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TODAY

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RAMPAGE AT RICKY ROAD

Frenzied man threatens to behead terrified freshers

By JAKE LEE
NEWS EDITOR

OVER THIRTY freshers were left terrified, shocked and "scared out of their minds" when a deranged man entered their block of flats on Richardson Road, smashed windows and repeatedly threatened to cut off their heads.

First year Newcastle students in Block 21 of Ricky Road who were returning in the early hours of Sunday morning found a drunken, abusive man attempting to enter their stairway, which leads to six flats.

"He was big. He didn't look like a student," said first-year Amy Holme, who witnessed the event. "We were scared. Even the lads were scared".

"He said he was going to kill us. He said he was going to cut all our heads off," Madeline Harwood told The Courier.

Once in the stairwell, he smashed two windows and banged on the six flat doors.

It remains unknown how the man got through the locked door that leads into the stairwell.

The danger wasn't immediately obvious as students in the upper flats said that at three o'clock in the morning, with music on from flats downstairs, it sounded like drunken students "messing about".

No students were harmed, but the man's wrists were badly cut after punching and smashing the windows. Blood stains on the walls were clearly visible the following morning.

Students have long campaigned for better security including 24 hour CCTV cameras at Richardson Road, especially in light of the many burglaries that take place.

Those in Block 21 are angry that nobody from Richardson Road Accommodation has been to see them to explain the event. Many of the students are living away from home for the first time, and had been in their flats for just a few days.

"I think we should have intercoms on the doors," said Madeline Harwood.

Some of the Richardson Road flats do have intercoms, but block 21, where the incident took place doesn't, and students do not know when they might be installed.

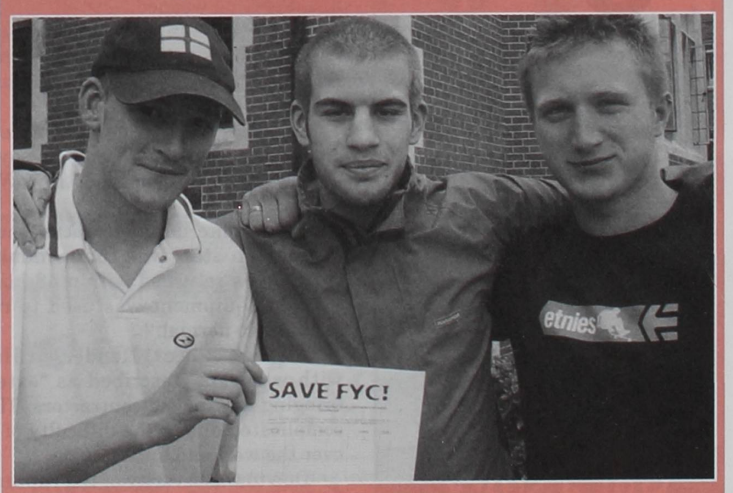
An intercom could have prevented the event, as those asking to enter the stairwell can speak directly to those they wish to see, rather than just asking one of the ground floor flats to let them in on the basis that they know someone in the upper flats.

"Nobody has said anything about it" said Alexandra Davis, and students are now wondering if it could happen again.

Nobody at Richardson Road Accommodation Services was available for comment as The Courier went to press.

A man has been charged with offences relating to the incident. He has been released on bail.

Uprising!



THREE FORMER Senior Stewards have lanched a campaign to get FYC Organisers reinstated after their abolition last year. Full story p. 5

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UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

The Courier is the independent newspaper of the Student Union at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. Established in 1948, The Courier is published weekly during term time.

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STUDENTS ACCUSED IN NUS HOSTAGE DRAMA

Occupation at NUS London HQ as debt abolition ideas dismissed

By JAKE LEE
NEWS EDITOR

TWO NEWCASTLE Uni have spoken out over accusations that they took hostages during an occupation of the NUS offices over the summer.

Led by the disaffected NUS National Executive Committee, 20 members occupied the National Union of Students' London offices for more than 40 hours.

They included Newcastle students Nicci Crofts, a third-year Biology student and last year's Union Women's Officer, and Will Wiles, a Philosophy post-grad and co-chair of the Campaign for Free Education.

They were protesting over a range of cuts.

Crofts told The Courier: "What we did was legal, it is our building."

"The NUS leadership are ignoring us and so we had no option but to get them to stand up and listen".

The NUS says the protestors were "childish and destructive", claiming their occupation incurred costs of over £20,000.

Workers at the NUS claim they were taken hostage as they were denied access to certain parts of the building by the protestors.

"Two NEC officers had to stay to keep an eye on us. By the evening they wanted to get food. On the grounds of humanity we allowed them medicine but didn't allow them food" said Wiles. He was at pains to explain that at all times they could leave.

The police were called, but were satisfied that there was no hostage taking.

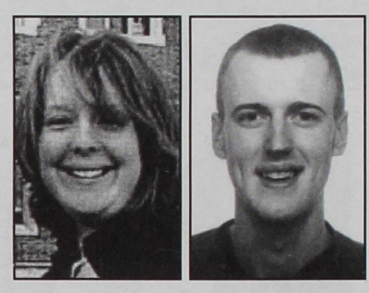
"The spirit was great. It was done very well. It was all formulated very quickly" explained Crofts.

"It was great fun getting into the building. There was a member who opened the building with her card. She dropped all her papers and propped open the door. Then everyone came charging through".

The protestors object to how the NUS proposes to cut its deficit of around £300,000 by 2004, which would mean a tighter rein on expenses, a stricter line on affiliation fee collections, the abolition of the Women's Unit, and fewer mailings to less active unions.

"I'm on the NEC but they won't let me look at the books, so God knows what the truth is," said NEC member, Lee Sergent, referring to the serious debt the NUS is facing.

It is estimated that losses by the NUS could add up to £1.5 million in 3 years time.



CROFTS AND WILES ... The accused

Not so fresh after gas leak

By LAURA CHARLTON
AND AIMEE WOOD

500 STUDENTS suffered serious disruption after a potentially dangerous gas leak at Henderson Halls of Residence last week.

A ruptured pipe cut off all gas supply to the majority of Henderson, resulting in a loss of hot water and kitchen facilities.

One first-year Marine Biology stuudent who was conerned for his health said simply: "It was a bit dodgy."

The concerns of the majority of students were more trivial.

Lack of hot water for two days was the biggest worry. One student told The Courier: "I'm just worried about getting washed."

Food was transported from the kitchens at Castle Leazes. Most students were grateful for the rapid response, but some slammed Castle Leazes notoriously unpalatable cuisine.

One angry fresher described the food as "crap".

Another raged: "When you pay all these fees you expect things to run smoothly. We should get some money back."

But despite initial setbacks, the response from the Henderson staff was commendable. The hot water supply was returned within 48 hours and specialized kitchen equipment was used to return the catering facilities to normal.

Alison Younger, Henderson Hall Manager, dealt with what she described as "extensive damage" by bringing in external contractors. The task was further complicated due to the difficulty of employing workers over the weekend.

Due to the severity of the rupture, contractors were called away from other sites and are believed to have worked around the clock.

A member of staff commented: "It has been a huge inconvenience and staff have done everything they possibly can."

As The Courier went to press, the repairs were said to be nearing completion.

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STUDENT YOLKERS POACH ART SCHOOL EGGS-HIBIT

Scrambled pranksters steal giant egg mould and whisk it away to Marris House

By NAOMI HAY-GIBSON

AN EGG-traordinary Freshers' Week prank has left porters shell-shocked.

A group of students pulled off the egg-centric late-night theft of a giant egg-shaped mould from outside theArt department.

They trundled it through the University only to dump it at Marris House.

The egg, a huge mould for a project to place dinosaur-sized eggs in a local wood, was hi-jacked outside the department where it had been left, due to be dumped.

"It's quite a help, in a way " said Steve Rowarth, who knows the artist in question. The egg left a snail-like trail, and as it picked up speed it careered into trees, walls and bollards, finally ending up at Marris House.

University porters were left to find a big enough skip to dump it in.

Beryl Carnaffin, receptionist at the Fine Art Department, said: "If somebody sees something strange, they just take it, even though it's not strange to us".

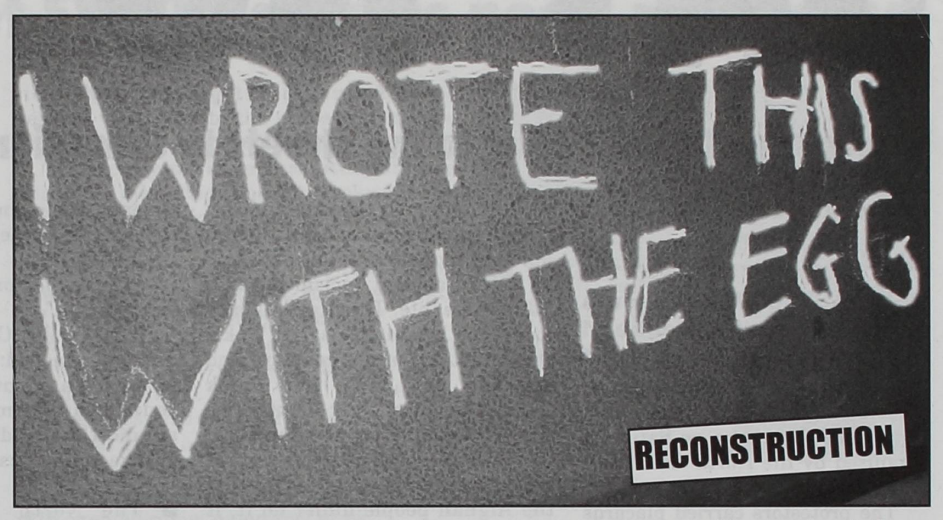
The artist, Joe Hillier , now in New Orleans, may be amused at the egg-stravagant stunts that his work has been involved in.

Shattered pieces of the monster mould were used to scrawl slogans such as "NUFC" and the highly-original "I wrote this with the egg".

The first porters on the scene were called to help by the finder with the immortal words: "I've got a big white egg here, and I can't lift it...'

There are now concerns that the light-fingered revellers may be egged on to attempt an even more daring prank.

But vigilant porters are determined to leave them with egg on their faces.



EGGS-TRAORDIANRY... Cryptic message that greeted Marris House residents after theft

Drugs bust at Castle Leazes

Four expelled by university officials

By JAKE LEE
NEWS EDITOR

CASTLE LEAZES is expelling FOUR students caught smoking cannabis.

This is a highly unusual move by the University, which rarely takes such a hard line in such cases.

A spokesperson from the University said: "It is some time since students were expelled from halls." He was unable to recall a previous incident.

The students were caught in the early hours of 17 September, with a disciplinary hearing occurring the following day.

"Expulsion from the halls is an option. It was warranted," said the spokesperson. The pot-smoking students have been given until 3 October to vacate their rooms.

The police have not been involved, although it remains an option.

Two of the four students are appealing against the decision.

