★★★



I once drove a tank. No wait, it's true - a day out from school took us to some god-forsaken wilderness where we were let loose with various forms of lethal hardware,

one of which was this bloody great tank. I didn't drive it for long though - for some reason they seemed to feel that letting someone

with my psychological problems loose with 10 tons of armour and enough firepower to level a small Wiltshire village wasn't too hot an idea. Anyway, as a result of this considerable experience in the field, I can exclusively reveal to you here in Felix that tanks are not designed to be raced. They lack acceleration and cornering ability. The Italian Job would have been a very different film had the makers used tanks rather than minis. Remember - you read it here first.

Now, given its name, there may be some of you who have jumped to the conclusion that Tank Racer is a game which involves racing tanks. And you'd be absolutely right. Think MarioKart64 with tanks and without the irritating Nintendo-stylee cuddly animals, and you have a pretty good idea of what lies within this game. You have a variety of

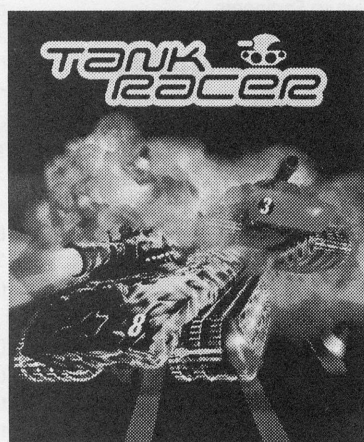
tanks (which could never be confused with real tanks, oh no) to drive each with slightly different characteristics, you have a variety of courses (some of which could be confused with a small Wiltshire village) over which to discover what those differences are, you have things to run over (cows, signs, dustbins and so on) and you have a variety of power-ups with which to shoot your fellow Tank Racees. And that's about it.

Except that it's fun. Lots of fun.

Even the singleplayer game (usually the big let down in games of this sort) is fun. Tank Racer doesn't pretend to be pushing back the boundaries of PC gaming in any way, just does exactly

what it says on the tin. And in the process has become the best arcade racing game on the PC since MicroMachines.

Danny



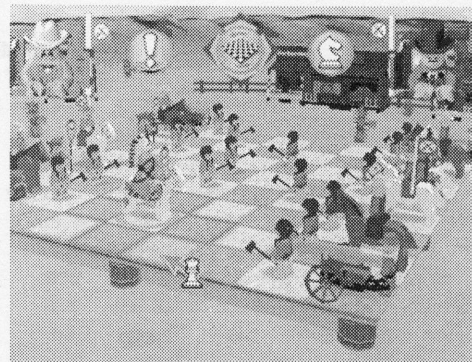
Lego Chess (PC)

Lego Multimedia ★★★

Lego is getting everywhere. Back in the old old days of hand me down lego it came in blocks or red, white, blue and if you were really lucky yellow. Then came along space lego - with fancy rocket shaped bits, and technical lego - with the big car and motorcycle kits. If that was not enough Lego suddenly themed everything - medieval lego, pirate lego, cowboy lego, there is even now a Star Wars Phantom menace lego set of kits (early large birthday present hint). Lego are taking over the brick world.

Not happy with just occupying the physical world Lego Multimedia are trying to take over the virtual gaming world. This time the bricks are muscling in on the ancient game of chess, and attempting to make it fun for more than the swot at the back of the class.

Please don't make me have to explain chess. You might not have played it for a while but surely you remember the eight by eight grid and the little pieces you still might call prawns and horses and castles. Though continuing to call them prawns will usually earn you a smack on the back of the head from your opponent any time after the fourth move. Try it if you dont believe me.



