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No. 1030 WEDNESDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2001 25p

INSIDE TODAY



Housing headaches? We can help - see our special feature p. 8-9

Plus: All the latest cinema and theatre reviews on p10-11

NEW HOUSE FOR V-C SPARKS ROW

Uni splashes out after £500,000 house is branded TOO SMALL

By PAUL CROSTHWAITE
NEWS EDITOR

THE UNIVERSITY provoked outrage amongst students and lecturers as it emerged that the new Vice-Chancellor has been bought a bigger house after a half-million pound property was rejected as inadequate.

And official figures show that the previous V-C had received a pay rise double that offered to teaching staff.

The V-C's post comes with a free house. James Wright, who retired from the post in December, lived for the last eight years in a luxurious residence in Gosforth worth £495,000.

With five bedrooms, a huge drawing room and even larger dining room, located just a few yards from a golf course, it is one of the most exclusive properties on Tyneside.

But the University decided that the house is "too far from the airport" and requires "VIP guests" to suffer the intolerable indignity of sharing a bathroom.

As a replacement, the University has bought a lavish £700,000 property for Mr Wright's successor, Professor Christopher Edwards.

The listed 18th century Georgian lodge is located in the exclusive Ponteland Village, just a mile from Newcastle Airport.

University documents show it was agreed that given the "increasing amount of entertainment and overnight hospitality associated with the Vice-Chancellorship the existing house has limited capacity".

The documents go on: "The opportunity has arisen to purchase Elland Lodge, an attractive Grade two listed sandstone detached Georgian lodge set within landscaped and private grounds.

"The accommodation comprises the main residence, a detached two-bedroomed cottage and a detached two bed-roomed studio house. The cost would be £690,000, plus professional fees and furniture."

Millionaire footballer Alan Shearer is a near neighbour, and the former occupant was Sunderland's French goalkeeper Lionel Perez.

Mr Perez is now playing for Cambridge United and Professor Edwards has moved in while the property is renovated.

The sale of the former official residence, which was put on the market for £495,000, has been agreed.

But some University staff are furious that scarce funds are being used to put up the V-C in luxurious style.

A senior University source said: "There have been a lot of cutbacks here. We've even been told to cut down on pens, pencils and stationery.

"When you consider the sub-standard accommodation many students stay in I don't see how the University can possibly justify giving Professor Edwards a house worth £700,000."

University spokesman Mick Warwicker insisted that there was nothing extravagant about buying a £700,000 house for the V-C.

Continued on p. 2



EDWARDS.. New gaff worth £700,000

Wreckage!



THIS IS all that is left of a gas canister that devastated part of the Old Library Building's ground floor. Thieves were using it to batter through a plaster board wall when it exploded, causing £4,000 worth of damage.

FULL STORY p. 3

The Courier
courier.news@ncl.ac.uk
Union Society
King's Walk
Newcastle
NE1 8QB
tel: 0191 232 4050
fax: 0191 239 3991

Editor:
Dan Gregson

Deputy Editors:
Jacqui Butler
Lisa Nandy

News Editor:
Paul Crosthwaite

Music Editor:
Mike Seaton

Arts Editor:
Wyl Menmuir

Letters Editor:
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Chief Reporters:
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Ann Clifford

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Olivia Richwald
Jake Lee
Natalie Bogusch
Louise Baty

Chief Sports Writer:
Chris Hurst

Photographers:
Rachel Godschalk
Niall Riddell

Crossword compiler:
James Romans

Advertising Manager:
Arlene Sutherland

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IT'S GOOD TO TALK

But new phone lines in lecture theatres are bad news for work-shy students

By KATE KRAKOV

GETTING OUT of lectures because the projector, video or computer won't work is set to become a thing of the past.

Phones have been installed in lecture theatres so that technologically challenged lecturers can get help from support staff.

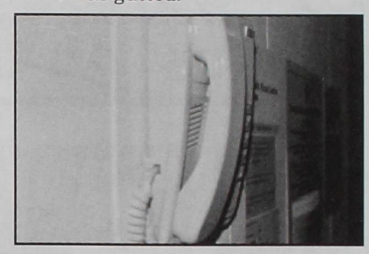
Az Mohammed of the Audio Visual Centre said: "Phones have been installed in twenty-four lecture theatres, at a cost of around £2,000.

"They're intended to help lecturers who encounter problems, or if the equipment fails."

Not everyone welcomes the move, though. A third-year Politics student said: "I saw the new system in action in a lecture last week.

"Much to my disappointment, it worked perfectly. After a quick phone call the problem was sorted and the lecture continued as planned, whereas in the past it probably would have been cancelled.

"I was gutted."



VICE-CHANCELLOR CONTROVERSY

Continued from p. 1

He said: "The house is not only a residence for the Vice Chancellor but a place where he can hold meetings and provide overnight accommodation for important visitors to the University, such as industrialists, politicians and senior academics.

"The University has links with 300 countries, so these VIPs come from all over the world.

"Accommodation in the old house was pretty close, and you can't have VIPs sharing bathrooms."

Mr Warwicker added: "This 'networking' activity is crucial because deals and partnerships are forged which lead to investment in teaching and research, ultimately benefiting students and staff."

Mr Warwicker denied that the University had attempted to keep the purchase secret. He said: "In October last year the University Council - which consists of staff, students and lay members - approved the purchase of the new house.

"It has been on public record since then. There has been no attempt at secrecy."

He also insisted that the University had no choice but to spend the money on a building.

"The £200,000 came from the University's capital fund and is therefore set aside for projects such as new developments and buildings.

"There was no possibility of spending the money on staff pay or reducing tuition fees, as has been suggested by some people, since these are set at national level."

But a spokesperson for the Students' Union said: "The Union building, which is central to the lives of students, is in dire need of repair in some areas.

"If the money had been spent on this, it would have been more directly beneficial for students."

Meanwhile, it was revealed that the previous Vice-Chancellor, James Wright, had received a pay rise of 6.4 per cent in his final year in office, giving him a salary of £116,000.

This compares with a mere 3 per cent increase offered to the Uni's teaching staff.

Tom Wilson, head of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education's universities department, said: "How can lecturers be expected to settle for three per cent when vice-chancellors are taking twice as much?

"Why should we recommend NATFHE members should accept any less?

"Vice-chancellors should think very carefully before they accept salary increases of this magnitude and consider how it affects staff morale."

Mr Warwicker said: "It's important that the University maintains parity with other universities if it is to maintain the highest quality of management."

But a Union spokesperson said: "As far as students are concerned, the quality of the University's teaching staff is vital.

"Resources should be concentrated on ensuring that we don't lose our best academics because of poor pay, as has happened in the past."

The University refused to disclose the new V-C's salary.

ELECTION PLEA

By COURIER NEWS STAFF

STUDENT UNION chief Ian Kitchen has urged students thinking about running in this term's elections to move quickly.

It follows the FYC elections which had to be postponed because nobody got their nominations in time. But after a Courier splash, the number of nominations shot up to one of the highest encountered as five teams stood for the coveted position of FYC organisers.

Kitchen said: "Following last term's elections I want to warn people that elections are soon and if you want to stand for any of the sabbatical or part-time positions then come and get an election pack with all the details in."

"These are very important elections because they decide who is going to be running this place next year, and so if you think you could make a difference then I strongly urge you to get involved."

The elections are set to happen on Friday 9 March, but nominations need to be in for Friday 16 February.



PHONE A FRIEND..Kitchen's election plea

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STOTTIE OF THE WEEK
Pate Salad

Old library hit by vandal attack

By ANN CLIFFORD

POLICE are investigating a break-in in the Old Library building which caused £4,000 worth of damage and risked the lives of the thieves themselves.

Robbers smashed through a plaster board internal wall using gas cylinders to get into a storage room.

Two cylinders exploded during the robbery, causing serious damage to a passage near the postgraduate coffee lounge.

"I don't know how anyone didn't get injured," said Flo Laidler, who works in the lounge.

Only around £80 worth of stock - mostly wine and beer - was taken during the robbery, which happened some time after 10pm on 25th January.

A cleaner discovered the damage at 7am the next morning.

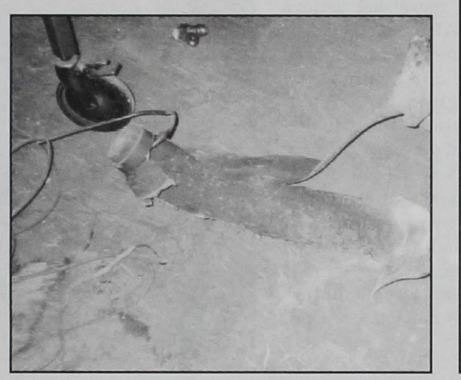
It is believed that those responsible had some knowledge of the layout of the Old Library and had hidden themselves before the building was locked up for the night.

The passage damaged by the thieves can only be accessed using a security code.

Porter David Ritson told The Courier: "It's a mystery, really."

"I don't know how no-one heard the noise made by the gas cylinders exploding."

The police have examined the scene and are looking into the incident.





"£200 YOU WON'T"

By JO JOHNSTON

A THIRD year Geography and Economics student flew to New York as part of a drunken bet.

Ameer Khanhai was pissing his housemate off so much that he was offered £200 to leave the country.

" Basically he'd been really winding me up and I had loads of work to do, " joked flatmate Nabil Air, a third year genetics student.