Those students appealing may stay until the appeal, if it occurs after 3 October.

The Courier spoke to a range of students who have lived at Castle Leazes over recent years, and none could recall the halls expelling students for smoking cannabis.

In an era when police officers have been told to ignore personal cannabis consumption in parts of London, many students seem surprised at the decision.

"They shouldn't be expelling students from halls just for smoking cannabis," said a third year Politics students who didn't wish to be named.

■ Are you one of the Castle Leazes Four? The Courier wants to hear your story. Email courier.news@ncl.ac.uk or call 0191 232 4050.

S C A N

MILLENNIUM VOLUNTEERS

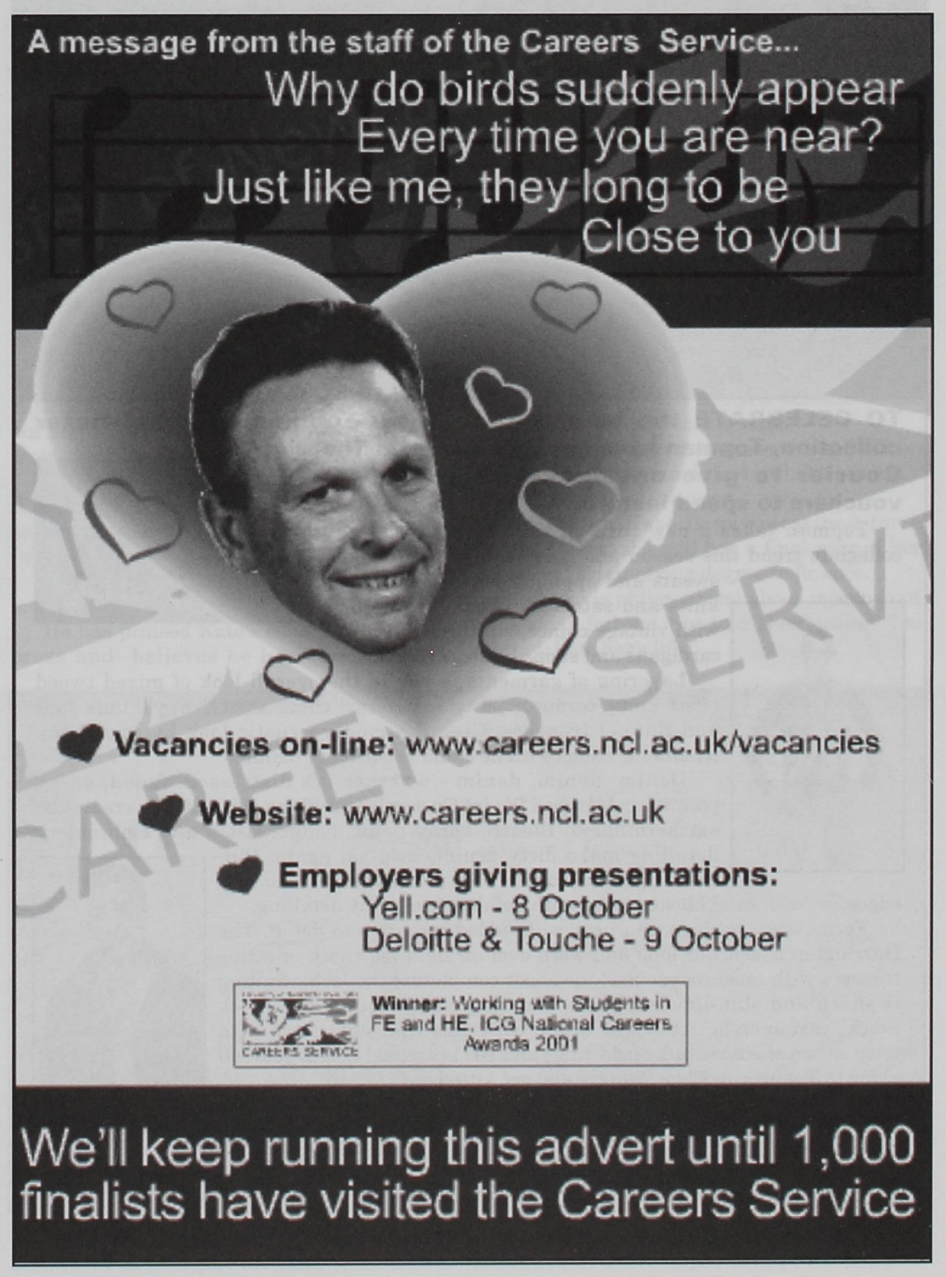
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Did you pass before 1998 and have catergory D1E on your license?
Do you like Bouncy Castles?

If the answers are yes then we need you help. SCAN's Inflatables project is in desperate need of drivers to take out volunteers and a trailor full or bouncy equipment once a week! If this sounds like something you could do, even only occasionally, please get in touch

Student Community Action Newcastle will help you "do it for free" and get some voluntary experience

MILLENNIUM VOLUNTEERS

S C A N



UNI STUDENTS SAY NO TO WAR

Newcastle students take to the streets to campaign for a peaceful solution to the international crisis

By PAUL CROSTHWAITE
EDITOR

NEWCASTLE UNI students protested at the weekend against the proposed bombing of Afghanistan.

They were part of a rally and vigil in the city centre on Saturday organised by the North East Anti-War Coalition.

The protestors carried placards bearing slogans reading "No more victims", "Justice through law not war" and "An eye for an eye makes the world go blind".

Lisa Harvey Smith, an Astronomy and Astrophysics Masters student and a former Union officer, told The Courier:

"The Coalition's aim is to educate, stimulate debate and call for the government not to bomb innocent civilians.

"We're against racism towards Islamic people. During the rally today one by-stander said, 'Pakis should get out of our country,' and another said, 'If they kick Christians out of their country, we should kick Muslims out of ours.'

"Lots of people have bigotted views, but they have to realise that the Afghan people didn't do it, it was the terrorists.

"The attitude of 'Just bomb the fuckers' isn't the solution."

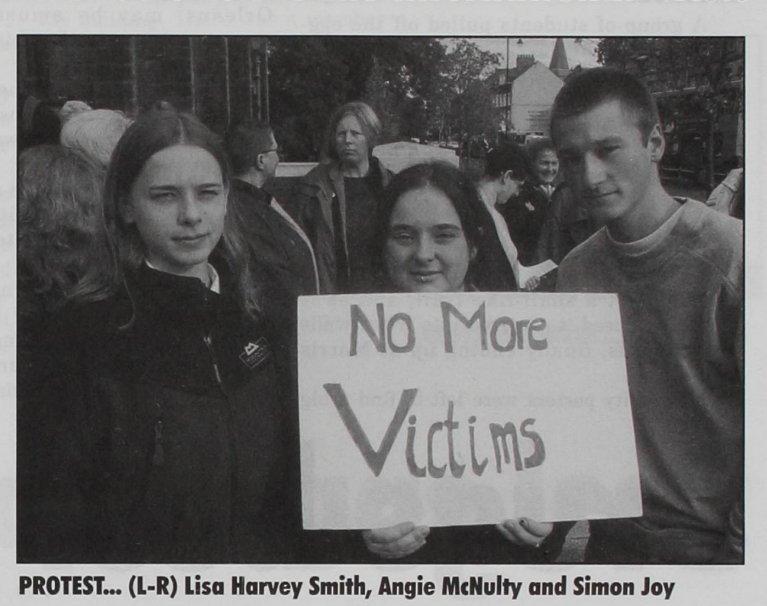
Second-year Social Policy student Angie McNulty said: "I don't agree with the war. It hasn't even been proved yet that Bin Laden was responsible.

"Also, the terrorists must have anticipated a retaliation by America when they were planning the attacks, so they must think that can handle it.

"The situation could escalate very quickly."

Newcastle College student Simon Joy added: "To stop attacks on western countries we need to reduce anti-American feeling around the world. This requires a change in America's foreign policy."

■ The North East Anti-War Coalition is holding a 'Teach-in' at Newcastle University Students' Union on Wednesday in the Debating Chamber from 1 pm. Experts from the History and Politics departments will be explaining the backround to the current crisis and taking part in a discussion. All welcome.



PROTEST... (L-R) Lisa Harvey Smith, Angie McNulty and Simon Joy

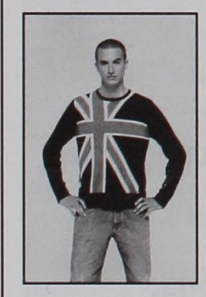
Dress to impress this term!

Win £100 worth of Topman vouchers

TO CELEBRATE the launch of the new Topman Autumn/winter collection, Topman have got together with The Courier to give one lucky fella £100 of vouchers to spend instore.



Topman takes a new turn on the current American collegiate trend this season and goes vintage with varsity sweats and appliqué letters on jackets, knits and satchels. Wear logo t-shirts with vintage chinos, zip through knitted cardigans and striped college scarves.



Layering of garments is key to the overall look of mixed tweed effect knits, corduroy jackets, tattersal check shirts, argyle tank tops and flannel trousers. Create a modern rustic look by combining traditional items with new and washed out denim.

Denim, denim, denim - whether it's distressed, faded, spray painted or bleached it's in! Customise anything this season - create the extraordinary! Bleach, spray paint, badge, stitch and embroidery detailing make dirty denims original again. Pin-tucked denim jackets with faded patches and raw edges, sit with sand blasted jeans with subtle use of army detailing.



Formalwear is clean and neat with added attention to detail. The Harrington is short or long and worn over straight leg check or stripe trousers with mushroom chisel toe shoes completing the look. Suiting is sharp and slim-line in double and single-breasted styles. 'Lock Stock', casino style is brought to life with pinstripe suits worn with crisp cotton shirts, chunky gold rings and I-D bracelets! So get yourself along to Topman in Eldon Square and get kitted out.

To win £100 worth of Topman vouchers answer this simple question: Which shopping centre in Newcastle has a Topman store? Answers on a postcard to The Courier office on the 1st floor of the Union by October 10th.

Sleep proven to be more beneficial than lectures!

By EMILY PAYNE and ANNA POLLITT

NEWCASTLE STUDENTS have been been given a new excuse to spend more time in bed, thanks to new research in the Medical Department.

A study has found that extra sleep has significant benefits for both your health and your intellect.

A team of boffins led by Felicity May monitored the effects of sleep deprivation and other variants on 12 volunteers.

The protein TFF2 is naturally produced in our bodies and works while we sleep to repair wear and tear on the stomach lining. Interruption of this process can result in stomach ulcers.

But before you assume that the damage caused by a late night can be counteracted by lying in, the most efficient time for TFF2 production occurs whilst most of us are still on the dance floors.

Alcohol, caffeine, cigarettes and midnight munchies only serve to aggravate the problem.

For once, it is not only the late night party animals at risk; shift workers and hardworking academics who are replacing lost sleep with coffee and other stimulants are making themselves vulnerable to future stomach problems.