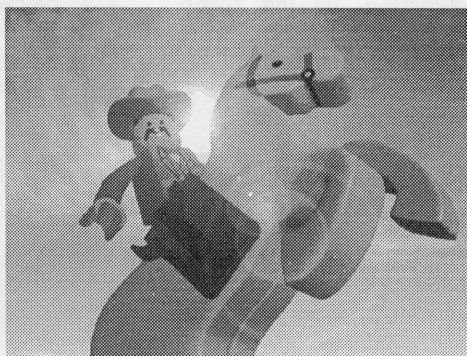
Ok so this is chess in lego form. In order to get the kids interested and tie in the lego aspect the pieces can either come from the cowboy or pirate range of lego. So in the cowboy game the pawns are Indian braves, the rooks artillary men.

These all march, gallop and run across the 3D board as the laws of lego allow (there is a 2D normal view

game for the purists, but if you are one of those purists then this game is not really for you). Each time you take a piece there is also a cute and bloodless cut scene - well it is lego. Some of them even had this old hack smiling - well some of them were straight out of the old Road Runner scripts.

Well ok perhaps you have guessed its not really been designed for the University student in mind - more the 6 year old set, so the level of the game is hard rather than Deep blue level. But this aside it is just so very cute you can't completely ignore it. The sort of game your gran and grandad could play, not like that nasty vicious kingpin game...ooooohhh all that swearing.

Gary S.



Competition Corner

Age of Empires and Expansion Pack answer and winner

Oh please boys and girls, what do they teach you guys in school ?

The answer to the question : **What clothing innovation are the celts usually associated with** are **the trousers**.

(The kilt is just a little bit too much like a skirt to be an innovation really.)

So the winner is **Suwa Du Fung**

He can pick up the prize from the office any lunch time this week.

Gex 3 - Deep cover Gecko (PSX)

Eidos

★★★★

Get reacquainted with an all-new GEX. And his Miss Adventures.



One line Summary :

Wise cracking gecko, rescues the girl, gets the baddie, saves the entire planet by tail spinning and bouncing through this 3-D action adventure.

What's It all about :

Gex gets a urgent message. Rez is back and this time has gone and made it personal by kidnapping Agent Xtra (Marliece Andrada - large breasted actress of Baywatch fame). Its once again time for Gex to enter the various themed worlds to collect mission remote controls in order to unlock her TV prison. Yep its the Playstation's favourite Mario clone back again.

Good Graphics :

Gex once again spoils us with cartoony fast flowing detailed animation, colourful and detailed backgrounds. Mario is really starting to look dated and slow in comparison.

Seraphim Sounds :

Standard themed tunes for the different areas, Chrismassy tunes for the Santa World, Creepy Scooby music for the mystery world even a Egyptian themed tune. No big names for the music....but Danny John-Jules (Cat from Red Dwarf) is the voice of the shifty little lizard, and amazingly enough Marliece Andrada gets to read her own lines.

Great Gameplay :

Gex the Gecko was annoying difficult to control and although having had a bit of

a thought about it they have sorted out a few things but missed others. The analogue control gives a bit more of a chance of making the long jumps, but the damn camera angles can lead to throwing things at the TV in anger after missing the jump for the tenth time - make sure you have a large supply of pillows and cushions. The missions go from the trivial to PhD problem complex and passing through the level expected of a solo reviewer quite soon - oh yeah kill the Santa by flying kicking the Xmas presents obvious really - not.

Sex and Violence :

Lizard human hybrids are definately not on the cards and the poster left is the nearest we get to see any flesh. Violence is as violence does - its all cartoony tail swishing.

Best bit :

The snowboarding and other stages like it. Gex playing snow dude while smacking evil elves with a spinning snowboard - madness and much mirth.

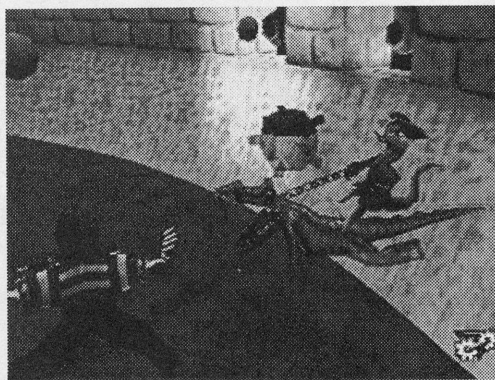
Worst Bit :

The whole repetitive nature of the game, each world has four missions each starting from the same entry point, with the same enemies with the same

moves. Oh and Danny John-Jules saying the same thing fifteen things does not make the phrase any funnier. This is not Vic and Bob's big night out any more.