"It was the end of November and my dissertation deadline was about 10 days away. Ameer had nothing to do and had been going on about how much he liked New York. We were both quite drunk so I offered him the bet. I didn't really expect him to take it seriously but thought it would give him a distraction and get him out of my way for a few days."

Two days later, Ameer was on his way to the Big Apple after getting a Swissair flight for £240.

"Ideally I wouldn't have wanted to be on my own, but I wasn't really bothered as someone else had paid for my flight. I think that he was a real idiot for giving me a free holiday," laughed Ameer.

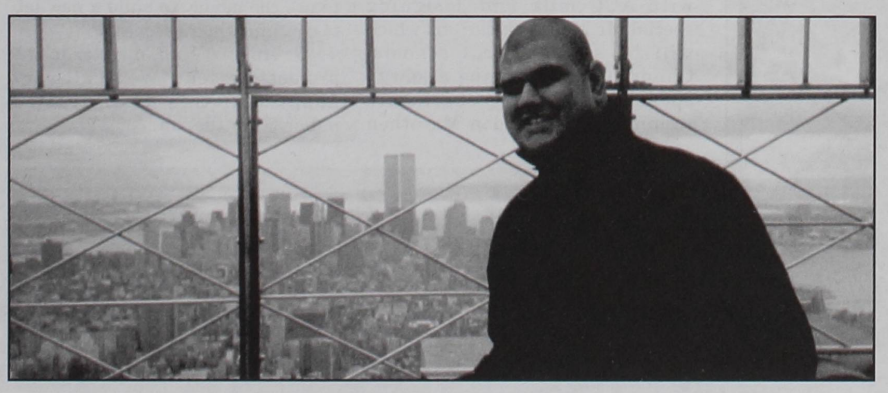
He spent two days in New York seeing the sights, bumping into the rich and famous and getting drunk in Time Square.

"I didn't even miss many lectures, just four or five, and even managed to write an essay on the flight home so I kept up to date with all my work and everything."

Things were to get even better when he got home to discover that the airline had lost his bag and gave him £140 compensation.

"I'd only been away for a couple of days so I didn't have much with me anyway so I wasn't too bothered when my bag didn't turn up. With the £200 Nabil had to give me and the compensation, the trip only really cost me about £60. I could spend that on two nights out in Newcastle so it was great.

"I definitely go again, or anywhere else, if someone else offered me a bet like it - I can't believe that he was that stupid when he knew that I had nothing else on."



Diary of a young couple in love...

"David darling, did you see that poster for the Work Experience Fair on your way back from training?"

"Sorry Victoria, I was just finishing off me jigsaw 'n'that. It's taken me 3 weeks but, at the end of the day, I'm pleased with the results."

"Yes, when Brooklyn does it he normally puts the bits with sky on more towards the TOP. As I was saying, now the girls and I have decided to go our separate ways, I'm looking to develop my career and acquire some transferable skills. That fair looks ideal, there are at least 20 organisations there offering work experience opportunities."

"When did you say it was on darling? We'll have to decide what to wear 'n'that, y'know"

"Well you looked lovely in that sarong David, all the papers said so. It's on Wednesday the 7th February between 12 and 3pm in the Ballroom. On second thoughts, maybe our matching leather catsuits would be more appropriate, and I could have "Sven-Goran Eriksson" tattooed in Asumboan on my face - might just help swing the captaincy for you."

"But I thought you were more interested in that Media Day 'n'that Victoria."

"Now I've been on TFI Friday and OKTV I wasn't going to bother. Mind you, you could go along on the 28th February at some point between 11 and 4.30. I heard a 'media celebrity' was going to open it but no-one's asked me. Unless it's that Groovejet person (**!!), or even worse, Westlife."

"Victoria, did I tell you that I visited Andy Cole in hospital on my way home yesterday?"

"No David"

"He said they'd given him a cortisone injection. They didn't give me a car when I was there!"

• www.careers.ncl.ac.uk/mediaday
• www.careers.ncl.ac.uk/vacancies

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Miniature Hero shops stottie thief

Shop assistant praised after stopping thief

By OLIVIA RICHWALD

THE UNION shop is celebrating this week after miniature hero Linda Stonebank caught a violent customer who was thought to be stealing stotties.

The brave shop assistant put her safety on the line to challenge the local man who dropped his booty before making a dash for the exit.

But fearless Linda wrestled with the man who struggled flailing his arms and legs for several minutes.

During the ordeal, the shoplifter threw another shop assistant to the floor.

After a few tense moments security arrived to hold the man who was later arrested and charged with assault and theft.

Heroine Linda said: "I was determined that he wasn't going to get away because he had hurt my colleague.

"But during the struggle I was more concerned that my nails were getting snapped."

Linda had spotted the man she described as: "In his 30's dirty looking with disheveled hair" entering the shop.

She then watched as the cheeky thief had the nerve to feel the stock for its freshness.

After selecting his lunch, it is claimed he tried to pinch a baguette, a stottie and a bottle of chocolate milk worth £3.62 which he hid under his coat.

For her gallantry, Linda was thanked by her boss Union shop manager Ray Sydenham, who offered her a box of miniature heroes.

Linda, in shock refused the offer, she said: "Ray offered us a box of chocolates, but it was only days later I realised they were Miniature Heroes, and then I thought it was funny."

Ray himself said: "We don't endorse this kind of response, but I must admit I am very proud of her, even if she did refuse my chocolates."

Linda doesn't regret her actions but she said: "Afterwards I felt terrible because he could have been hungry, but I don't have any regrets, although in hindsight I realise it was a stupid thing to do - he could have had a knife."

■ This comes as Union bosses are considering how to make better use of the smartcard system that has been installed at the front of the Union building.

It works the same as the library and gym but has not yet been put into operation.



SLICK WILLIE STYLE

By CHARLIE WEBB

IT'S TIME for Newcastle politics students to begin to size up the credentials of America's randy ex-president Bill 'Slick Willie' Clinton.

Leading the new Newcastle politics module and seeking to do just that is US politics expert and university lecturer Rod Hague.

The existing module dedicated to contemporary American politics will be updated to include the Clinton era.

Hague considers Clinton to be the most gifted politician of his generation calling Slick Willie "extremely talented.

"He relates well to ordinary people yet he can also debate complex policy issues with top experts".

Despite all this political talent it seems that Clinton will be best remembered for his voracious appetite for extra-curricular activities.

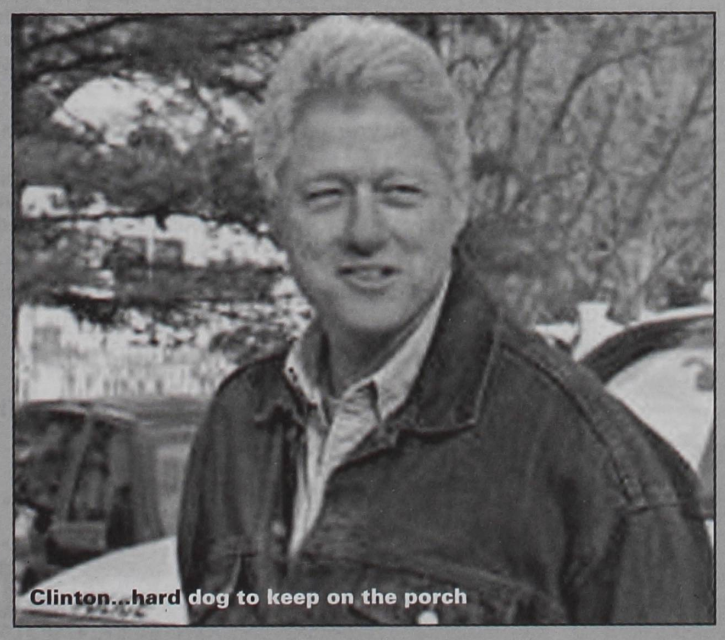
One third year politics student welcomed the move: "lectures on Bill Clinton's sex life sound more interesting than anything else we've done on the course".

Hague diplomatically admitted: "In the end he was shown to be a very human President with very human weaknesses; as his mother said, he has always been a hard dog to keep on the porch".

One of the biggest questions yet to be answered concerning Clinton is what he will do now that his time in office is over. Most commentators seem to agree that he needs to earn some serious cash so as to pay off the massive legal fees that have been run up over the last 8 years.

Hague suggested:"Clinton isn't an actor - but he could have been, and a very good one. This seems to suggest that the seemingly unfounded rumours that he has been asked to play the baddie in the next James Bond movie might just possibly be true.

Another avenue open to him is to embark on a lecturing world tour. And who knows he might even turn up in our very own politics department.



Clinton...hard dog to keep on the porch

Beadle's about

By JENNIE LAWRENCE

WATCH OUT Beadle was about!

The prankster was recently in Newcastle launching a campaign for leukaemia research at Newcastle University's child health department.

The campaign aims to raise £800,000 for the Leukaemia Research Fund by joining forces with ACC milk and designing special Mr Men milk cartons which will be sent to local schools. Children are also being asked to sponsor Mr Men characters running in the London Marathon as part of the fundraising bid.

Jeremy Beadle visited Hadrian Park First School in Wallsend on the 15th of January as part of the launch and told The Courier : "I learned of the important research being carried out at the university and am delighted to have been able to help at the launch".

Half of the money raised will go to the Leukaemia Research Fund and the rest will be shared between the participating medical schools. Newcastle, which gets no funding from the government, is planning to use the money to build a new lab to continue their research.

Dr Andrew Hall, director of the project, agreed: "We're all very happy that this has attracted publicity for the fund."