Caffeine stimulates acid secretion in the stomach increasing pain, while smoking hinders the healing process of ulcers, and eating late at night supresses protein production.

So next time you find yourself outside Munchies at three in the morning, debating over a kebab or a pizza, think of the turmoil it will create in 40 years time on your stomach!

Newcastle Medic killed in bus crash

A NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY Medicine student died in a bus crash in Africa during the summer vacation.

Caroline Long, 23, was among the 38 dead after an overcrowded bus toppled into a ravine as it turned a sharp corner on a remote road in southern Zambia.

Another Newcastle Medic, Ishbel McDougall, 23, was also involved in the accident. She survived a 14 hour ordeal before being rescued, but doctors were forced to amputate her injured right leg.

Miss Long's father, Andrew, said of his daughter: "She always wanted to visit Africa. Who knows what she would have gone on to do."

EX-STEWARDS IN BID TO SAVE FYC JOBS

Three lads launch campaign to get FYC Organisers posts reinstated

By ANN CLIFFORD
DEPUTY EDITOR

A GROUP OF Newcastle students are launching a campaign to prevent the abolition of FYC organisers.

Tom Hopes, Phil Brown and William Shaw, all of whom were senior stewards at this years event, are starting up a petition in the hope that it will convince Union officers to continue with the current system.

Union Council voted to scrap the FYC organisers posts last year after former Communications Officer Ian Kitchen argued that the move would save the Union money.

However, the decision needs to be endorsed at the next Union Council meeting, and the protesters intend to put forward an objection.

"This years' organisers were fantastic and we want their good work carried on," said Phil.

"Newcastle is the only students union where freshers' week is run for students by students and we believe it should stay that way."

"We're not campaigning as potential organisers," Tom told The Courier. "We believe the FYC system as it stands is better than the proposed change."

"The current system should stay not because of tradition but because it works."

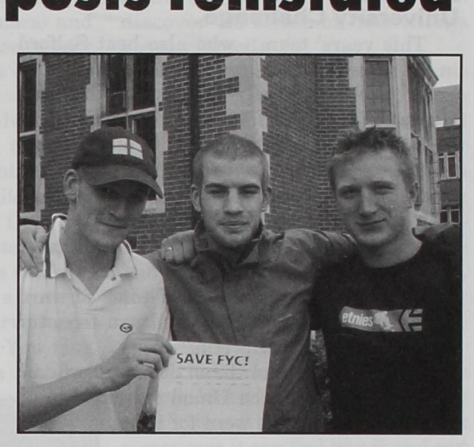
The campaigners agree with Communications Officer Geraldine Englard's view that handing the organisation of freshers week over to the sabbatical officers would prove to be a mistake.

"It's really positive that students are starting to take action and get involved in the running of the Union - that's what the Union is all about," she said.

"Their campaign will provide information on whether people want FYC run by students and it will help us to reach a decision."

Englard is also holding focus group meetings for first-years to discuss their experiences of FYC.

Meetings will be held on 4th and 5th October at 12pm or 3pm in the training room on the first floor of the Union. Anyone interested should contact her on 0191 239 3916 or email comm.union@ncl.ac.uk



Phil Brown, Tom Hopes and William Shaw

Student's discovery worth millions

But she gets a mere £50 from chemical company boss who stands to make a fortune

By SARA ARIFF and LISA BRUEN

A FOURTH-YEAR Chemical Engineering student has solved a problem that has baffled scientists for 30 years.

But Kate Brookes received a measly £50 bonus for her discovery, which could net millions for her boss.

Kate was based at Preston firm Kleentec International on the STEPS work placement programme.

The scheme requires students to sign a contract that denies them any legal entitlement to profits from their findings, but employers can choose to reward them for their work.

The Courier spoke to Kleentec boss Nigel Whitaker, who refuted claims he had previously made in the The Daily Mail that "we will make millions of pounds from this."

In fact, Mr. Whitaker claimed to have a mere 50p in his bank account!

He has praised Kate's achievement in the press and believes he has given Kate "a passport to a good job" - sufficient reward in itself .

Whitaker spent a quarter of a million pounds over a ten year period trying to find the formula for a protective glaze that would stop erosion of the cheap glass alternative, polycarbonate glazing.

Kate was handed the problem as her project for the STEPS placement and warned by Whitaker that "failure is not an option."

Within six weeks she had cracked the formula, which is set to revolutionise the industry.

Despite this, Whitaker chose to give Kate a mere £50 reward..

And Kate's completion of the STEPS programme has been delayed because of the magnitude of her breakthrough.

She was required to present her findings but was forbidden to do so until the product's launch in July of this year.

Although Kate is now destined for a bright career, she still has a final year of her Chemical Engineering degree to finance.

Yet she is philosophical about missing out on a small fortune. She told The Courier: "I'm gutted, but that's life."



BROOKS... Received a mere £50 for breakthrough that could net her boss millions

Win your height in chocolate!

FAIR TRADE CHOCOLATE GIVEAWAY

- NO GIANTS ALLOWED!!

Divine

CHOCOLATE - one of the UK's favourite treats - the industry is worth 3.6 billion annually!!

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Simply by choosing Divine and Dubble Fairtrade Marked chocolate bars students can make a difference and send a clear message to companies backing an alternative way of trading.

To get you all salivating The Courier have joined with Divine and Dubble to offer one lucky reader the chance to win their height in fair trade chocolate!!

All you've got to do is **name two fair trade chocolate bars**, write these down on a postcard and hand it into The Courier office along with your name and contact details (your address and phone number/email address).

Don't forget to include your height!

Entries must be received by 10th October.

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RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

They've been quizzed by Paxman, but can Newcastle's University Challenge team face a grilling from The Courier?

By ALISON OVEREND and ANTHONY WALKER

IN THE next couple of weeks BBC2 will be showing Newcastle's finest overturning the so-called elite of British education, Downing College, Cambridge on the prestigious quiz programme University Challenge.

This years' team - who also beat Salford in the second round - consists of: captain Phil Lockley who is a 3rd year Architecture and History student; Ian Hale, 2nd year Politics; Arthur Brown , studying Politics and French; and Steve Walker who is doing a Phd in Free Radicals. We caught up with some of the team for a quick pint in the Mens Bar .

Courier: I heard that it was a story in The Courier about how no-one had come forward from Newcastle that inspired you to enter the competition. Is this true?
Ian: Yeah, I did read the article, and when I saw the posters in the Union I decided to go for it. Eight students went for it but only four were selected. Luckily I was one of them.
Phil: I picked up a copy of The Courier and then rang Granada to apply.

Courier: Did you know each other before University Challenge?
Ian: I knew Phil because we had a few seminars together but I hadn't met the others.
Steve: I knew no-one until we met up for an audition and there was a bunch of idiot dentists and these politics guys, so I teamed with them.

Courier: So how much time did training for University Challenge take up?
Ian: Not much time and very little effort for me. I flicked through a couple of quiz books and played Trivial Pursuit a few times but that was it. I'm taking it a lot more seriously now though!
Phil: I only entered for a laugh.
Arthur: But we're are taking it a bit more seriously now.

Courier: What was it like on set?
Ian: It was good, the alcohol was free and it was good to mix with the other teams.

Courier: So what is Paxman like? Good bloke or up his own ass?
Ian: He's actually quite a funny guy, sociable and friendly.
Arthur: It was like, here is this guy who grills politicians, and now he's talking to us saying he likes students.
Steve: He really liked us and asked if we were crapping ourselves when we were losing. But he cannot pronounce 'sphignomanometer'.
Courier: The fool!

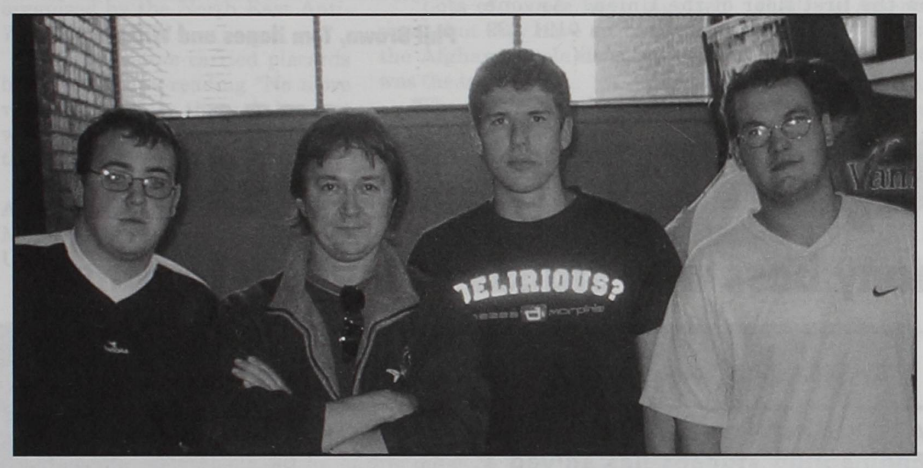
Courier: Was it pretty much a team performance?
Ian: No. Steve was the star of the first round because we found ourselves at least seventy points down after the first set of questions but he rescued us with his scientific knowledge. But against Salford the questions were more varied so we all answered a fair share. Except Dave, our stand-in, who got all the perks of the trip but sat in the audience and laughed at us.
Arthur: Steve pulled it out of the bag when we were down and out.
Steve: I just felt I had to get one over all of the posh kids and Cambridge toffs.

Courier: Any stories from the show?
Ian: Phil thought that Eddie Stobart was an 18th century historian. And we won the first round against Cambridge by five points even though our winning answer was wrong - we said 'Dundee United' when the correct answer was 'Dundee' - so we had to go back for a tie-break question two weeks later.
Arthur: That was so tense. We all had the answer in our minds but it took us three seconds to answer.

Courier: How do you fancy your chances against Edinburgh?
Ian: They are the highest scoring losers so they must be quite good, but we have actually won, so I don't know. We should win.
Phil: We are actually quite good. I haven't seen anyone else get over 200 points so we're confident.
Steve: Hopefully, if we win we may get more support from the University, who have shown little interest in us till now.

Courier: Finally, how have you adjusted to the life of celebrity glamour?
Arthur: We don't really know because we haven't been on telly yet, but apparently you get fan mail from grannies.
Phil: (jokingly) It's a great chat up line!
Steve: I've already had my five minutes of fame during the 70's in a heavy metal rock band.
Ian:Well it has been hard, there's no privacy, I can't even step out of my door without being photographed. Can't even go to the shops.
Courier: Yeah right. We're going now.

The Newcastle team clearly made an impression on their fellow contestants. In an article in the Guardian, one of the UCL team described them as 'tough-looking': "It's a relief to learn they are not our opponents."
The first round of University Challenge against Downing College, Cambridge is televised on Monday 8th October, with the quarter finals against Edinburgh being recorded in three weeks time. If you see the lads about say hello and show them that we are all behind them to beat Durham in the University Challenge final.



CHALLENGERS... (L-R) Ian Hale, Steve Walker, Phil Lockley and Arthur Brown.