So who will get it : Gex the Gecko players, Playstation mario converts. It's a good 3D cartoony platform let down by a few niggly camera angle problems and repetitive gameplay spots, repetitive gameplay spots....

Gary S.



Akuji the Heartless (PSX)

Eidos

★★★★

One line Summary :

Voodoo bloke, no heart, seeks evil brother to perform nasty revenge on - please send photo.

What's It all about :

On the eve of a marriage to the local rival clan leader's daughter Akuji gets the worse of a sibling rivalry that started when Akuji tricked his brother into eating dog shit or something equally bad. Orad gets his mates to rip out Akuji's heart condemning him to hell and is about to sacrifice Akuji's bride-to-be for desert. Akuji strikes a deal which would allow him to exit the underworld and sort out Orad good and proper - unfortunately this deal is a bit on the harsh side - well who said getting out of hell was easy.

Good Graphics :

Makes Lara look dowdy and tatty. Akuji walks, jumps, slashes his way through his high detailed hell. The lighting effects alone are impressive and the monsters look very polygon like, they move fairly quickly though.

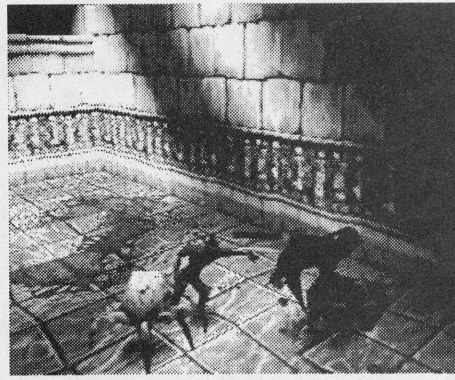
Seraphim Sounds :

Voodoo styled music, the odd whoosh of magic, buzzing of monsters in the area. Nothing too impressive and definately nothing out of the ordinary.



Great Gameplay :

Lara had her two pistols up front and personal to take out the bad guys. Akuji instead prefers to go for it claw against claw, and has a rather sharp shaving blade strapped on the end of his mittens. Now while this seems a good idea for



taking on the local cats and dogs the average hell hound comes with sharper teeth. The solution - voodoo magic. There is more magic down in the hell world than a million Paul Daniels and David Copperfields and most of it pretty effective at stopping monsters chomping on your cheeks. The control method is good - with a neat sniper mode for those long range precision spells. Fourteen levels will also keep the interest up. If you are expecting lots of puzzles this isn't really it, more a Tomb Raider 2 than 1.

Sex and Violence :

Well violence anyway, with Freddy Kruger gloves, the ability to morph into a panther and a wide range of fire, blast and blood draining spells there is plenty of violence.

Best bit :

Morphing into a panther is pretty cool, so are some of the nastier spells - the possession spell allows Akuji to take over the enemies body and rattle

them till they explode. Scanners eat your heart out - or on second thoughts.

Worst Bit :

Nothing really stands out. The monsters can look a little bit mechanical especially when compared against Akuji's detail and the backgrounds.

So Who will get it : 3D Third person action adventurers who believe that Gex and Mario are for the kids - Ok the Lara Croft crowd. Anyone who wants a decent adult themed 3D platformer.

But is it better than Gex 3 :

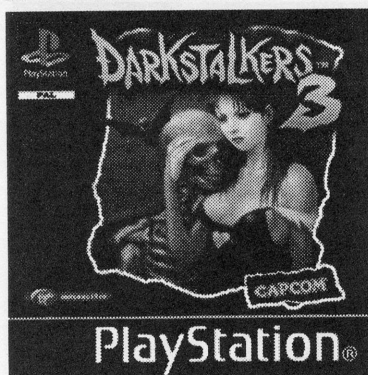
It hasn't got the little irritating problems that just knock the edge off Gex so yes.