Latest sport - pages 15-16



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RAG TO RICHES

RAG Organisers aim to raise a duck load of cash for good causes

By PAUL CROSTHWAITE
NEWS EDITOR

EXPECT MORE than a few feathers to be ruffled when Keith Harris and Orville bring their notorious X-rated show "Duck Off" to the Union as the finale of this year's RAG extravaganza.

The comedy duo, along with cheeky side-kick Cuddles, once delighted millions of children with their show on national TV.

True, they've always been able to provoke offense and disgust in even the most broad-minded of adults, as anyone who's been subjected to "I Wish I Could Fly" on the Mens Bar juke box will confirm.

But nothing will have prepared you for the torrent of filth that the trio will unleash in the Bassment on Saturday 17 February. You have been warned...

Another highlight for those who "wish they could fly" will be the sponsored hitch-hike to Amsterdam, which runs from Friday 9 to Monday 12 February. Think of it as the London Marathon for students.

For those with a more masochistic - not to mention exhibitionist - streak, the sponsored Waxathon on Fri 16 in the Mens Bar should grab you - by the short and curlies. "We need hairy blokes!" begged RAG Organiser Joanne Winter.

With RAG taking place over Valentine's Day, love will no doubt be in the air. And for a bit of amorous action, where better than the "Global Love" Valentine's Party in the Global?

Not only will you be able to enjoy dating games and a live jazz band, you'll also receive a free Toblerone and packet of heart-shaped Discos. And don't worry about the delicious cheese 'n' onion snacks ruining your chances of pulling - everyone'll be munching them, and how better to impress than saving your last one for the girl or boy of your dreams?

Other events that are guaranteed to get you "gaggin' for a raggin'" include: the Companies Fair in the Bassment on Wednesday 14 and Thursday 15 February; Firewalking and the Magical Mystery Pub Tour on Thursday 15; "Saints and Sinners" themed Positive on Friday 16; and abseiling and bungee jumping on the Quayside, and the RAG Carnival in the city centre, all on Saturday 17.

And make sure you buy a copy of the legendary RAG mag, which will feature a high-profile member of the University as you've never seen them before.

Last year's RAG was dogged by cancellations, poor turn outs and bad weather.

But this year's Organisers, Rebecca Hopkins and Joanne Winter, have vowed to make the event a success. Joanne said: "RAG is definitely going to be much better this year. We've got more sponsorship than ever before, we've done more work, and we've got more new and exciting events.

"We're promoting RAG as a second FYC - an FYC for everyone."

Rebecca stressed the charitable side of the event. She said: "Students should get involved in the events not only because they're going to be a great laugh, but also because they're for a good cause."

Organisations that will benefit from RAG include: Comic Relief, the Meningitis Research Foundation, SCAN, and the Evening Chronicle Sunshine Fund.

For more details, tickets etc. visit the RAG stall in the Airport Lounge, which is open 12-2 pm every day, go to Reception, or contact RAG@ncl.ac.uk.



FOWL MOUTHED... The X-rated trio

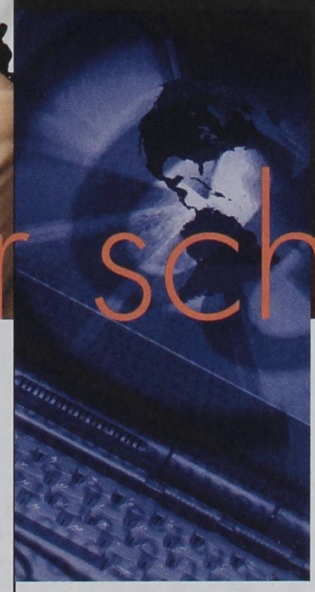

CASH LANDING... Students can raise money with sponsored bungee jump

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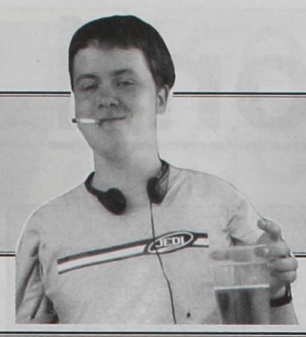
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Dear Gaz



the voice of a generation...

Security issue

Dear Gaz,
The heads of the Union society have finally gone mad! The security for last term's Arcane was absolutely ridiculous without the exception of Basil Fawlty making a guest DJ appearance.

My complaint doesn't lie with the stewards employed by the Union, most of whom are genuinely helpful and nice people trying to make the best of what must be a difficult job, but with the individuals in charge.

Those who have had the pleasure of frequenting the Union for the last three or four years have noticed a massive decline in the effectiveness of the stewards. I suggest it is the people responsible for the hiring of security that are at fault.

The heads of the Union seem to be under the impression that the Union is not a night club on Friday and Saturday nights. I'm not suggesting we need Bigg Market style door staff with a 'hit first - ask later' policy, but surely some happy medium can be found.

An all night event like Arcane inevitably draws a large non-student crowd, some of which can be very difficult to deal with. While Stewards are excellent at dealing with other students they are often not able to deal with non-students who can often have a very different perception of what is acceptable.

The security arrangements at this University are at the worst I have ever seen and the security stewards' well being is compromised.

We have to remember that the folks who work on security here are paid around £4.50 an hour, not the £10-£15 an hour paid in town. Yet they do much the same job and apart from being unfair, it is more importantly unsafe for you, for them and that is wrong.

Jon Tate

Gaz says: Heavy stuff I think. Well to be honest I've got to agree that the stewards try their best and work hard. Unfortunately I also agree that some of them don't appear to be able to handle trouble that will always happen at big events where there are in excess of 2000 people.
All I can say is that I hope the people in charge take on board some of the points, or if they have got a reason as to why things work as they do, then I'd be naturally glad to hear it.

Darius Shmarius

Dear Gaz,
I know by the time this goes to press, it may be a little out of date. But still, I can't just let it go, so I'm gonna get it off my chest once and for all.

*Popstars. Darius. Tw*t.*

Words for once almost fail me in what I think about this man. But naturally I'll try.

Thankfully he didn't get in, although Myleene has got in and throws her hair around just a little bit too much!

But why must that prick insist on singing Spears' classic like a fucking idiot. I want to punch his lights out. And why did he have to sing a fucking shit song about the 'experience' with his newly found lifelong 'soulmates.' Blow it out your arse.

And worse still. Worse than him singing a song, is the fact that all the other simpletons started to cry because they weren't going to 'share' their new life together.

Now I cry, we all cry. But normally people cry when they've really fucked up or something's really getting to them. Not when this fool doesn't get into the band.

I could go on but I think I've made my point.

Please, let's hear no more about him. Unless it's nasty and abusive.

yours,
Nigel

Gaz says: I really could not agree more with you Nige mate. The bloke is a dickhead, and I for one hope that he gets a record deal, and then crashes and burns.
I know that may sound a bit harsh but what is the bloke thinking?
He seemed to have turned into a cult leader when he was singing that song and they were all crying.
Watch out, he'll be the cause of the next Waco I tell you.

Gym staff slam

Dear Gaz,
I thought it'd be a good idea to join the gym after a fattening Christmas, and yes £50 to join was something I could have done without but needs must and all.

But why do the staff have to be so fuckin grumpy and generally rude. I mean we're all not too keen to be back at work/uni whatever but surely that's no need to be arsey.

I reckon the only reason they get away with being such miserable bastards all of the time (and it is all of the time cos they've been like it for the 3 years I've been here) is because they've got a monopoly on student custom. They know we can't afford to go elsewhere so they know we'll go back even if they're shit.

We are students, not reprobates. Someone take note, possibly the AU chief, and have a word. Please.

An annoyed 3rd year

Gaz says: To be honest I'm gonna have to take your word for it, because the closest I get to the gym is when I walk past it to go to the union for a few beers. But saying that some staff can be arsey, throughout the uni and don't seem to be student friendly. Which annoys me, cos if they don't like students they should piss off and work elsewhere. Fair enough? I think so.

Gaz's personal bits - the coolest place to let it hang out

NIGHTLINE
For information or a chat
RING
261 2905
"We don't sleep 'til you do"
8pm to 8am

HAHAHA,

I've been in Dublin on the piss while you've all been working hard.

love IK xxx

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Society
Meets 7.30pm Thursday, MLK Room, 1st floor Union Building.
For more info contact Lisa Harvey-Smith or Geoff Frost, LGB Officers, Equal opps unit 1st floor Union.
Tel: 239 3936

What's WTO?

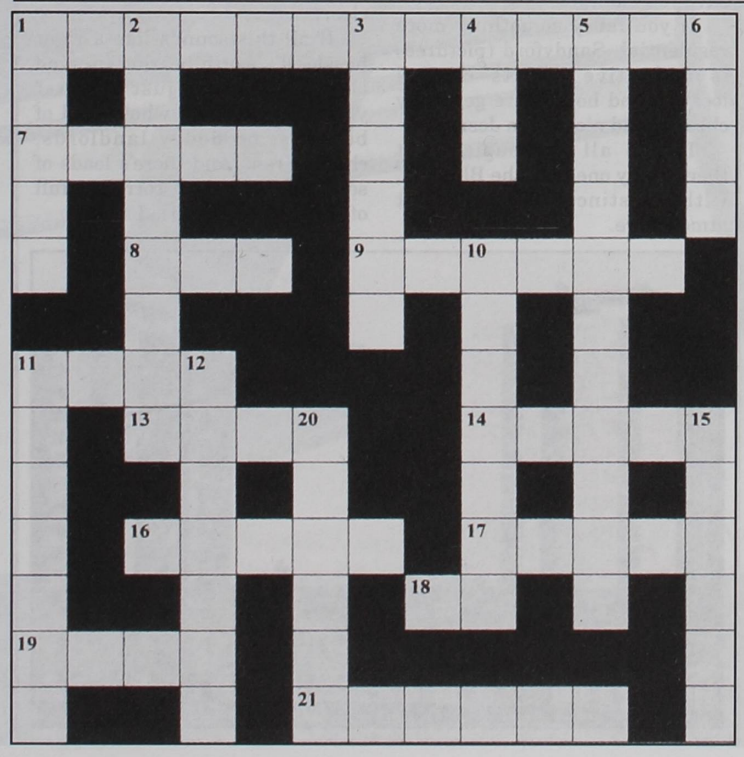
TRADE JUSTICE MEETING

5-7pm this Friday
Room 229
Claremont Tower

Wales you were unlucky.