Careers prize

By BETH WATSON and ANN CLIFFORD

NEWCASTLE University's Careers Service has won a prestigious award in a national competition.

The ICG National Careers Awards, which are advertised in The Independent, are open to careers services in several different categories including the University's own group - 'Working with students in FE and HE'.

Newcastle's service impressed the judges with its range of facilities, including email notification of vacancies, bookable CV clinics and late night opening.

Nick Keeley, Deputy Director of the Careers Service told The Courier that the department were extremely pleased to have won the award, especially as some of the categories only chose 'highly recommended' services, not winners.

Newcastle students have described the news as "reassuring"

"It's encouraging to know that there are good resources available to us," one first year English student said.

"It will be useful for when I do work experience next summer," said Business Management student Lynsey O'Donnell.

However, some students have claimed that the location of the Careers Service in the Armstrong Building makes it too difficult to find.

"Finding us can be a bit of a problem for people, despite our best advertising efforts" said Keeley , "although figures are rising year on year as people are realising how important and useful the service is."

But confused first-year Politics student Richard Jones mused: "Career? Isn't that in South-East Asia?"



WINNERS... (L-R) Iain Nixon, Careers Service Director Cathryn Harvey and Nick Keeley.

WANTED!
UNION OFFICERS

The Union is holding elections on Friday 26 October.

This is YOUR chance to get involved in running YOUR Union.

The positions open are:

■ **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS OFFICER - represent the International Students across campus and organise the annual International Grand Festival.**

■ **POSTGRAD AND MATURE STUDENTS OFFICER - represent the views of PGMS to the Union.**

■ **CHAIR OF UNION COUNCIL/CONVENOR OF DEBATES - Chair the Union's decision-making body - Council - and encourage debating within the Union.**

INTERESTED? CANDIDATES MEETING ON MONDAY 8 OCTOBER 1PM TRAINING ROOM (1ST FLOOR OF UNION).

The Courier
3 October 2001

IT AIN'T HALL IT'S MADE OUT TO BE

Ah, the halcyon days of the first year. James remembers them all too well...

By JAMES GARBETT
CHIEF REPORTER

So you're a first year. You wake up. It's 9:17. You missed breakfast. You'd make your own but you know its futile as there's nothing left in the fridge because it's all been nicked - probably to satisfy someone's post-boat munchies on Monday night.

After all, you only slept in because the fire alarm went of at half-hour intervals during the night, as some prick kept burning their toast or smashing the glass, or both.

"The fire alarm went off at half-hour intervals, as some prick kept burning their toast"

You get up anyway to take a pee, a moment somewhat ruined by the realization that you've locked yourself out of your room. Which is marvellous because it means a ten-minute trudge down to reception to get a spare key, thus treating around twenty students and fifteen cleaners to an eyesore they'd sooner not see.

Reception is packed, a heaving throng of Cloret-breathed, scarf donning, loud speaking 'mates' performing a passable impression of a cliff full of seagulls. Having convinced the receptionist that you genuinely require a spare key and that you're not stood there in your undies for fun, you plod back and let yourself back in - noticing not for the first time that your room reeks of Stella, kebabs, and the unnamed fungus currently flourishing in your bin.

You take a cold shower then throw some clothes on. Or at least you try - it's not that simple because all the garb you own is gathered in a dirt infested mountain in the corner of your room. Obviously, you'd have washed it sooner, but you never seem to have the three quid and the spare morning you need in order to combat Room 101, sorry, the laundry. You pick out a creased and dirty pair of jeans and saturate them in Febreeze, and so, smelling like your auntie, you set off for your lecture.

After waiting 'til mid-morning for the lift, you bump into various semi-acquaintances on your way out of the warren. After exchanging a series of inane questions with each and every one about: "did you go out last night?" you finally manage to leave halls.

"You pick out a dirty pair of jeans, saturate them in Febreeze and set off for your lecture"

You make it to your lecture for just after eleven, but you're still late and walk in clumsily, footsteps still echoing around the Herschel as you force half a row to shuffle up so you can sit down.

The lecture is ridiculously boring, and you can't take notes because you're too hungry to concentrate and your pen doesn't work even if you tried.

The shuffle of paper rouses you from your semi-catatonic stupor and you join the queue for the exit. Believe it or not, that was your only lecture of the day (yes, that's £1,075 for 5 lectures and 3 seminars) and so the afternoon stretches before you like a great vacuous cavity - without a dentist in sight.

"Yes, that's £1,075 for 5 lectures and 3 seminars"

Your stomach rumbles once more so you head down to get a sarnie from the Bassment, which you devour feverishly while trying to avoid looking at the floor, or anything else for that matter, while eagerly reading this week's Courier.

With your nutritional needs satisfied your attention turns again to the afternoon's plans. You ring your mate, who's still in bed but says they'd love to meet up for lunch if you're hungry and that they'll be down in 20 minutes.

To kill time, you go to the cash machine (again) before sitting on your arse for 35 minutes waiting for them to show up.

Anyway, you get the picture - if somewhat exaggerated.

Being a first year in halls can be lonely, boring, monotonous, or all three. But at the same time they are a tremendous place to meet hundreds of new people and discover all kinds of new things about yourself.

At times it is easy to regress into resenting halls, and all the problematic baggage associated with living with a thousand other people. But it is important to remember that it is your home for the next year - and not some over-inflated boarding school full of rules and regs to bring you down. Sure, the food sucks and you hate your neighbour, but there are worse things in life, so chill.

To be honest, my year in halls wasn't like that and I'm sure yours won't be either, its just that sometimes it can feel like it and you wonder quite why you bothered in the first place. Just deploy a bit of perspective and remember that one day you might well be pleased to have nothing to do.

"Being a first year in halls can be lonely, boring, monotonous, or all three"

And what's more, getting pissed is fun. If someone invites you out and you're feeling knackered or you can't be arsed then it's a good indication that you'll probably regret not going, so just have a coffee, then go and enjoy yourself.



FIRST YEAR... More lows than highs?

GOT A VIEW ON THIS? SHERVENE WANTS TO HEAR IT.

EMAIL
COURIER.NEWS@NCL.AC.UK

RENEGADE RANT

Angry, anonymous and always on the look out for aggro...

It's that time of year again...

Fresher's week is long enough ago for those involved to have recovered and those not involved to have stopped complaining about it (but that's a different rant altogether).

The exams still seem blissfully far away in the future so there's no point actually doing any work, which means the only thing left to do is get pissed.

However, some people don't feel fulfilled by such frivolous activities and begin to search for something else to stimulate the mind in these days of intellectual apathy... This search usually ends when they cast their eye across the road to Northumbria Uni.

Here they believe to have found an institution below their own in terms of academic status and this surely makes it worth slagging off. It doesn't matter how many lectures you missed as a result of being held up in the Mens Bar during your brief but inebriated spell at Uni - as a Newcastle student you will always be intellectually superior to the Poly lot!

I suspect such a killer of an argument wouldn't go down too well with a potential employer when you try to explain away your 2.2 in History. Of course, I don't want to make anyone sweat unduly in their bodywarmers at the thought of being less employable than an Ex-Poly graduate.

Durham Uni looks down on us all the time, and our graduates often beat them to highly desirable jobs (though they're really just jealous because we're good-looking). This might bear thinking about next time you assume a look of superiority as you pass the Poly campus, I think.

Catch up on the latest music reviews on p. 12

Dear Shervene



Words from a wise wee Scottish lass

Well, I see that the controversial Courier has upset a few people (again) - that's what I like to see, students having their rant, yep, just can't get enough of moaning students. This weeks provocative letters are sure to create some heated debates in the next few weeks. Goodee goodee!

Shervene
The Courier
Union Society
King's Walk
Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8QB

Yet more FYC

Dear Shervene,

So, FYC is being hailed as a success? One for next year's organisers to take note of? As some fat bloke off telly says, MY ARSE!
The coverage given by The Courier so far has been unrealistic, is it because one of the Courier staff was an FYC organiser? Naaah
Let's move on to the organisers themselves, I saw one on a complete power trip all week (he knows who he is, walking around saying, "do you know who I am, give me some respect!"), two appeared to be actually working hard and our current letters editor I didn't see very much so can't comment. Do you know these people get paid for doing this? Yes, good fresher, part of your hard earned £36 went on keeping these four over the summer; this wouldn't be a problem if FYC had been a success. I've heard figures of £2,000 for 3 months work on FYC, I may be wrong. I also may be wrong but I heard that the organisers weren't seen in the union until 3 weeks before FYC. Must be nice to be able to organise something from your armchair like that.
Registration: what a farce. Shervene, congratulations for thinking of the completely bleedin' obvious after the event. Yes of course you need more than 3 computers for registering 3,000 students and fuck me, do you really think it might be a better plan to register these people before FYC?! Yes you would have to have 50 people using 50 computers but how many stewards weren't doing anything at that time?
How many people applied to be stewards and how many got through, I know that numbers were limited this year.
Again, to be fair, Friday night and Saturday were excellent, good bands, a BBQ, plenty of things to do, for the whole week I didn't see anybody who was bored, pissed off but not bored There is no accountability, who is to blame when FYC is such a mess? Changing it so that officers control FYC wouldn't help in this matter, especially if the officers changed half way through the summer.
In conclusion, not a complete fuck up, but nowhere near a "success" either, 3rd years: would you shell out £36 for that? Money is worth more when you're in 3rd year than when you're a Fresher.

Ann Clifford, Deputy Editor: *I don't think it's really fair to expect Shervene to reply to this vitriolic missive. The conclusions drawn by the reporters who worked on the FYC pull-out were based on the views of the freshers we spoke to during the event - it is, after all, their opinions which are the most important. I suppose it's fair to say that not all the freshers who paid their £36 had a fantastic time, but we could hardly go round Ricky Road knocking on doors, finding the people who were unhappy.*
The TWO organisers who write for The Courier were not involved in our FYC coverage and fully appreciate that the paper does not exist to boost their egos or anyone else's - had the week been a disaster, we would have said so and they are well aware of that fact. The article did mention problems that occurred during the event, such as the registration queues, but overall, it seemed to us that the positives outweighed the negatives. Your letter doesn't appear to take into account some of the flaws with the current system - this years organisers received only two days training and there is no co-operation with organisers from previous years. Bearing this in mind, the fact that FYC went ahead at all is an achievement.

Foster's In?

Dear Shervene,

I am writing to complain about an article that appeared in the edition of The Courier dated 26th September. The article in question concerned the issue surrounding Marc Foster: the fact that he had been excluded from Fresher's Week and that his steward colleagues felt that there was the need to still make his presence felt.
I feel that the article made Mr Foster seem more of a hero than the offensive character he is.
The fact that he was banned from the union after assault involving a female student, which followed a number of other incidents seems to have not been highlighted enough.
The article also draws attention to the plight of Mr Foster's colleagues, who wanted him to fulfil his role as a steward. At this point I would like to question why someone with such a negative history within the Union be allowed to become a steward in the first place.