Darkstalkers 3 (PSX)

Virgin Interactive

★★



Summary :

Creatures of the night, fight !

What's it all about :

Beat-em-up arcade game conversion from the Capcom neo-geo style flat 2D family. Naughty old Jedah, a big cheese in the Dark World - a small village just outside Chelmsford, has found himself resurrected and with nothing to do on a saturday night. Fancying himself as a bit of a fighter he's summoned all of the owners of 'valuable souls' where they will unite under one rule - either that or following one too many drinks a simple argument over who was the hardest out of Rod, Jane and Freddy from Rainbow has been blown out of all proportion.

Good Graphics :

Arcade quality cartoon graphics - though I'm saying Neo geo southside arcade quality not Namco World. Sure they move like they are meant to but there is very little here that is new or special.

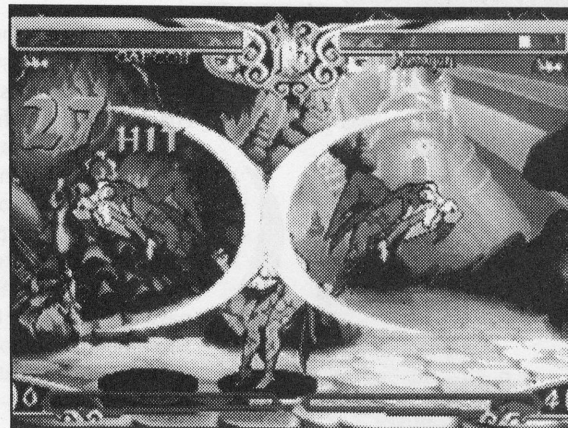
Seraphim Sounds :

Like a Neo-geo unit. Come back in five years and it might be retro but it just sounds very dated.

Great Gameplay :

Better than the average 2D beat-em-up. There is the usual combination attacks, auto defence for beginners, even secret moves you can find out how to do on web sites throughout the world.

But this is the whole problem. The 2D beat-em-up is stuck in a bit of a rut. We've had cartoons, motion capture and even model animation beat-em-ups but there is very little new here. The analogue controller might rumble and the one player game contains the feature where the character gains experience and new moves after every battle, but it belongs in the same bin pac-man



and space invaders - till someone sorts out a better way of controlling the player other than pressing keys this type of game is not going to make a big come back. The future might just be VR controllers - eventually.

Sex and Violence :

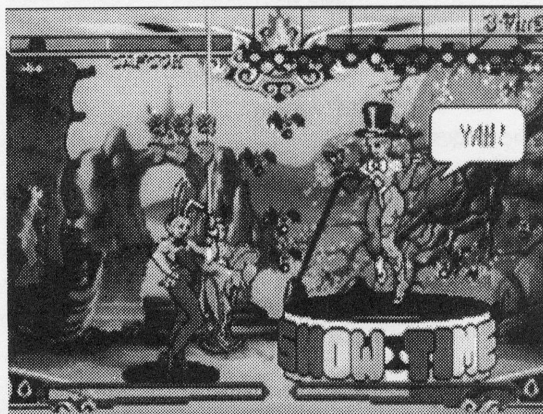
As most of the characters are either dead

or undead we will pass straight over the necrophilia jokes on stiff. The violence aspect - well it is a fighting game after all. Violence and fighting, hmm there could actually be a link here. Though in true Capcom style the only thing on the floor will be tears when you get beat ten times in a row. Blood is definately not an option.

Who Will buy it :

Darkstalkers 2 players, fans of manga cartoons wanting a beat-em-up. Buffy the Vampire slayer watchers buying purely based on the large breasted woman on the front cover holding the skull is really dark.

Gary S.