I really feel for you. Haha, do I fuck?!

Bread of Heaven my arse!!



Across
1. Actor - star of Of Mice and Men and Shadow of the Vampire (4,9)
7. Mork and _____ (5)
8. Mystery flying item (3)
9. US music award (6)
11. President of the USA (4)
13. _____and rockers (4)
14. _____Hill, comedian (5)
16. Nasty _____, Popstars judge (5)
17. Town in SE England (5)
18. To, or not to (2)
19. Big brother runner up (4)
21. Affectionate term for the BBC (6)

Down
1. Hill, football pundit (5)
2. Dominant religion of India (8)
3. Newcastle nightspot (6)
4. Over the top (3)
5. Unrestrained, extreme (11)
6. Victor_____, French poet, novelist and dramatist (4)
10. Darius from Popstars (7)
11. English rugby star (7)
12. We'll all need one of these by summertime (7)
15. American (6)
20. Ozzy female (6)

GET RINGED IN THE MENS BAR



Every week The Courier will take some pics around the union bars. If you're the one circled then you've got lucky. You have won 10 drinks vouchers to be used in anyone of the Union bars and is worth £15!
So to claim your prize then come into The Courier office on the ground floor of the Union. It's that simple.

10 QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE YOU MOVE IN

1 Find out what your landlord's like before signing. Dodgy landlords DO exist and can make your life a misery. For the best advice ask the previous tenants when the landlord's not there. They'll be honest.

2 Read the contract. Sounds obvious, but hefty charges can be concealed in the form of water rates etc. If you don't understand or want to change something don't be afraid to ask. If your landlord won't discuss it, it's a good indicator that he's not going to be very good. And never hand over a deposit without a written agreement.

3 What penalties might you have to pay? If someone leaves are you liable to make up their rent? Burst pipes and other damage may be your responsibility. Ask.

4 If you're going through an agency (which can save time and hassle) check how much money they're taking. Some agencies are extortionate. Check first, because if you use them, you'll have to pay.

5 Have a gas safety check and service been done in the last 12 months? Carbon monoxide can kill, so ask for proof before signing anything.

6 How secure is the property? If the locks or windows aren't adequate some insurance companies won't pay up. An alarm's a good idea to save yourself a lot of possible pain.

7 Furniture you see in the house when you look around may not be what you actually end up getting. Check what's actually included in the contract.

8 Geordies are a friendly bunch, but there are always exceptions. Check you're not living next to or above people with radar ears. Complaining neighbours can make your life a misery. If possible live next door to students and you won't have a problem.

9 How far is the house from shops and the Uni? Five mile hikes to the supermarket aren't much fun in Newcastle weather.
And remember that if a lecture starts at 10am, getting out of your bed in Fenham at 9.50am is going to leave you struggling to make it!

10 Is the property part of the accreditation scheme? If not, there's probably a reason why. Ask the Housing Office.

Jesmond

- **TYPICAL RENT: £45-£60**
- **TRANSPORT: Metro, regular buses**
- **WALKING DISTANCE: 15-25 minutes depending on location**
- **SHOPS: Tesco is central, plus lots of off licenses and 8 til lates**
- **PUBS: Lonsdale, Osbornes, Billabong, Brewsters - all student friendly**

Apart from the street bound homicide that you'll have read about in *The Courier*, the area of Jesmond is as good a place you could hope to live.

There are the obvious advantages of living in Jesmond: its proximity to uni (15 - 20 minute walk or a couple of minutes on the Metro), a Tesco which, though a little pricey compared to bigger stores, is extremely convenient...and of course the bars.

A couple of years ago there was the choice between the Lonsdale and Brewsters. But now there are the highly popular Osbornes and Billabong watering holes, which are often busy, but essentially nice places to drink.

Naturally there is a downside, though this depends on the size of your wallet. Rents are high, ranging from £45-60 a week and this is the biggest limiting factor.

But generally, if you can afford it, it's a friendly place to live and apart from the odd nutcase neighbour it's worth a look.



Heaton

- **TYPICAL RENT: £35-45**
- **TRANSPORT: Metro, regular buses, especially the No. 1 bus**
- **WALKING DISTANCE: 20-30 minutes depending on location, but bus is best**
- **SHOPS: Safeway, Kwik-Save, Spar, Off licenses etc**
- **PUBS: Chillingham Road or Corner House. Not really studenty.**

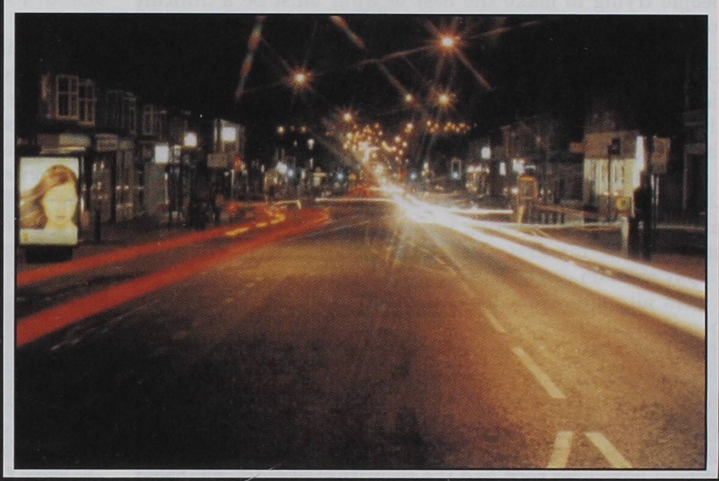
This is basically a halfway house between Jesmond and Fenham. If you can't afford Jesmond but want more amenities than Fenham has to offer, then perhaps Heaton is what you're after.

In terms of what's there, Chillingham Road is about all you need, with loads of shops, take-aways, pubs and a Kwik-Save. What more could you want? Bus stops and a Metro. Well yes, it's got those as well, but depending on where you are it's very walkable.

Although it has to be said that the No. 1 bus has saved lots of students those valuable minutes when they're trying to make that morning seminar.

Students take over most of Heaton so you won't be on your own and there's always the chance of a party you can roll up to somewhere near by.

Which is good news because pubs-wise Heaton is a bit limited. The Corner House is probably the best bet for students. Otherwise, it's mainly just working mens clubs.



Fenham

- **TYPICAL RENT: £25-35**
- **TRANSPORT: Regular buses**
- **WALKING DISTANCE: 25-30 minutes, uphill going home from uni**
- **SHOPS: Netto off Westgate Road, a few off licenses**
- **PUBS: Most are scary ones for locals, Prince of Wales is OK though**

This is one of the cheapest places you can live. Rent should be between £25-35 but you've got to compromise on the prettiness factor. People call it 'nam, after Vietnam.

There's a fair bit of litter, dirt and broken windows knocking about but there's not much traffic and some lovely parks in which to go a roaming upon a Sunday afternoon.

There are few pubs but we recommend not charging in mobile glued to your ear, talking loudly about your gap year in India unless you feel the need for a good kicking. In other words locals are friendly unless provoked and you should probably favour the Kappa style of dress.

If past years are anything to go by, there should be quite a few other students knocking around and if you want to eat out then this place is Curry Central. There's also a Booze Buster and a lovely little Netto, but no Metro stops so you're going to have to bus it or walk. Take your pick.



Others

Most of the student population live in the areas above, but there are alternatives.

The City Centre's a good option for people who can't be bothered with buses or the Metro. It's handy for nipping in and out of Uni, or for staggering home after drunken nights out.

If you can cope with the grime, noise and lack of students it can save you money.

If you fancy something more residential, Sandyford (pictured) is attractive for its central location and houses are generally cheaper and nicer than Jesmond.

It has all the basics, but there's only one pub, the BlueBell, with a distinct lack of student atmosphere.

Gosforth fares better on the pub scene. Its busy high street has all the main shops (Boots, Kwiksave) as well as several pubs and restaurants.

It's on the Metro, and is a safe area which means lower insurance premiums. The houses are among the nicest, but the neighbours can be a problem.

It's a family area without many students so if you're looking for some wild house parties, steer clear.

If all this sounds like a right hassle, it's worth bearing in mind that halls aren't just for first years. There are a whole load of benefits: no dodgy landlords, cheaper rent, and there's loads of self-catering flats if corridors full of freshers do your head in.



HOUSEMATES FROM HELL?



LISA NANDY offers some tips on how 2 avoid lunatics

There are two things that'll have you drowning your sorrows a couple of weeks into next year: where you live and who you live with.