Yours sincerely

Cate Watson
Women's Officer

Shervene says: I do see your grievance. However, the article does clearly outline Marc's crimes and punishment of a life ban from the Union - which I think sufficiently portrays the severity of the case. The article's aim was to inform those of the obscure phrase 'Let the Goose loose' and never (and didn't to my mind) make judgement on the case at hand. I do not condone Mr Foster's actions and agree that he should not be portrayed as some 'hero', but surely we cannot expect loyalty from a friend to go unnoticed.

Fosters Out?

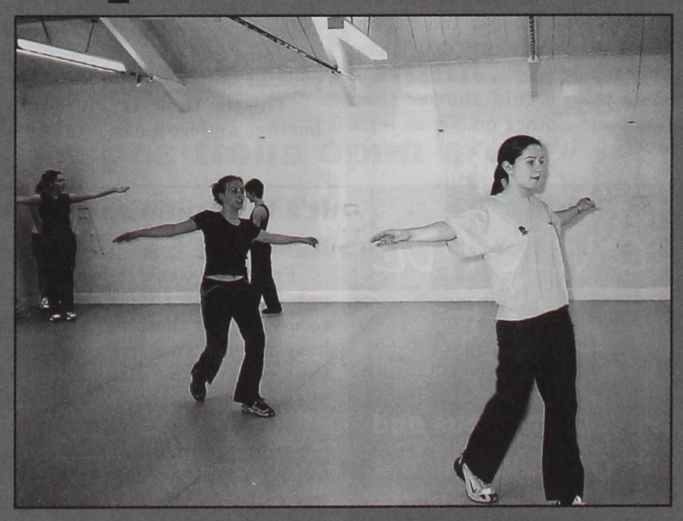
Dear Shervene,

What is the Union playing at? Not content with ruining the Mens Bar they're also trying to poison us all with the filth they call Carling! The amber nectar, the ambrosia, the drink of the gods replaced with what...? Carling, that pissy yellow stuff that dribbles from the taps, the only thing identifying it as "lager" is the fizz, and there's lots of that.
Shervene. I'm relying on you, please stop this madness before it goes even further, next thing we know they'll only be serving shandy and designer bottled beers.

Rolf Harris' Drinking Buddy

Shervene says: Listen, I'm a girl and I don't understand all this beer, lager, ale talk! Don't get me wrong some girls and boys could relate to you, but not me - I like my Smirnoff Ice. I think you should just accept this new corporate direction of the Union. If you really want to make a stand you should start your own society called 'I hate Carling Soc'.

Caption Corner



We've trawled the paper's picture archives, home to some of the oddest snaps ever committed to film . All you have to do is come up with a caption to fit them. The funniest caption each week will win its writer £15 worth of Union drinks vouchers, and the respect of our readers. Entries on a postcard to the Courier office on the ground floor of the Union by Friday afternoon please.

The Courier NOTICE BOARD

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

Need a haircut? Look no further. Go to your Union Hairdresser on the 1st floor. Our prices can't be beaten! Tel: 261 0104 or Uni Ext. 6476

Shopping days 'til Nat's birthday: 89. Come on guys, there's no time to lose!

Bring ads/messages to Courier Office on Ground Floor, Union, by Thursday afternoon. Ads. charged at 3p per word. Minimum charge 30p.

Your LGB Officers are Ruth Conroy and James Hecker. Their Office is on the first floor of the Union, and they're there to give you the support you need.

In search of the American Dream

David Mamet's second play in the Play Boys season is an unflinching study of greed and dishonesty

Glengarry Glen Ross

Written by David Mamet, directed by Karen Kessler, @ Playhouse

LEADS AND DEALS, boasts and blags, "Glengarry Glen Ross" is the cruel and harsh world of the salesman in vain pursuit of the American Dream.

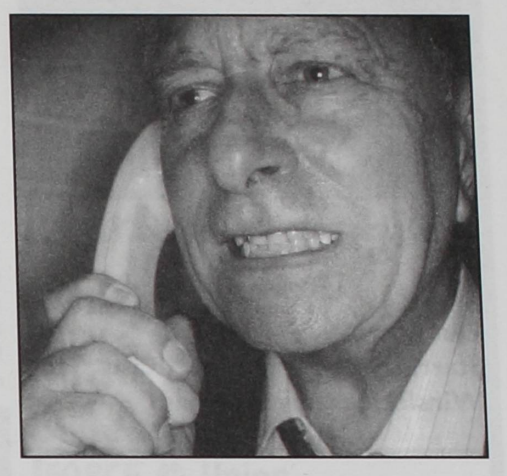
With a cutting and quick-fire spiel allowing neither actor or audience to breathe or think, Mamet sells you his masterpiece. Set in post-war America and split between just two sets of classy restaurant and office with seductive jazz intervals, the play moves through the robbery of the company by one of its employees. All are suspected, from the old school, "dying breed" Shelly "The Machine" Levene to the smooth talking, flashy Ricky Romany.

But this is not the thrust of the play. It's the wining and dining, the pushing and shoving of each ego-laden salesman fighting tooth and claw in an attempt to reach the top of the board and earn himself a nice cadillac that grabs your wit and attention.

With enough "fucks" and "shits" to make even Bernard Manning blush, and a morality where it's all about the sale, Glen Garry Glen Ross is gritty, real and brilliant.

Northern Stage's delivery is flawless, moving with such speed that you don't know whether the actors are ad libbing the bullshit they are selling you. I was just glad that I was in the audience and not the wife dominated client suckered into a sale by these schmucks, otherwise I'd be needing an extension on my overdraft. Breathtaking.

Dan Brack



Foul-Mouthed

Women Talking Dirty

Out now
Starring: Helena Bonham Carter, Gina McKee, James Purefoy, James Nesbitt

CORA (BONHAM CARTER) comes to Edinburgh city with great plans, only to end up pregnant by her French boyfriend, who subsequently does a runner. Just down the road, perfectionist artist Ellen (McKee) has problems of her own when she discovers that her sexy husband Daniel (Purefoy) is a compulsive gambler. Exchanging their tales of woe in the pub, the two women become friends, only for their relationship to be intensely tested through a combination of Cora's raging hormones and Daniel's seedy deceptions.

Not really a recommended watch, Bonham Carter may be a good monkey but playing kooky and years below her real age doesnít really come off. Neither does her Scottish accent and you may find yourself becoming more captivated by whether her accent will slip the next times she opens her gob than with what she is actually saying!

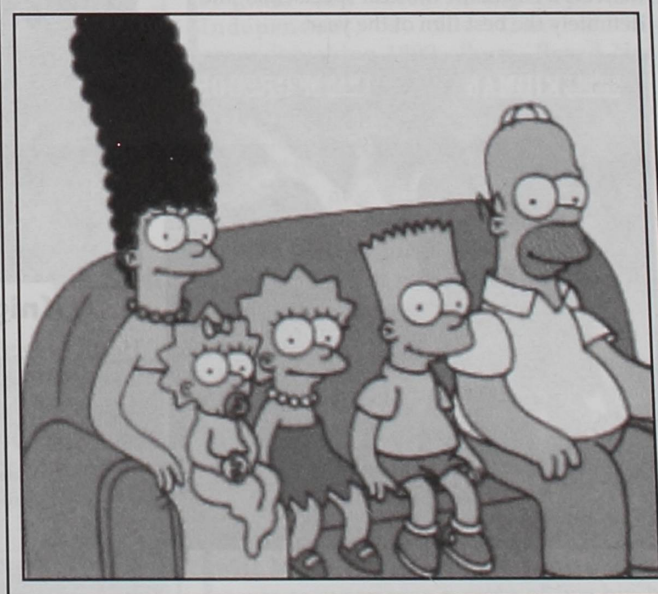
This film may far better under the title of "Women Talking in Dodgy Scottish Accents". However, there are some nice lines hidden within the shite and the cameo from Richard Wilson and Kenneth Cranham as a pair of bickering gays is a delight. Donít drag your arse into town for it but if thereís nowt else on video, try it!

SIMP-LY GREAT

The Simpsons: Season One (DVD)

Since making their television debut on December 17, 1989, The Simpsons have gone on to become one of Americaís most celebrated families and now that debut season is available in a three-disc box set.

Containing all 13 shows, and special features such as outtakes, early sketches and script notes from creator Matt Groening, this is a must for fans of Homer, Bart, Lisa and Maggie.



Bullock shines through

Miss Congeniality (Video)

SANDRA BULLOCK plays F.B.I. Special Agent Gracie Hart, a cool, tough talking professional for whom personal grooming isn't exactly at the top of her agenda.

When a psycho called The Citizen threatens the Miss America beauty pageant, Gracie is buffed up under the eye of beauty consultant Victor Melling (Caine) and given the undercover job of targeting him.

OK, it's not the most original, brain taxing or unpredictable film and it does provide a lot of fodder for a good feminist rant, but it is fun and Bullock oozes charisma.



Arts pages in association with ODEON
FANATICAL ABOUT FILM

CYPHER SO GOOD!

Code-cracking period drama Enigma finds the right combination

FILM OF THE WEEK

Enigma

Out now
Starring: Dougray Scott, Kate Winslet, Jeremy Northam

YOU DON'T need to be a history buff to enjoy this tense spy thriller about the Nazi code-breaking that helped Britain during World War II.

The film opens when brilliant mathematician Tom Jericho (Scott) returns to the top-secret code-breaking base of Bletchley Park after a complete nervous breakdown. It soon becomes apparent his collapse was brought on not only by the pressure of his work at Bletchley, but also by the disappearance of his fellow worker and lover Claire (Burrows) whom he suspects has been in alliance with the Nazis. Where has she gone and why has she hidden stolen documents from Bletchley in her room?

His colleagues hope that by immersing himself in his work, Jericho will forget about Claire, but the shadowy presence of secret service agent Wigram (Northam) asking personal questions encourages Jericho to dig deeper. With the help of Claire's concerned housemate Hester (Winslet), he decides to discover the truth.

At first the disjointed structure is quite confusing, the storyline tracks back and forth in time leaving it up to the viewer to piece together the riddle of what has happened, when and to whom. Then there is the riddle of the German Enigma code itself, which has to be broken before we can understand what's going on. But as the story builds you'll find yourself lost in the secret life of Bletchley.

Enigma has a strong old-fashioned air, reinforced by the heavy use of deep brown and of course, the acting. Scott seems so stoical yet world weary you wonder why he doesnít just keel over on the spot, but Winslet gives a great performance as Hester, the dumpy, bespectacled housemate who secretly falls for him. The biggest acting accolades, however, have to go to Northam, who puts in a brilliant performance as smooth, snake-like Wigram, charming yet deadly dangerous. It helps that he gets all the best lines, adding a humorous touch to the taut script.

All in all, great performances, suspense and tweed jacketed period detail, and an impressive debut movie for Mick Jagger's production company Jagged Films.