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KENDO

New comer Imperial takes gold

For those of you who are unfamiliar with Kendo (and that, I should think, would be most of you), it is a Japanese martial art type sport fought between two people using bamboo swords. It has gained popularity in Europe over the past few years and the ICU Kendo club was founded this March, thanks to much running around by Koichiro Yoshida and his dedicated committee. Around 40 members (which is amazing considering how new the club is!) are currently training every Wednesday and Friday from 8.30pm to 10.00pm at Southside Gym. So, what results can an only-just-founded club bring near the end of the academic year? On Saturday 1st May, the Annual University "Taikai" (Championships) were held at Cheltenham & Gloucester College and both individual and team competitions were fought throughout the day. This year, seven universities (IC, UCL, Oxford, Cambridge, Sheffield, Kent and Cheltenham & Gloucester) took part. While the other colleges arrived on their minibuses on big teams, it was Koichiro Yoshida from Imperial who, having got up at 5.00am and travelled for 3 hours from Victoria on coach, won the Championship title with an outstanding performance. He also contributed in

bringing the Silver medal to the Imperial-Cheltenham & Gloucester combined team.

It was such a shame we couldn't stay for the buffet afterwards since we had to catch the last coach back to London which surely would have been gone had we been another 30 seconds late. Hopefully, next year, we'll have one, if not more, teams of our own and make the buffet as well as winning the medals and trophies!

With one of, if not the best university kendo player in as founder and president of the club, the ICU Kendo Club is sure to flourish and continue to be successful in the years to come. If you are interested in joining us, contact [HYPERLINK mailto:koichiro.yoshida@ic.ac.uk](mailto:koichiro.yoshida@ic.ac.uk) koichiro.yoshida@ic.ac.uk or come along to one of our training sessions. We hope to see more of you next year!

A couple of weeks ago a report was submitted about a pool tournament between Southside and the Union. Surprisingly I do have standards for what gets into the Sports pages, and while they are quite low, this article didn't reach the minimum. Suffice to say that Southside won 9-6.

From the Sidelines

So Manchester United have won the Premiership and are one third of the way to fulfilling my prediction of their treble chances (Felix 1143). By the time you read this of course the outcome of the FA Cup final will be known (my prediction was Newcastle to win in extra time) and the build up will have begun to the European Cup Final on Wednesday evening in Barcelona (I have Man United winning that one). Before any of you think it, I am not a Man U fan (even though I was born in London, which seems to be where most of their fans come from), but I think we should take a moment to step back and look at how well Alex Ferguson has done with his teams. In the 7 year history of the Premiership, Man U have won the league 5 times out of 7. They have an unending supply of youthful, British, talent and one of the best managers in the game for the next 5 years. However much you love or hate the team, you have to respect the ability to keep churning out the quality players. Contrast this with the fortunes of one of the other two teams to win the Premiership, Blackburn Rovers, who will be ending 1st division football next season. But while all this football is going on, even though the season has ended,

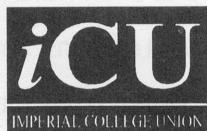
don't forget there is a World Cup on in this country at the moment. Yes that's right, it's my weekly plug for the cricket world cup. It so far is looking to be a good tournament with England winning their games against Sri Lanka and Kenya, and I was at the Oval on Saturday to watch them take on South Africa (hopefully they won).

The ticketing system under which I obtained those tickets, however, is rather odd, in that I had to submit my request for them over a year before the start of the tournament. Last year's football world cup in France was an event selling a much greater number of tickets to a much bigger world-wide audience, and the tickets for that didn't have to be ordered a year in advance. Also this is the last world cup in this country for a generation. You would have thought the England and Wales Cricket Board would be shouting about it from the rooftops, but I have yet to see a single TV advert (other than the ones for Sky). Still a much larger number of people seem to know about it than I expected, and the arguments over what should be on the tele in my hall look set to continue for the next couple of weeks at least.