This last one's important. People who seem perfectly normal when they live down the corridor in halls can turn into raving lunatics when you share a house with them.

In fact this is one of the most important things to consider. The nicest house in the world won't help if you've got a weirdo in the bedroom next door who never washes and eats all your cereal.

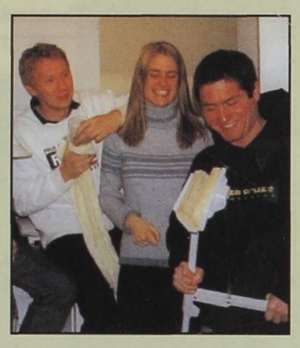
There are ways to prevent this, and other nightmare situations by observing a few basic rules.

Never, ever live with, or anywhere near, your lesser half. Besides the inevitable splitting-up-and-having-to-spend-24-hours-a-day-with-an-ex any options to play away are thrown out of the window.

And don't think living with other couples is any better unless the Cold War is your idea of fun.

Beware of 'groups' of friends, they can easily turn into a clique you don't want to be part of.

Living with all your best mates isn't necessarily a good idea at all. Think about it - when they piss you off where are you going to go? Having a couple of good mates round the corner can be a lifeline when the



only reason you haven't shot your housemates is you can't decide who'll get it first.

And never live in a house your housemate (or their parents) owns unless you want the carpet police around every time you take a drink into the living room.

There are ways of spotting potential freaks before you move in with them. If they split taxi fares down to the last penny and then quibble over who pays the last 2p they're not gonna buy milk when you live with them.

And if they're not on speaking terms with any of their ex-housemates there might be a reason why.

Everyone falls out with their housemates, but to minimise problems, move in with someone who wants to keep the peace at all costs and you should be able to shout them down.

But if it's really not working and you want out, don't let them convince you to stay. If it's already that bad, think about how much you'll hate them a year from now.

Think carefully about how you tell them though. Getting pissed and telling them all to fuck off won't seem like such a good idea when you sober up and realise you have to live with them until June.

Basically, there's no perfect recipe for harmonious living. When you poke beneath the surface everyone's a bit strange, just watch out for the lunatics.

GO GET SOME HOUSE CRED



JACQUI BUTLER looks at the Accreditation Scheme

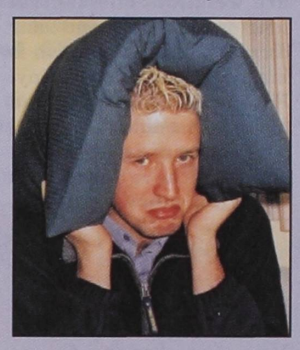
Ok, so you've finally decided who you want to spent your next year at uni living with and thanks to us you've decided whereabouts you'd like to live. If you're a really good Jonny Bigspuds you might even have found a house that doesn't smell too bad and damp that you can cover up.

But before you sign that contract, check to see if your spiffy new house is accredited. If it is, this is a good thing. That means your landlord has made promises to the University to look after your little cotton socks and if they break those promises, they're in Big Trouble.

Should you have any big problems you will find it a lot easier to wheel out the big guns in the form of the Uni and the Public Health Department. These mean machines will get more involved and even take enforcement action, all because you're one of the accredited.

But like everything in life, you have to know what you're entitled to before you can hold your landlord to ransom.

Gas and electric safety is promise numero uno. If you're going to inhale you don't want to do carbon monoxide. Accreditation means all appliances must be checked annually and a



lot of certificates waggled about.

Next is security. To leave you to your sweet dreams, landlords are obliged to install 5 lever mortice locks in addition to any locks or bolts they might already have there. All the external doors should be solid wood and your front door should have a viewer and chain - good if you're still trying shake a fresher's week geek. Any ground floor or other vulnerable windows have to have locks fitted as well, giving Burglar Bill enough incentive to think twice.

You're also entitled to mains wired, interlinked heat and smoke detectors that will let you know when you've set the house on fire.

On top of all of these goodies, if the house has more than seven people, the building has to have two bathrooms (hallelujah). Plus there's another bit of useful paper called the "Landlord and Student Charter". This gives you the low-down on what you can expect from your landlord and what he can expect from you. He can't come round visiting five times a week and you can't leave the door unlocked and wide open when you're out having adventures...you get the idea.

So basically, when your landlord tries a swifty with 'As ah sae pet, I canna garrentee that fore yooo', now you can start waving bits of accredition paper around to make the point that actually, yes he can.

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TRICKY DICKY

NIXON'S NIXON

Gulbenkian Studio

ON the evening of the 7th August 1974 - the day before his resignation - the President of the United States Richard 'Tricky Dicky' Nixon met with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger for three hours.

Written by Russell Lees this Off Broadway production is a playful speculation on what took place during that meeting.

The acting by both Keith Jochim (Nixon) and Tim Donoghue (Kissinger) is simply fantastic. Jochim's portrayal of Nixon vividly demonstrates the emotional roller coaster that resignation and near impeachment took him on. Meanwhile Donoghue's Kissinger comes over as both wonderfully self-serving and thoroughly devious.

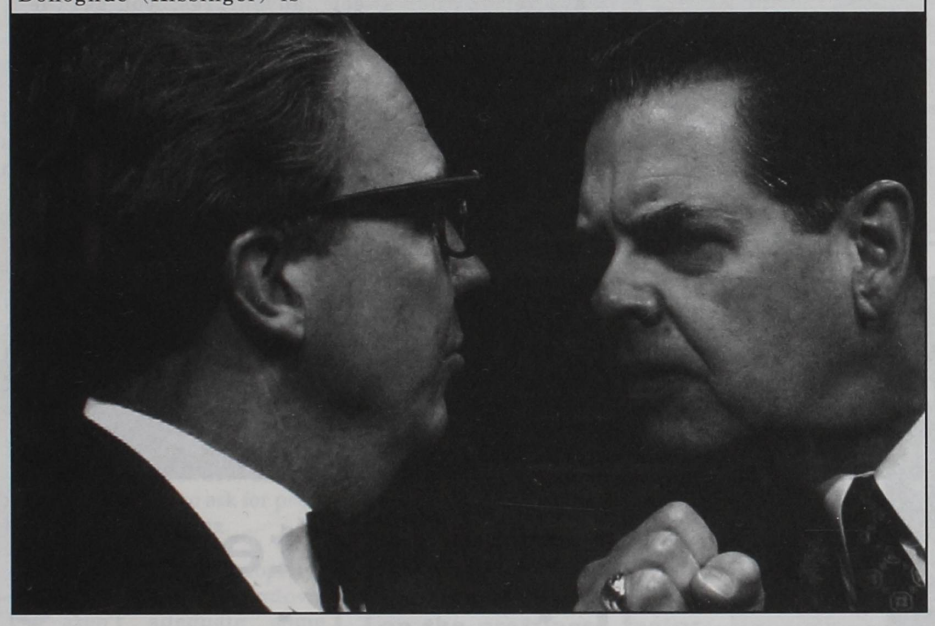
The themes of the piece are weighty. The central tenet is that power and fame corrupts and that no man is master of his own destiny. Fate is all controlling and history is merciless.

The script is clever and wordy, although in places rather slow paced. Fortunately the superb acting and use of comedy (the scenes during which they act out their previous meetings with Chairman Mao and Brezhnev are particularly amusing) more than make up for this.

Much of the interest provided by the piece comes from its portrayal of these world leaders as human beings. Both Nixon and Kissinger are seen to possess not only vanity and arrogance but also emotions. Perhaps the most affecting scene in the whole play comes when Nixon asks Kissinger to tot up all the deaths caused by his presidency. The answer is 800,000.

Overall this play is powerful and thought provoking. It stresses the difficulties and darkness that filled American politics in the 1970s and also shows that world leaders are no less prone to error and weakness than the rest of us. The only difference perhaps is that they possess rather more power.

CHARLIE WEBB



PLAYHOUSE PREVIEW

OUR very own theatre on the doorstep, The Playhouse looks to have some great plays on this season - a bit of comedy, a few serious plays, and a touch of dance - something to suit all tastes.

Yerma is the story of a peasant woman desperately wanting a child, and who's love for her husband is slowly changed to hatred when she finds out he does not want a child. Considered a failure by society, the pressure mounts to breaking point in Yerma's life, in one of Federico Garcia Lorca's greatest plays.