FACTS

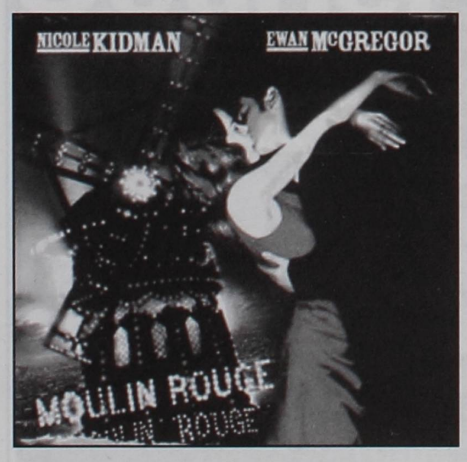
■ This is the second film within a year to be based on the cracking of the Enigma code. Last year's U-571 was condemned in the House of Commons, with even Tony Blair adding his voice to the protests, after the movie wrongly claimed it was the Americans rather than the British who broke the code.

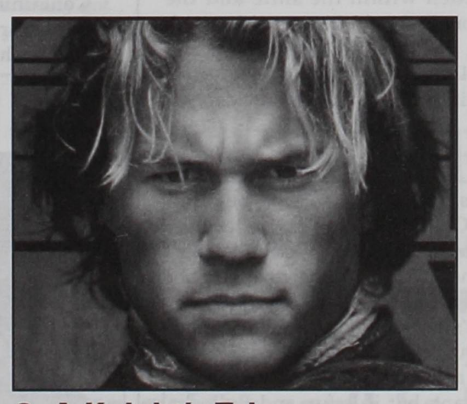
■ The site at Bletchley Park in Buckinghamshire where the code was cracked was due for demolition nine years ago, but a trust was set up to preserve the buildings for the nation.

Movies of the moment

1. Moulin Rouge

Nicole Kidman and Ewan McGregor embark upon both a breath-taking romance and tour of 19th Century Paris. Director Baz Luhmann delivers a cinematic musical spectacular and definitely the best film of the year.



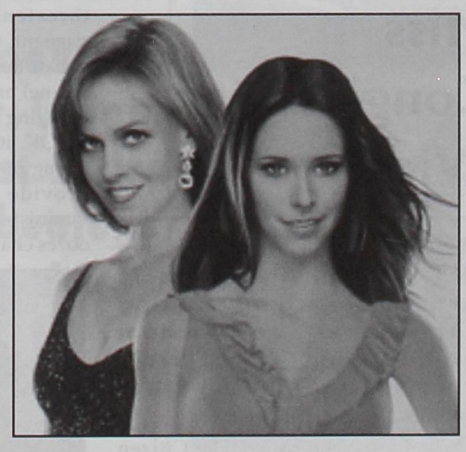


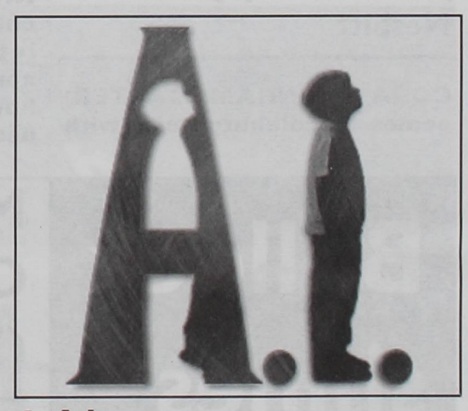
2. A Knight's Tale

Heath Ledger leads the cast in a tale of courtly love, jousting and saving fair damsels in distress. An excellent contemporary soundtrack and tongue in cheek humour (look out for the bad gambler and mouthy herald Geoffrey Chaucer) make this film a giggle and a half!

3. Heartbreakers

Sigourney Weaver struts her stuff as the con artist showing her daughter (Jennifer Love Hewitt) the ropes in this romantic comedy, also starring Ray Liotta and Gene Hackman as the pairís hapless victims.





4. A.I.

Steven Spielberg has a futuristic stab at making a Stanley Kubrick movie, but this is no 2001: A Space Odyssey or even E.T. As technically awesome, moving and impressive as it is, the annoyingly glib, sentimental ending means this is a flawed masterpiece.

Arts pages in association with ODEON
FANATICAL ABOUT FILM

PLAYED UNION

This term, the Union has one of the best line-ups of any venue in the country. Astrological Al gives his long-term predictions...

WHO NEEDS Nostradamus' visions of doom & gloom and World War Three? Follow my guide to this term's Union nights and you won't even remember whether the apocalypse took place or not!

October

A month of contrast is in store for October, ranging from the straight friendly gay night Universal (4th), to the fast and furious (and loud!) Irish rockers Therapy?(18th).

Cooper Temple Clause were the first to brighten up our Autumnal nights on the 2nd.

Jello Biafra, controversial ex-frontman of the Dead Kennedys will be raising hell with his spoken word show tonight.

October also sees the much awaited return of Force, with Mark B & Blade and Roots Manuva all on the same night (6th) - you lot are definitely spoiled (check out the preview for more details!)



THE SHEDS... York's finest return to the Toon

Eclectic also returns with a bang on the 13th with Leeroy Thornhill (Prodigy) and Adam Freeland (Marine Parade).

Don't miss Solid Steel with DJ Food (17th), it's compulsary as far as I'm concerned (absences will have to be explained in writing in advance).



LOW... They preferred the old Mens Bar

Further highlights for the month include the endless talents of Mercury Rev on the 7th (see the preview for more details), old favourites Shed Seven entertain us with their array of hits including 'Going for Gold', 'Speakeasy' and 'She Left Me on Friday'(10th), and new favourites Starsailor (25th), OPM (29th) and Elbow (17th) are all very highly recommended.

Turbulence this month plays host to Ed Rush and Optical, you'd be mad to miss it!

November

If you've never witnessed November in Newcastle before you're definitely in for a surprise. Make sure you have wellies, umbrella, scarf, icepick, the usual.

The union has plenty on offer to warm up these arctic nights. UNKLE are at eclectic on the 3rd (tbc), Judge Jules and Matt Hardwick are back on the 8th, they just can't stay away! (They were last here for the love parade). Bodyrock meets Bugged Out on the 10th, Turbulence has the mighty Andy C, and the union will rock to Napalm Death (although they're usually in bed by 9 with a nice cup of cocoa). Other bands include Silver Ginger Five, Waterboys and Low.

December

If you thought November was cold, you ain't seen nothing yet! The term will be rounded off on the 8th in spectacular fashion with the legendary Arcane featuring Boy George and Gordon Kaye (not the one from 'Allo 'Allo).

Jon Carter (tbc) will be playing the last Eclectic of the term, while DJ Hype will be rounding off Turbulence. Neighbours-fan-baiting Punk band Frenzel Rhomb will be here on the 3rd to make your nose bleed. The LA Doors will attempt to resurrect the spirit of Jim Morrison, which may be succesful judging on the rumour that all those who



JUDGE JULES... Court in the act

cover the Doors songs are visited by his ghost. Capdown, the Milton Keynes punk, metal, and ska band will be the last band to play this term, before you all trek home to your mums with four months worth of dirty washing!

Al Smith

Traveller's tunes

Nitin Sawhney

Wednesday 3 October @ Newcastle Opera House

FRESH FROM the round-the-world journey, from which the brilliant album 'Prophesy' was born, Nitin Sawhney will be visiting the Opera House tonight.

His world music meets dance music stylings create a widescreen soundscape taking you along with Nitin on his voyage.

The meeting of many different sounds works well for Nitin, he blends instruments which would not normally grace the same continent to create a unified spirit. A spirit which captures the way people see the world, whether this is through cynical politicised eyes, or the spititual eyes of the aborigines.

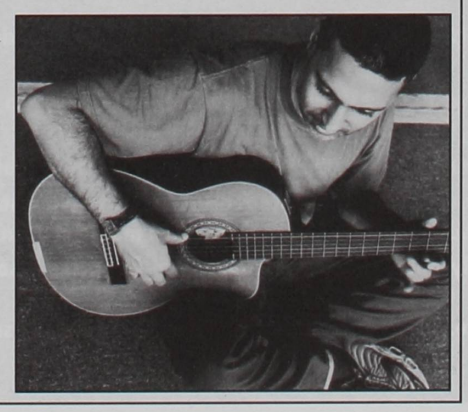
Sawhney felt that to create such a feeling he had to visit these people, whether it be the children of Soweto or Chicago cabbies, to get a unique view of the way we live at the turn of the millenium.

This journey, both the physical journey and the spiritual journey, is created perfectly in surround sound, enveloping you, giving you a taste of many cultures rather than the blandness of some more narrow minded musicians.

You wouldn't believe that Sawhney started out as a comedian, one of the creators of the hit comedy series "Goodness Gracious Me". But Sawhney is creative in everything he does, whether writing for Sinead O'Connor, remixing Sting and Sir Paul McCartney, writing movie scores and documentaries or helping out in workshops and schools.

With four albums under his belt, Nitin Sawhney has no shortage of material, and when the material is this good, the prospect of a live recreation of it is mouthwatering.

Al Smith



Cutting edge

Mark B & Blade and Roots Manuva

Saturday 6 October 2001, FORCE @ Union

CALLING ALL hip hoppers- the North East's Premier Hip Hop Night, Force, is back! To start off another year of choice cuts and a superior selection of DJs 'n' MCs, the ever popular Mark B and Blade are returning to the Bassment, this time joined by the Big Dada of UK hip hop, Roots Manuva.

"Now you know the name. Unstoppable, clever, artistic. You're about to enter a higher level dimension... fantastic"!

The London duo combine the prime scratching technique of producer Mark B and the hard-headed vocal style of Blade to create innovative tracks with groove and attitude. Proud of their UK roots, they are no longer "The Unknown" as their album suggests. and they have helped bring British hip hop to the front of the stage.

On Saturday the levels of energy and peace 'n' love (you get the general idea!) will be pushed even higher by the presence of Roots Manuva- the artist who has set the standards for UK hip hop. This South London 'geeza', aka Rodney Smith, has been called "the most significant and original new voice in hip hop" (The Independent) at the time of his groundbreaking 1999 album "Brand New Second Hand".

He merges a range of sounds and melodies to make tracks that are totally creative and distinctive, in a Mos Def kinda way. His new album, "Run Come Save Me", highlights his lyrical diversity expressing a picture of his life and personality in a complicated world. The rumbling beats and rhythms prove him to be tough competition for his U.S. counterparts. Most recently he has been nominated for a prestigious MOBO award for Best Hip Hop Act, and he will be up against artists such as Missy Elliot and Outkast.

Also on offer are Eclectic residents and other backroom DJs for added fun. This will be an opportunity for anyone who wants to experience a night of live hip hop from some of the UK's finest artists. So come along 'cos you don't want to miss out. You know it's gonna be all good.

Fi Clark

REVIEWS ALBUMS...