Anyone purchasing a Summer Ball Ticket will now be entered into a weekly draw, where the following fabulous prizes could be yours:

- 14" Colour Television (Courtesy of ICU Catering)
- Two Person Tent (Courtesy of the YHA store)
- Dinner for Two at Luigi Malone's (Courtesy of Luigi Malone's)
- Your money back on the cost of Two Tickets
 - Free Suit Hire (Courtesy of Youngs Suit Hire)
 - Free Haircut (Courtesy of Anne Russell Hair)



The sooner you get your Ticket the **MORE YOU CAN WIN!**

Ticket deadline Monday 7th June

All students £55 (Subject to proof)



CRICKET - 1st XI

The Story So Far...

by Gus Paul

On a pitch far, far away (well, just next to Heathrow in fact), 3 weeks ago, the IC cricket team began the second consecutive defence of the ULU Cricket Cup. And what a good start they made. Three wins out of three in the preliminary group stages, sees IC cruising into the quarter finals for a home tie against either Royal Holloway or LSE.

Imperial's defence of the title they have won the past two years began with a game against St. Georges. All the ULU matches are 40 over limited over affairs, but all of IC's matches so far have been affected by rain. IC batted first against St George's and made an impressive 230 for 5 off 35 overs, Jawwad Rasheed (Mech Eng I) hitting 118 not out. There was more rain and St Georges couldn't cope with their new target, finishing on 109 for 9, ULU captain Simon Holliday scoring a half century and Kav Patel taking 3 for 33.

IC capitalised on this opening victory the next week, by thrashing GKT 2nds. IC made a massive 252 for 3, again off 35

overs. Jawwad, who has obviously been watching Brian Lara's recent form, hit the GKT attack to all parts in scoring 168 – at one point scoring 106 out of a partnership of 108 with Alex Wright. A shell-shocked GKT couldn't even come close to IC's total, being skittled out for just 76, Kav taking 3 for 29.

The third game was a much closer matchup against St. Bart's. The winners would guarantee a home tie in the Quarter Finals, and both teams were confident of victory. A beautiful afternoon at Harlington saw IC win the toss and score 191/9 off their 40 overs, against a Bart's team containing only 10 fielders (they had forgotten to bring an umpire with them so were forced to use a fielder as square leg umpire). Jawwad couldn't continue his form, but he still joint top scored with 32, sharing a 62 run partnership with Murali (also 32). Last wicket pair Nigel Terry and Mark Dawkins scored

15 runs off the final over, which was to prove crucial later on. After the tea interval the players returned to a backdrop of black clouds and lightning bolts, and the umpire was unwilling to begin in the potential hazardous conditions. After an hours break, the players returned to a soggy field, Bart's requiring 72 off 15 overs. They complained about IC bowlers bowling more than 8 overs each, but were rebuffed when the rules were produced. They proceeded to spend their innings whining on the boundary, while a very tense match was unfolding in the dim light out in the middle. The medics lost their first 4 wickets cheaply and were never able to get back ahead of the run rate, although 16 extras conceded by IC allowed them to reach 69 for 5 off their 15 overs, meaning IC won by just 2 runs. Kav bowled unchanged from the motorway end and captured 2 for 30, taking his season's wicket tally to 8.

So IC proceed to the Quarter Finals, and hope to go one better than the last winning IC team from 1971/72, who could not manage to capture the cup three years on the trot. It looks to be an exciting summer ahead.