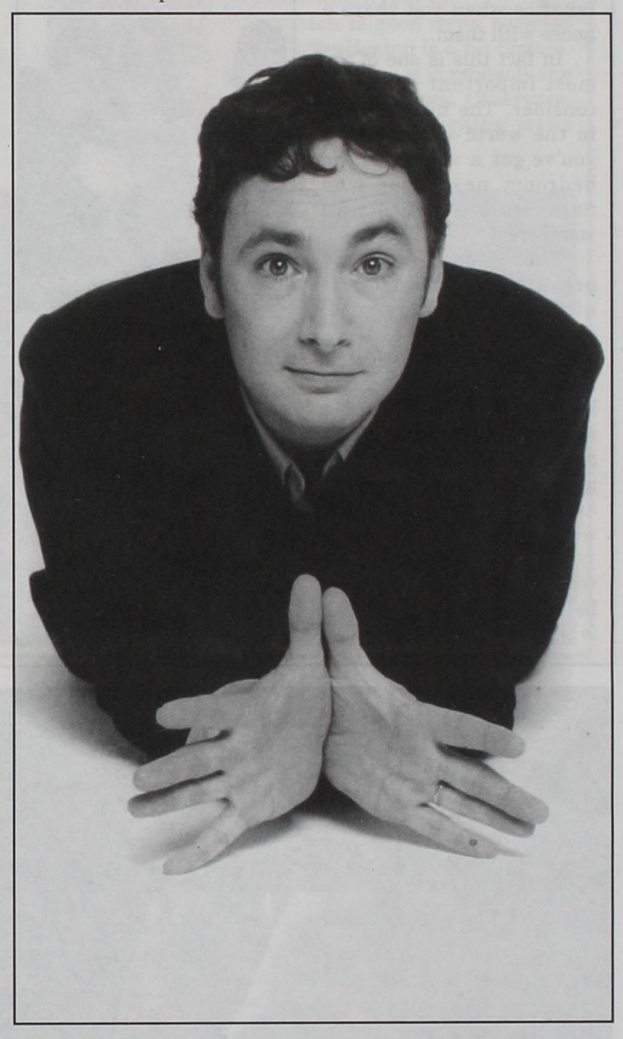
Adapted by Nigerian poet and playwright Biyi Bandele who's play Oroonoko was premiered by the RSC, the action is moved from it's original setting of Andalusia in Spain, to Nigeria. Yerma will be on between the 13th and the17th Feb.

As well as classic theatre there's also new talent coming up with Newcastle's own Sian O'Brian's jazz musical Downriver, whcih will run on the 23rd and 24th of this month. Set in Newcastle's Quayside this is a tale of love, death and jazz in a near future. If gangsters, club owners, sailors and a good dose of jazzy music are you scene, this one is definately worth catching.

Funnyman Jeff Green, will be appearing at The Playhouse on Tuesday 27th Febuary with his stand-up act of observational wit and a charming manner that has made him one of the most poplular comics on the circuit.

To top things off Northern Stage are offering a Student European Theatre Deal - You can get tickets for Lorca's Yerma, Brecht's The Mother and Linda Marlowe's Berkoff's Women, for the bargainous price of £10 for the bunch, so if your New Year's resolution was to get a bit of culture into your life this a chance to prove you weren't just kidding yourself.

WYL MENMUIR



Good Question

WHAT WOMEN WANT

Out Now

WHAT do women want? I'm tempted to say a deserted island and Russell Crowe on a vibrating jet ski.

But this old fashioned romantic comedy probes slightly deeper than mere primal urges.

What Women Want is an average satire about a misogynistic prick who accidentally acquires the ultimate crib notes on women - the ability to hear them thinking.

Nick Marshall (Mel Gibson) is a "man's man." He is an advertising executive who specialises in naked women posters.

So when a WOMAN is promoted over him to produce women friendly ads, Nick is a little bit miffed. She gives him a box of "women's things" for him to get inside a woman's mind.

The box contains a various assortment of Boots-type products and whilst trying on tights, nail varnish and mousse, Nick accidentally electrocutes himself in the bath. When he wakes up he discovers he can hear what women are thinking.

A few shock revelations later -like the realisation that all women think he's a chauvinistic tosser, the question of whether the accidental mind reading is a gift or a jail sentence is debated. The result of Mel's new talent is a mildly amusing look at the everyday thinking process of the average woman. Some of it is funny, some of it is shallow, and some of it is plain insulting.

Lads, for those of you who thought this film was the answer to your girlfriend problems, I'm afraid it is unlikely to tell you what we actually want (see first paragraph for that). But for those of us who prefer Mel with a gun in his hand and Ayres Rock on his shoulder, it is a little boring.

In Braveheart there were a hundred naked arses, in Lethal Weapon, fifty mutilated men, but What Women Want is still a few jokes short of a really funny film.

OLIVIA RICHWALD

LOVE SPREADS

BORN ROMANTIC

Out 23 February

IT'S good, it's British and it's just in time for St. Valentine's Day.

This romantic comedy has fine jokes, a great cast and a smart soundtrack.

Chosen to close last November's London Film Festival this British, and potentially hit movie revolves around the London lives of three lonely males: one a failed musician, one a failing thief, the other just a plain failure.

Their search for love leads all three to a salsa bar where they find romance and learn to dance.

The soundtrack is fantastic. The salsa beat is very sexy and colourful and builds on the recent popular acclaim for all things Cuban after the success of Buena Vista Social Club.

The cast is full of good British actors. Jane Horrocks (Little Voice) and the brilliant Jimi Mistry (East is East) are particularly prominent. There are also small roles for John Thompson and Hermione Morris (Pete and Karen from Cold Feet).

The film is also full of excellent comic moments. Mainly these derive from the rather eccentric group of characters. These include a death-obsessed absentee grave tenderer, a feckless thief living with his punch-drunk ex-boxer dad and a Dean Martin wannabe that lives with his ex-wife in a house that's sinking.

The main weakness of the film is its rather predictable outcome, which for many will also be its main strength. If you like your endings to be happy and prefer to see love win through then this is the film for you.

Overall Born Romantic covers old ground but is both well made and highly enjoyable. What director David Kane seems to want to tell us is that relationships require lots of hard work. It's hardly revolutionary but it is certainly a decent way of spending a dull Valentine's Day moment.

CHARLIE WEBB

VAMPIRE STRIKES BACK

SHADOW OF THE VAMPIRE

Out Now

JOHN MALKOVICH plays Murnau the genius but nuttier than a nut roast, creator of the original vampire flick Nosferatu in this new and highly original horror movie.

Murnau is desperate for his film to be realistic, and mad genius that he is, employs a real vampire to play the part of the lead (smart move? We think not).

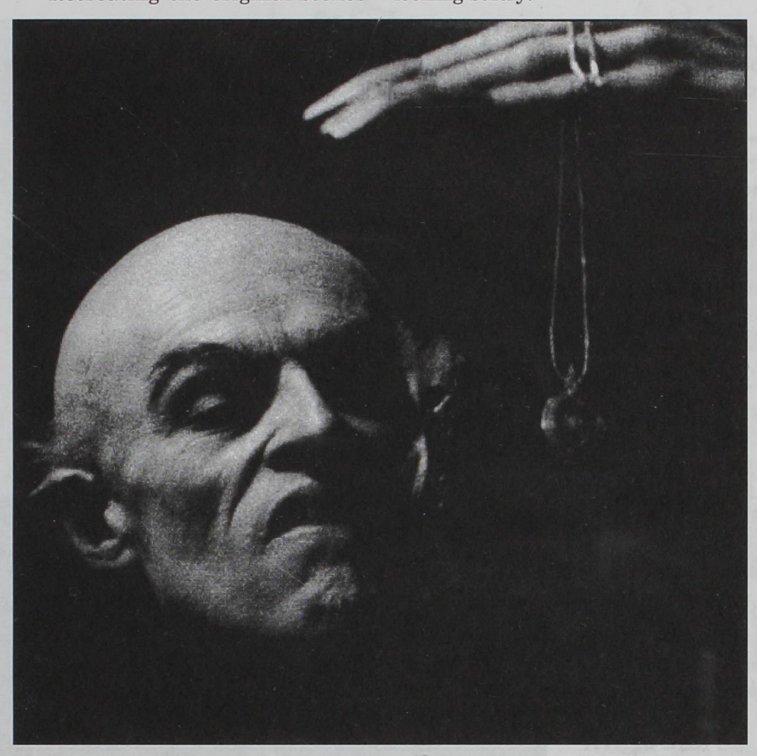
Schreck (the vampire) has been promised the blood of the leading lady for a good performance. Murnau passes the strange behaviour of his bloodsucking actor off by saying he is just a very effective method actor, but when Schreck starts attacking the cast, people start getting a little suss.

This is a film about the making of a classic film, which was itself a rip-off of a classic novel, and so has a lot to live up to. And the best part about it is that it doesn't take itself too seriously - it's hard not to laugh when the vampire (Willem Dafoe) is desperately trying to convince Murnau that he should be allowed to eat the scriptwriter since he's not really needed anymore.

Eddie Izzard is perfect in his supporting role as the real estate salesman, his comedy expressions send up the rather poor acting of his counterpart in Nosferatu fantastically.

Recreating the original scenes from the film is where the real beauty of the film comes in. You actually feel that you are watching a film made in the 1920s.

Fantastic, but if you're expecting a Buffy the Vampire Slayer type movie you may be a little disappointed, due to lack of nubile totty back-flipping and looking sultry.



NOSFERATU

Out Now on DVD

F.W.MURNAU'S, classic Nosferatu, the first vampire film ever made, and according to some hardcore film buffs the best ever made, has been re-mastered and re-released on DVD and video alongside the release of Shadow of the Vampire.

This is the film that inspired just about every vampire film made since and made Stoker's novel Dracula popular again.

If you've read Dracula you'll know the plot of Nosferatu, but if you don't, here goes: Count Orlock (a thinly disguised Count Dracula) needs new supplies of blood and calls for an estate agent to relocate him in Bremen. Jonothan Hutter, sent to relocate the Count, gets a bit scared when he realises Orlock is after his blood rather than his advice. He legs it back to Bremen, followed by Orlock and his trail of dead and bloodless bodies.

Bewildering at times, this is nevertheless a masterpiece, and by entering the competition below you could win a piece of classic and class cinema history.

WYL MENMUIR

Shadow of the Vampire Competition

WIN A CRATE OF METZ!

To celebrate the release of Shadow of the Vampire, we've got lots of goodies to give away to you lucky readers.