THERAPY? 2/5

SHAMELESS

THOSE DIE hard Therapy? fans amongst you must be slightly upset (if you're able to be upset in only a slight manner) with the way the band's sound has morphed from hard indie into something more akin to "Dadrock".

Hard hitting intros from tracks such as 'Gimme Back My Brain' (can't we all identify with that after a heavy weekend?) and 'Alrite' sit uneasily with those delivering a more laid back tempo such as 'Wicked Man' and the glam rock 'Body Bag Girl'.

Marilyn Manson harked on about those 'Disposable Teens' but who, Mr Cairns, is going to supply them with genuine teen angst?... Not you by the sound of things. Have you hit the thirties head on?

This could get you in troublegum!

JAMES BROWN

22-PISTEPIRKKO 4/5

RALLY OF LOVE

Nothing on 'Rally of Love' is unfamiliar. This, however, isn't a criticism.

What 22-Pistepirkko do with such style and ease is take the conventional building blocks and create intriguingly skewed eclectic forms.

For example 'Mowing a Lawn' steals the riff from Blur's 'Song 2' tips it on its head and gives it a melancholic rather than celebratory air, sounds odd but works so well.

The foreign tones of P-K Keranen give the songs individuality and depth, whilst the subject matter varies wildly from love to Jaguars ('Quicksand') the standard remains high!

TERESA MORTIMER

RECORD OF THE WEEK



PULP 4/5

THE TREES/SUNRISE

PULP RETURN with an altogether more optimistic outlook following 1998's 'This Is Hardcore', which charted the pressures and emotional fallout of fame.

Having come through the instant celebrity of 'Different Class' and the subsequent impact it had on their lives, Jarvis and co have gone back to basics. Stripping things away until "in the end we're left with earth, trees and nature" as Jarvis puts it.

Both tracks are produced by Scott Walker and his love of orchestrations shine through in both numbers, particularly on 'Sunrise', which is reminiscent of 'Ocean' by the Velvet Underground, but with fear replaced by the glow of optimism.

After their battle with indifference, it's a joy to hear Pulp excited again.

JAMES COLLINS

VARIOUS 4/5

BACK TO THE OLD SKOOL (MINISTRY OF SOUND)

WHITE GLOVES, Baggy T-Shirts and a lot of Smiley Faces!

The sound of the late 80's and early 90's has been brought back to life, courtesy of 'Back to the Old Skool' on the Ministry of Sound label.

Unlike the majority of 'The Best **** in the World... Ever' CDs, this has an authentic feel to it with an unbeatable track selection featuring classics like N Trance, 808 State, Felix and A Guy Called Gerald.

Since getting my hands on this, it has transformed my lowly Hi-Fi into a Super-Sonic Sound System! So, get your whistles out and Go Back to the Old Skool!

PETE DOLUKHANOV

SINGLES...

MARK B & BLADE 4/5

THERE'S NO STOPPIN' IT EP

SUPERFUNKY BASSLINES with hard-hitting lyrics bashing yer bonce. The soaring reputation of MB & B coincides with their current tour alongside a certain Mr Manuva.

This four track EP begins with the funky 'There's No Stoppin' It' and 'Superior Mindstates' both of which combine fantastic bass loops with Starsky & Hutch-esque samples. 'Sealed With A Diss' gives Blade an opportunity to answer his critics from the past, to ask: "When was the last time you stood on the stage and tried to do what we do?". The EP ends with the 'Survival Of The Hardest Working', perhaps some neo-Darwinian theory from these mutha funkstaz.

ED CONNOR

TURIN BRAKES

EMERGENCY 72

LUMPED TOGETHER with various other bands under the banner of the "New Acoustic Movement" last year by none other than the NME, Turin Brakes have been quietly successful, with their debut album 'The Optimist LP' recently going gold.

Comparisons with the Buckleys have been unsurprising and though the album is sound this is a weak track, sadly lacking the intensity of either Tim or Jeff. This track fails to come to life and is destined for VH1! 'Emergency 72' is an unengaging affair, triggering little emotion and ends as a dull criminally-average record.

If you like your music bland, and your potatoes boiled, this is for you. Otherwise, buy the album, and skip past this track

JAMES COLLINS



Recommended nights

A great night out in Newcastle EVERY night - guaranteed!

- **Wednesday 3rd - Nitin Sawhney @ the Opera House - After a successful journey round the world, during which he stopped off to chat with Nelson Mandela, Nitin composed a brilliant album. Hear him recreate it LIVE!**
- **Thursday 4th - Stone Love @ Foundation - Top indie shenanigans with special guest dj's, often including some of the cream of the Madchester scene**
- **Friday 5th - Positive - The only way to start your weekend! Chart hits and commercial dance in the Bassment with a funkier 'blend' in the Global.**
- **Saturday 6th - Force with Mark B & Blade and Roots Manuva - "Run Come Save Me" is a phrase you probably wont be hearing tonight as I'm sure everyone will want to stay till the end.**
- **Sunday 7th - Mercury Rev - Now on their fourth album 'the Rev' attracted huge crowds at this years Reading and Leeds festivals be sure to get your ticket in advance for this one to avoid disappointment.**
- **Monday 8th - University Challenge @ Tuxedo Princess - Cheap drinks and mainstream music make this a very popular student night, but it's the only one with a revolving dance floor. It's also often called 'the boat' for obvious reasons!**
- **Tuesday 9th - tSUK (www.tequilasociety.co.uk) @ Foundation - Does exactly what it says on the tin! One tequila, two tequila, three tequila, FLOOR.**

Returners' songs

Mercury Rev are back from a two-year lay-off to soothe your pain

Mercury Rev

Sunday 7 October @ Union

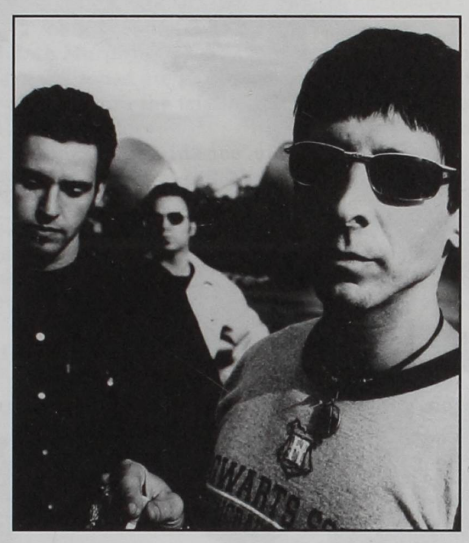
IMAGINE IT'S a Sunday: you've had a hectic first week of missed introductory lectures because you couldn't find the room or the willpower to attend. Knackered from a weekend of clubbing, and pissed off with those cheesy chill-out compilations that attempt to alleviate the come-down blues, you're in the need for a sympathetic ear to tell you that it's alright.

This is where the Union steps in. Mercury Rev are coming to toon, and those at Ents have prescribed just the tonic by delivering their soothing melodies to your second home. Fresh from an outstanding set at the Carling Weekend after a two year break from touring, Jonathan and co have already forced London to sell out and add an extra date, so don't miss this treat on October 7.

They bring with them their latest collection of atmosphere, "All is Dream". A darker album than the award winning "Deserter's Songs", Mercury Rev still manage to creep into your hungover head, stirring up sensations that delicately touch and glide through your soul. From the quirky "A drop in time" to the hypnotic, cosmic brooding of "Tides of the Moon", the boys are as philosophical as ever in their poetic breathings.

So, if you're in search of a comfortable shoulder to rest on after the stress of the new term, then drift on down to Mercury Rev, forget your worries and think... all is dream.

Dan Brack



REV-OLUTION ROCK...The Merc do moody

THE VINYL FRONTIER

OUR GUIDE TO THE WEEK'S MOST DESIRABLE DISC

Various

The Sound of Smitten E.P.

(Smitten Records)

HARD ACID Techno? Oh Yes! Never the one fearing a bit of diversity, I took this baby round the block and back!

Techno is one of the only genres of dance music that has remained underground, and this just shows why.

The four track E.P. featuring Geezer, Immersion, Dave the Drummer and Chris Liberator is minimal, dark and very, very evil!

These artists have been about for years and keep taking techno higher and further and this E.P. is no exception. A must for any tech DJ's record box, and definitely worth a listen for those with an eclectic taste in music.

More of the same please!

PETE DOLUKHANOV

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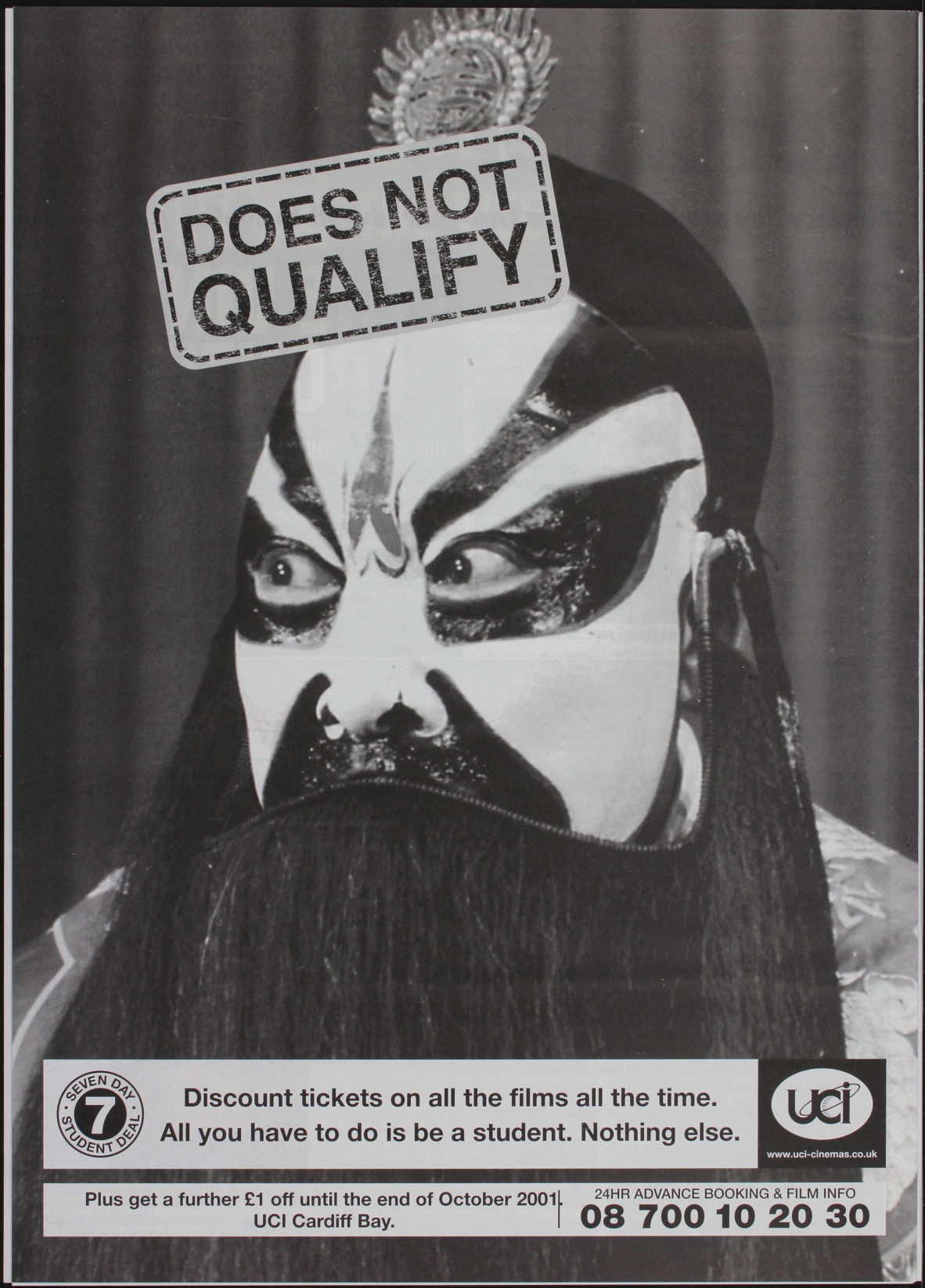
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FRESH TALENT

Women's team look for new blood to bolster hopes of BUSA championship glory

By DAN FOLEY
SPORTS EDITOR

THE COUNTRY'S fastest growing sport kicks off this season in under three weeks, and Newcastle Uni is looking to head the pack.