SCOREBOARD

CRICKET

1st XI

IC 230/5 (Rasheed 119*) v St. Georges
109/9 (K Patel 3-29)
IC won by 121 runs

IC 252/3 (Rasheed 168) v GKT 76 (Patel 3-33)
IC won by 176 runs

IC 191/9 v St. Bart's 69/5 (chasing 72 off 15)
IC won by 2 runs

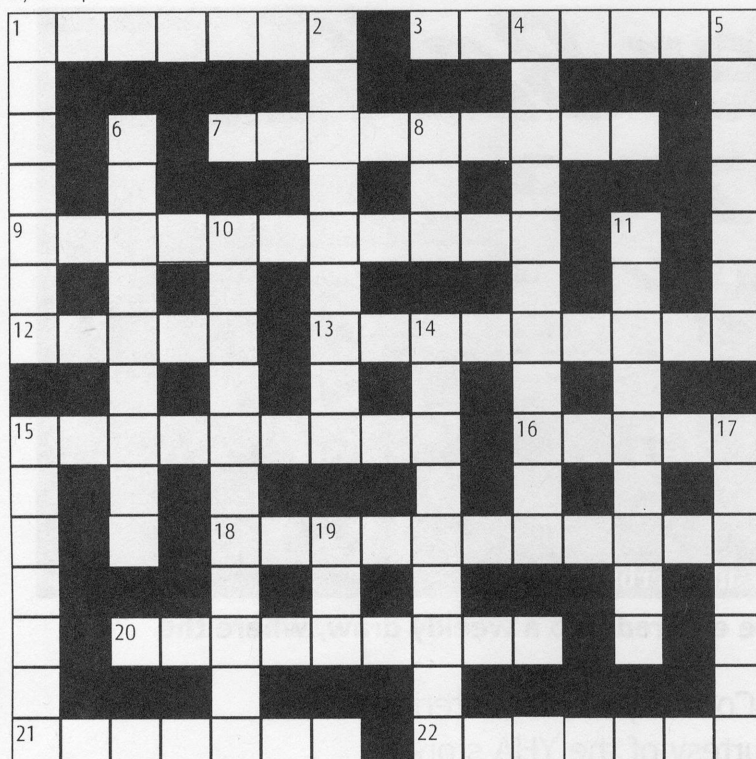
2nd XI

At this point I would have put in some 2nd XI scores, but I forgot to write them down. Sorry.

Entries for this week's crossword should be received by Wednesday 1pm.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

by Sheep



Answers to 1145

Across: 1 Sour, 3 Upwardness, 8 Lest, 9 Floatation, 11 Ailurophobe, 15 Rapport, 17 Range, 18 Erect, 19 Deduces, 20 Initialling, 24 Appetising, 25 Anon, 26 Breadboard, 27 Adds

Down: 1 Syllabuses, 2 Unsalaries, 4 Polyp, 5 Diametrical, 6 Exit, 7 Skin, 10 Aborted, 12 Repatriated, 13 Unassigned, 14 Belongings, 16 Ordains, 21 Inner, 22 Barb, 23 Apse

Across

- 1 Concealed room beneath church and college. (7)
- 3 Without the alien, a bath on the Adriatic coast. (7)
- 7 I am fifty in forty correct, action. (9)
- 9 Dianne Hurst is without a stain. (11)
- 12 It is a moat, hidden in the South Pacific. (5)
- 13 Similar to a logo in your arsehole. (9)
- 15 Hot chemical change in prissy oil. (9)
- 16 Pieces by two start defying alien in America. (5)
- 18 Cavemen get old story. (11)
- 20 Taken for granted tax ends; I owe mother tea, we hear, I see. (9)
- 21 Oh, you are needless! Throughout an idea. (7)
- 22 Constable Bernard takes away renal. Corn pushed in sharply. (7)

Down

- 1 See? He rubs like angels. (7)
- 2 Sweaters that hang open in rancid gas. (9)
- 4 Sheltered window-screen covered eyes. (11)
- 5 To use oars excites! (7)
- 6 Reveal stinging pains to gain advantage by cleverness. (9)
- 8 A quiet wood. (3)
- 10 Designating a portion (again) of a little organ. (11)
- 11 He forecasts Roger and Jim to swap heads in the deputy vice-chancellor. (9)
- 14 Beast, soul principles are always true. (9)
- 15 Joke man has acrid smell. (7)
- 17 Attach a suspect start to a fitting end. (7)
- 19 I 'ear there's no place like an SI unit. (3)

Evian Competition

Congratulations to **Jacqueline Ah-Wong**, **Alexis Biller** and **Rosalind Ng**, who all correctly identified that Evian water comes from the French Alps, specifically Evian-Les-Bains, and managed to copy the website successfully. Please come into the Felix office at the end of the week to collect your prizes.