The prizes include a crate of Metz, a DVD and video of the original Nosferatu, Penguin classic copies of Bram Stoker's Dracula and limited edition Shadow of the Vampire posters.

To be in with a chance of winning, all you have to do is answer the following question:

Which stand up comedian plays the real estate salesman in Shadow of the Vampire?

Drop your answers into The Courier office by Wednesday 14th February.

Good luck to you all!

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Unilever

THE ALL NU METALHEADZ

MY VITRIOL

@UNION: MONDAY

MY VITRIOL. Go on, say it out loud. As names go they don't get much worse than that.

It probably resonates with the sort of person who thinks JJ72 are the future of 'Rock and Roll', whatever that means.

If angsty, angry indie rawk is your cup of musical cha, then you'd be well-advised shuffling down to the Bassment on Monday. "The Vitriol" are in toon, backed up by Thirteen:13 and Mo*ho*bish*o*pi.

Clearly all of the bands on offer share an interest in smashing the system via their use of extremely poor names and odd punctuation. You'll be joined at the gig by a host of buck-toothed fifteen year olds with damaged hair who have told their parents about their latest piercing and are lying about being told off by the "establishment".

In a recent NME interview, My Vitriol's lead singer Som declared: "for me everything begins and ends with Nirvana", which possibly means he has lived a very closeted life.

Don't despair, though - he also likes Jeff Buckley, so perhaps the metal leanings of the band may yet be tempered by their love of a half-decent tune.

Sadly, the only other point of interest about the band is their ongoing feud with indie no-marks Crashland. Which, when you think about it, isn't very interesting at all.

New album 'Finelines' is out in March, so soon you'll be able to judge for yourselves whether My Vitriol can hold your interest amongst the current glut of so-called 'nu-metal' bands.

In the meantime, you can put on your favourite black t-shirt or dress (or maybe both) and enjoy an evening surfing through a sea of sweat and bad hair in the moshpit.

For one night only, the Monument will be deserted, with many an unridden skateboard to be seen.

So what are you waiting for? Tickets are only £6 in advance, and maybe your head will fall off as you violently rock your little heart out.

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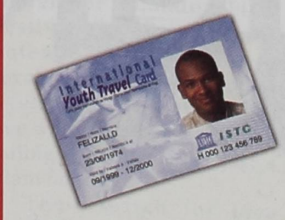
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REVIEWS ALBUMS...

SPOOKS: S.I.O.S.O.S - VOLUME I

(ARTEMIS)

HAVE you heard 'Things I've Seen' by this lot? If you had, you would stick this album on with higher expectations than Peter Stringfellow on a night out.

And you'd be disappointed. Tracks like 'Something Fresh' are often anything but, and Edwina Currie would suspiciously sniff a few of these.

This is not a shocker though, as the chilled blues of 'Sweet Revenge' demonstrates.

Occasionally slick.

AL MILLAR

LOWGOLD: JUST BACKWARD OF SQUARE

(NUDE)

LOWGOLD have (somehow) been blagging support slots with the likes of Doves and Coldplay. The association with these top acts does them less favours than Ebenezer Scrooge.

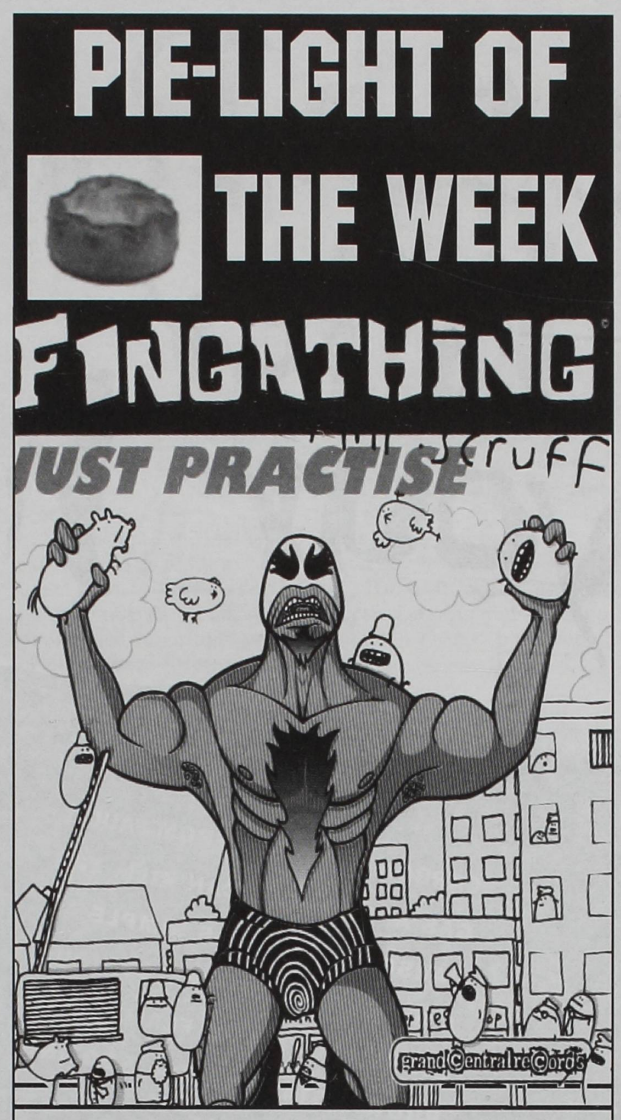
This plods unimaginatively along like an industrious midfielder with the proverbial "good engine".

The best tunes like 'Never Alone', 'Mercury' and 'Into The Void' are OK, but the rest just don't cut the Colemans.

AL MILLAR



PIE-LIGHT OF THE WEEK



FINGATHING (WITH MR. SCRUFF): JUST PRACTICE

(GRAND CENTRAL)

HOME OF Rae & Christian, Aim and now Fingathing, Grand Central have helped set up Manchester as the hip-hop hood of Europe.

And for every badass, break-funk record they put out there's an equal amount of the weird and wonderful.

Fingathing are a scratch DJ and double bass player, Mr. Scruff a legendary purveyor of the eccentric. Collectively they've pasted together scratches, beats and old "teach yourself guitar" records into a crazy, funky little tune.

If Spinal Tap ever did a play guitar record, this would be it.

An essential pie-light.

TOM HORDER

FILA BRAZILIA REMIXES: ANOTHERLATENIGHT

(AZULI) 4

THESE compilations just keep on coming - Groove Armada's "All Back To Mine," the DJ Kicks series, the Kruder and Dorfmeister sessions, for example.

And why not? The coffee table is by no means full.

This is an unadventurous yet flawless selection from the big bins of funk, reggae, hip hop, trip hop - all the usual suspects are present and correct: Mr.Scruff ('Get A Move On', of course) David Holmes, John Barry, Nightmares on Wax, Marvin Gaye, Brian Eno, The Beta Band, et al.

Facts: is it good? Yes, very. Has it got some random choices? Yep, check out the reggae of Prince Alla. Will it change the world? Ah, no.

But it will make it better to live in.

TOM FENWICK

STEPHEN MALKMUS: SWEDISH REGGAE

(DOMINO)

WEIRD title, weird songs. That's about as positive as I can get.

Lyrically this (whiny) Yank needs to go back to High School: "you're just such monumental slime".

Now and again, the miracle of a decent tune wriggles out of the trash - 'Black Book' and 'Discretion Grove' are at least hummable.

It's obvious why there's so many strange and loud samples on this though - to save your hands the hard work of covering lugholes.

AL MILLAR



SINGLES..

GOLDFRAPP: HUMAN

(MUTE)

ONCE upon a time someone invented something.

Very cleverly, they stole a hip hop beat, slowed it down, made some eerie noises and found either a troubled young lady (preferably from public school) or a doped-up ex car thief (preferably from jail) to sing. They called it trip hop.

Now associated with coffee houses and middle age dinner parties, it's found in record shops shelved next to easy listening. And Goldfrapp is trip hop at its worst - brash, over dramatic and cliched.

Sounding like Shirley Bassey on downers, with the Chuckle Brothers taking care of spooky background noises, this is as misguided as it is unnecessary.

TOM HORDER

KINGS OF CONVENIENCE:

WINNING A BATTLE, LOSING THE WAR (SOURCE)

IF QUIET is the new loud (Coldplay, Travis etc), this is deafening. Two Norwegians, two acoustic guitars, a shared love of nature and a defeatist outlook on life.

Lo-fi beauty or minimalist whinging? You decide.

With a nod to Simon and Garfunkel, a wink to Belle and Sebastian and a pilfering of Eagles style sincerity, Kings of Convenience make prime time "you've just been dumped and have no friends" bedsit melancholia.

'Winning a battle, losing the war' is a typical heart wrenching slice of quiet - perfect for soup drinking, TCP gargling nights in.

Not for the happy.

TOM HORDER

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Dull-ham Get Draw

By CAMILLA TABOR
HOCKEY CORRESPONDENT

IN A DISMAL derby Newcastle failed to repeat their drubbing of archrivals Durham and in the end were lucky to come away with a point after a 1-1 draw.

Having come from 2-0 down to record a 6-2 win over Durham when the sides met before Christmas, Newcastle had high hopes of completing a league double.

But despite taking the lead, the Royal Blues struggled against a much improved opposition.

For the first ten minutes of the game Newcastle narrowly had the upper hand with a couple of shots on target being well saved.

In contrast, Durham were struggling to find the target with their rare shots.

Newcastle kept up the pressure and after a spate of attacks were rewarded in the 18th minute.