Women's football, whose recruits at the Uni have doubled since only last year, already has a strong pedigree.

Last year's first team were runners up in the BUSA League, while the second's won the Sunday League.

The victory for the second team means that Newcastle now has two teams in the BUSA League.

And although the prospect of the two meeting in the final is still a long way off, it's a step in the right direction.

Club captain Rachel Pierce is confident of a successful season.

"We could do really well this year, especially with the number of new members that have joined us."

Full trials have not gone ahead as yet, so the quality of the incoming freshers is still uncertain.

This could be a cause for concern considering the team has lost a few influential members, including last year's midfield general, Beth Murphy.

None of the squad are panicking though, and are sure the trials will unearth some talent.

And under the guidance of coaches Andy Murray and Neil Jones, the team looks set to bring back more silverware.

Hopefully they will also retain the Isle of Man trophy, a competition that Rachel feels the rest of the uni should be more involved in.

The event is spread over three days, and includes a range of sports such as rugby, polo and hockey.

It is open for universities nationwide to enter, and many send teams to play in most of the available sports.

Newcastle only sends the women's football team however, something which Rachel feels has to be addressed.

"There is almost no communication between the different clubs. It would be great if we could take down loads of teams to compete, because it is brilliant fun."

For the time being though, the squad is focusing on its' first clash at home to Sheffield Hallam.

The match is on October 17th at Cochrane Park, so come along and support our women!



WOMENS FOOTBALL... Looking forward to the new season

POLO TEAM SEEK TO FILL THE HOLES

Talented newcomers bring hope of further success

By DAN FOLEY
SPORTS EDITOR

NEWCASTLE University's polo team are looking to go from underdogs to superstuds as they build on the success of last season.

The team finished third in the indoor NUAP Championship, where they beat Edinburgh on penalties after a 5-5 draw.

They also reached the finals of the National University's Outdoor Championships, but were thrashed 10-4 by Oxford Brooks.

And although that result was disappointing, for Newcastle to have reached the final was spectacular enough.

The team went into the competition as one of the lowest handicaps, and were actually seeded bottom.

On top of this, they had to make do without their star player, Jamie Murray.

Captain of polo Oliver Jackson said, "It was an outstanding feat to get that far, however we have high hopes for this year."

And well they might do with influx of fresh talent.

A number of young semi-professional players have joined the uni this year, one of whom is Rebecca Douglas.

Fresh back from the winter season in New Zealand, it is hoped she will give the squad that extra edge needed to win some silverware.

Rebecca brings with her not only talent on the field, but connections off it.

She is linked to the owners of the Edinburgh polo club, who Newcastle share training facilities with.

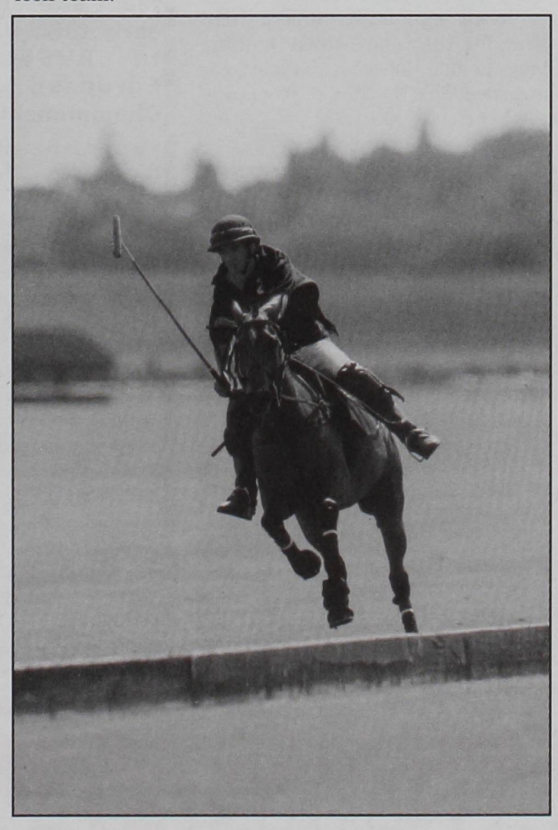
Training time has been a big problem before, but hopefully now Newcastle will get some parity in the use of Edinburgh's facilities.

Oli Jackson is confident that all of the new recruits will bring something to the squad.

"The new players will fill the holes in the first team, and greatly strengthen the seconds.

"Hopefully in a few seasons we will see a Newcastle versus Newcastle outdoor final!"

Although there is no Stan Calvert Cup to look forward to - Northumbria only have one polo player - this season promises to be an exciting one for the new look team.



POLO... Aiming for silverware

International star boosts tennis hopes

By SARA ARIFF

THE ARRIVAL of international player Amru Alabidi has sent excitement throughout the mens' tennis team.

Destined for stardom, Amru will no doubt be a great asset to Newcastle by boasting previous experience in the Jordanian Davis Cup.

Reaching the Round Robin Amru was unfortunate to pick up an injury which prevented him from finishing the tournament, although he had been expected to do well.

Ranked 2.2 with the Lawn Tennis Association, Amru has earned the title as number one player on the team, despite the fact he has not yet played for Newcastle.

However, he more than made his mark last week in the Jesmond tennis tournament by winning both the men's singles and doubles events.

And there is no doubt that Amru's two year scholarship at a Californian University will also benefit the Newcastle team no end.

Currently without a coach, Amru said: "I had intensive training in America and am happy to help the Newcastle team out in whatever way I can."

It is clear that the mens' tennis team are thrilled with the new kid on the block, convinced he is going to make a big impact for the university.

The first match is scheduled to take place on October 17th against Sheffield Hallam and Amru is hoping to make an explosive start for what seems to be a promising year for Newcastle University men's tennis.

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courier sport

WEDNESDAY 3 OCTOBER 2001

SWIMMERS' MEDAL FEST

By DAN FOLEY
SPORTS EDITOR

THE ATHLETIC Union's "Team of the Year 2000-2001" certainly lived up to their name at the NEC Masters in Scarborough last weekend.

Almost all of the 20 swimmers who travelled down brought home medals.

Newcastle got off to a bright start in the two day event, with everyone pushing themselves hard.

Scott Watson and Dave Baldwin deserve special mention, as their performances harvested an impressive six medals each.

The second day was also a success, with Carlotta Rasales taking bronze in the 50m breastroke.

Newcomers Vicki Dodd and Peter Germain also gave superb performances, which is great news for the squad.

In all the team brought home over 25 individual medals, and in the relay events they took seven out of eight.

With almost every event covered by a strong swimmer, captain Scott Watson is enthusiastic.

"This is a fantastic start to the year. We have a really strong team at the moment and with the new talent from the freshers coming through, preparations are well underway for the BUSA nationals."

The team will be hoping to build and improve on the success of last year.

They were ranked 8th and 6th respectively at the BUSA Shortcourse and Longcourse nationals.

Medals there included gold and silver in the Biathalon, a gold and two silvers in the BUSA Shortcourse, and two bronze in the Longcourse.

Newcastle were stronger still closer to home, hauling a gold, silver and bronze from five events in the North East Counties Team Championships.

Meanwhile, the mens water polo team got to the BUSA quarter-finals.

Regional and national competition aside, there is of course the small matter of the Stan Calvert Cup.

While most of the clashes in other sports were cancelled last year, swimming happily went ahead.

Happily because Newcastle wiped the proverbial changing room floor with Northumbria.

And although the Poly were missing some of their key swimmers, club president Katie Hill is still upbeat about this year's chances.

"If they are missing their best members again this year it will be easy, if not it will be closer, but we'll still walk away with the cup."

The chances of that seem even greater after the success of recent freshers trials.

Katie was pleased with how it went, saying, "We got a good turnout and there were a lot of swimmers with lots of potential to make a very strong team."

Names to look out for this year include Emily Rowbothom, Hannah Champkin (both backstroke) and Peter Germain (frontcrawl).

In all it promises to be a great year for the team whose leading lady, Louise Roberts, was last year awarded The Courier's "Woman of the Year".



SPLASH OF THE TITANS... Uni swimmers take a well-earned breather

From Russia with shove!

By GERALDINE MOLE
SPORTS EDITOR

TWO MEMBERS of the University Rugby League team started their season early this year with a tour to RUSSIA for the European Student Championships.

Andy Raleigh and Eamonn Ruane were selected for England training last February after impressing talent scouts whilst playing for the North-East in a regional tournament.

They then went on to represent England Students against the home nations, in addition to two professional Russian sides.

With a crowd of 8,000 for the opening ceremony and four games being condensed into seven days, it was a far cry from their usual BUSA fixtures, but they rose to the challange.

Their first game was against the Russian team Tartarstan, and although they are classed as a professional Emerging nations side, England students took no prisoners and beat them 34-12.

They followed this up with a 38-12 win over Ireland to take them into the semi-finals against Scotland.

In a tight game, England students had to wait for extra time before claiming their place in the finals with the crucial Golden Point.

Scotland had the first chance for victory when a drop goal attempt hit the cross bar, and fell to another Scotsman on the try-line, only to be tackled by the England full-back.

This allowed England students the chance for a quick counter-attack resulting in a successful drop goal to end the game at 13-12.

Facing Tartarstan again in the final they started disappointingly, trailing 10-6 at half-time. But with the Russians only scoring one try in the second half, England students strolled to a 32-14 victory, winning the Championship.

Eamonn Ruane said: "It was an amazing experience and we were lucky that they picked such a great bunch of lads to represent our country. We definitely deserved to win."

Check out the latest music reviews - p. 12