From a fine short corner set piece Andy Fry found the back of the net and it looked as if Newcastle were on their way to victory.

But Durham weren't going to lie down and with an increased determination they turned the tables with a sustained attack.

And it was more down to good fortune rather than the Royal Blues defence that Durham's efforts weren't rewarded.

Going into the second half, the away side continued to dominate with Newcastle's defence really having to prove themselves under the constant pressure.

Newcastle had a couple of chances of extending their lead but a good Durham defence, meant the Royal Blues rarely looked like scoring again.

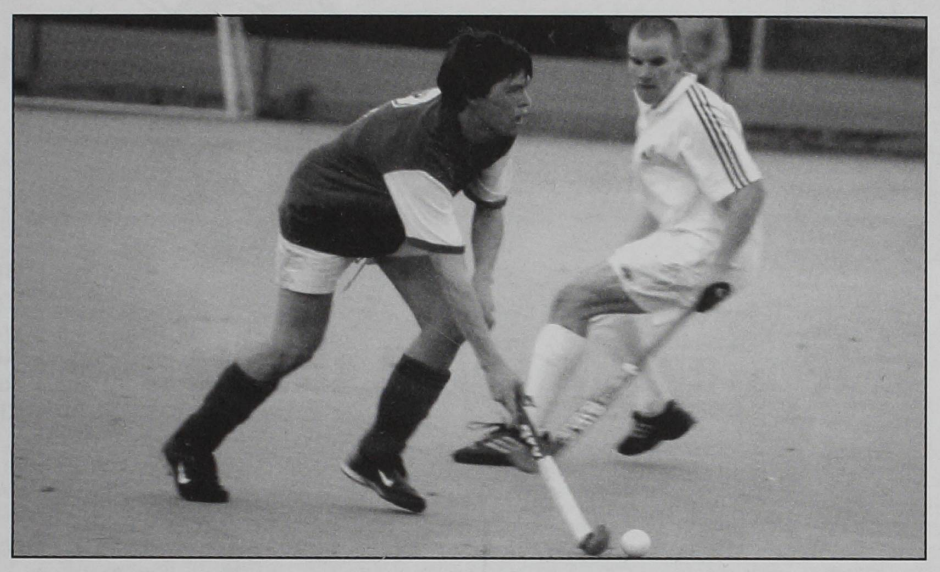
Drawing to the end of the match both sides were desperate to score and the fraught nerves amongst the players led to an ugly period of play where a total of four cards were given.

Durham continued to dominate and deservedly scored an equaliser.

From a short corner the ball touched many sticks before beating the keeper.

Newcastle rallied well, but with a couple of their own short corners were unable to get back into the lead.

Durham went near to scoring again, but the final whistle meant both teams had to be content with a point.



By CAMILLA TABOR
HOCKEY CORRESPONDENT

THE LADIES hockey side were unable to reproduce their brilliant form against Loughborough when they slipped to a 3-1 home defeat against Birmingham.

Birmingham took the lead in the 10th minute with a fine goal after a good run by one of the opposition players.

Newcastle responded bravely and produced a fine display of passing and running in response to Birmingham's speedy attacks.

However, in the second half Birmingham drew two goals clear and with a fine strike from a short corner extended their lead even further.

Newcastle were down but not out and after a stunning run by Jenny McDonough, who played excellently throughout, Alexa Birt finally got Newcastle on the score sheet.

Captain Laura Stone felt that Newcastle were not disgraced by this defeat against the second best side in the country.

And the side can certainly take plenty of positives from this game for the rest of their campaign.

Before Christmas, the Royal Blues played some of their best hockey of the season when they defeated Loughborough 2-1.

After Newcastle dominated the opening twenty minutes and missed a couple of excellent chances, Loughborough took the lead against the run of play.

But Susie Richmond levelled the scores after a well worked move.

Resolute defence kept the Royal Blues in the game and saw their hard work rewarded when Lucinda Insall-Jones fired home a rebound following a shot from Alexa Birt.

Freshers Marie Bailey amd Lisa Bashford were particularly impressive as they ran rings around the Loughborough defence.

Rugby league look to future

By CHRIS HURST
SPORTS EDITOR

ANDY RALEIGH'S rugby-league side has achieved one of the greatest results in Newcastle University's sporting history.

The Royal Blues defeated Hunslet Warriors 36-22 to win their opening round of the Challenge Cup - rugby-league's version of the FA Cup.

And although they were crushed 51-8 in their 2nd Round Clash with Leigh Miners Rangers, the side can be proud of their efforts, which has put Newcastle University well and truly onto the rugby-league map.

Going into their match against Hunslet, many were predicting that Newcastle would suffer a crushing defeat.

But with home advantage, the Royal Blues started strongly and went into an early lead following two penalties from Roger McGill.

Encouraged by this bright start the Uni side began to play with more confidence and were rewarded by tries from Mike Shires, Andy Raleigh and Eamonn Ruane.

Hunslet came fighting back, although having defended stoutly it was Newcastle who once again took the initiative.

Marshalled by Shires and McGill, the backs made good yards and Alex Stott, following fine work from Adam Martin, finished a fine try.

Martin himself was on the score sheet in the latter stages of the game to complete a famous victory.

And so rattled were the Warriors by their defeat, they even had a man dismissed in the latter stages of the game for dissent.

Although the side suffered a heavy defeat in their clash with Leigh Miners Rangers, Captain Andy Raleigh believed the game had been an important learning experience.

"To be fair, they were a higher standard but we learnt a lot of things from it and especially in the first-round a lot of the team were worried about the game.

"However, we proved that we are good enough."

Rob Powell, Club President, said: "It was our best performance ever. It was a high standard of competition against a team which had ex professionals in, which was a bit of a difference to student level."

When asked whether rugby-league is now firmly established as one of the top sports at Newcastle, Powell admitted the club still had a lot of work to do.

He said: "Our squad still hasn't got enough strength in depth. Although there is a good squad of 25-30 people, we need a bigger squad to compete."

And Powell agreed that the club is now receiving sufficient support from the university sports chiefs.

He said: "As long as we continue to get what we get at the moment, I'll be happy.

"We had a lot of help on the day and Colin Blackburn in particular helped us a lot."

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WEDNESDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2001

HOWAY FIVE - 0

Edge Hill crushed as side step up BUSA challenge

By JO JOHNSTON

RICK SELLERS' football side stepped up their challenge for BUSA glory as they thumped Edge Hill 5-0.

But coach Alan Brown claimed their performance wasn't a brilliant one.

"We might have won 5-0 but it wasn't a professional performance. We were careless and lost a lot of possession and will need to improve considerably if we are to get any further in the BUSA competition this year.

"We were fitter and stronger than the opposition which is why we won, but we are capable of playing much better."

But captain Rick Sellers was more positive about the match.

"I felt we played quite well and had a lot of possession. It could probably have been about 12-0 but our striking wasn't as good as it should have been.

"Having said that it was still quite a good victory. We defended well and gave them few real opportunities."

The first half was fairly even and although the Royal Blues had a lot of possession they were unable to find the back of the net for the first half hour.

Denis Barbe finally opened the scoring on 35 minutes after an Edge Hill defensive blunder left him with an open goal to aim at.

The start of the second half saw the Royal Blues consolidate their lead.

Denis Barbe who scored such a vital goal on the opening day of the campaign against Crewe and Alsager, was once again the Cochrane Park hero.

Two quick goals in quick succession from the Seychelles born student completed his hat-trick and effectively ended any hopes that Edge Hill had off getting back into the match.

And the Uni extended their lead a few minutes later when Alex Houlsby wrong footed the keeper to make it 4-0.

Despite this, Edge Hill rallied well and had some periods of pressure, as Newcastle began to ease off sightly as they became more and more tired.

And the side know that they will have to improve their fitness even more as they face a gruelling fixture programme due to the amount of matches that were postponed before Christmas.

Sellers had to save a couple of shots on goal before a breakaway saw Denis Barbe miss an open goal before Ben Chesters eventually made it 5-0.

This win should set Newcastle up well for a successful second half of the season, as their play improved considerably in the second half.

It was a good day for the football club as the 2nd's beat Leeds Met 7-2 while the third team hammered Sunderland 9-0.



TYNE TO CELEBRATE... Newcastle University's football stars enjoy one of their five goals against Edge Hill last week

UNI STAR FIRES WARNING TO POLY

By CHRIS HURST
SPORTS EDITOR

UNI RUGBY star Dave Hasswell has fired a warning to arch rivals Northumbria ahead of today's big clash at Kingston Park.

And Hasswell thinks that the Royal Blues have a good chance of avenging their two defeats against the Poly in last season's big games.

Vice-captain Hasswell said: "I think that the game will be close and that we'll win by five points.

"Hopes are very high as they are not as good as they were last year.

"The game will be won and lost in the forward pack, but it would be stupid of us to concentrate on playing there as they have a huge pack.

"We want to get it wide to the backs and attack them."

Although the team hasn't played for a couple of months, the side have been putting in hard work in their training sessions in order to get themselves ready for one of the biggest matches in university rugby.

And the side will be especially determined to get a good result, following some disappointing results in the run up to Christmas.

Hasswell knows just how important it is for Newcastle to beat the Poly.

He said: "I am looking forward to it. It is a big game and people rate how successful a season was just on the result of this game.

"We want to prove that last season's result was a fluke."

The game at Kingston Park kicks off at 7.00pm and there are high hopes of attracting a massive crowd to the match.

The ground is within five minutes walk of Kingston Park metro station.

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