

The Courier

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INSIDE



NEWCASTLE STUDENT GETS CHEEKY!

FRESHERS PEAK

Fun had by all as record numbers take part in Freshers' Week

By REBECCA WRIGHT

FRESHERS WEEK 2004 saw the highest number of new students ever to join in what is now thought to be the best Freshers' Week in the country.

As if the traditional September mayhem wasn't quite enough, this year saw an increase of more than 500 first-year students on last year's numbers, meaning a record number of Freshers signed up to join in the festivities.

The thousands of new students enjoyed a variety of activities including go-karting, paint-balling, trips to Blue Reef Aquarium, plus frequent pub crawls throughout the city, along the Metro line and also to Durham.

The Friday night of Freshers' Week also introduced the all-new "Solution" - a revamped replacement for the Union's classic cheese-fest Positive.

Ally Robson, an organiser of this year's Freshers' Week, said: "Every member of the Freshers' Week team helped to make the week fantastic. Each and every person involved is a credit to their university."

However, the very first Solution event was made memorable for more than just the gallons and gallons of Diesel and Skittles. There were several fire alarms, resulting in three evacuations of the building throughout the evening.

Union officials advised not to be ALARMED and reported that this was due to initial teething

problems with the new £180,000 safety system installed in the Union building during the summer vacation.

"Even when the fire alarms went off, everyone was evacuated straight away," added Ally. "As a safety measure, the stewards formed a human barrier to prevent anyone going back into the building."

"Everyone was really proud of how quickly and efficiently the fire drill was carried out."

"Each and every person involved is a credit to their university."

Ally Robson, Freshers' Week
Organiser

drunken antics occurring campus - and city - wide but care was taken to make sure those not so fond of the drinking culture were still able to get involved, with non-alcoholic and more cultural events put on

Freshers' Week saw acts like Kosheen, Mark Rae and comedian and ex-Newcastle student Dan Nightingale return to the Union as well as newcomers the Newcastle circuit, such as drag queens Marty and Sassy Stryker.

In general it seemed a good time was had by all in what has officially been the most popular Freshers' Week Newcastle University and the Students' Union have ever seen.

The overall success of the week was noted not just by the new students, but also by the Union staff, prompting a glowing letter of thanks from the Union's managers to all who helped organise and run the event.

The letter sent out special thanks to all crew members, supervisors, drivers, organisers and officers for helping the week to run so smoothly.

As is the case every year Freshers' Week was mostly fuelled by a liquid diet with crazy



Hundreds of students gather for Kosheen in the Union Bassment during Freshers' Week

This week's Courier contains a special souvenir pull out for Freshers' Week. For photos, stories and your opinions on the week turn to page 11.

THE VOICE OF NEWCASTLE STUDENTS SINCE 1948

AND INTRODUCING...

The Courier

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WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO

Ally Robson

And due appreciation for

Ruth Currie,

Matt Fulford

&

Alex Ward



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25,000 SAVED BY RED CARD

MANY OF you will have received your student union RED card - and we know a lot of you have been using it!

In fact all students that have been using their RED card have altogether saved over £25,000 in the Union during Freshers' Week alone. In addition to the RED card, a Happy Hour has also been introduced in the Mens Bar. RED Card was piloted last year with great success, as Sales and Sponsorship co-ordinator Owen Parry explained: "Only 2,000 were available last year, and all went very quickly. The RED card has already made a big impact upon its release this year". The RED card does not only save money on alcohol and other

such beverages but also food, comedy night tickets, and in the future even purchases in the all-new Union shop. This card is causing quite a stir, as union drinks are now such good value that even the Hancock has been forced to cut £1 off selected drinks. Finance and Administration Officer Alex Ward told The Courier: "RED Card is what this Union has needed for the last three years. It forms an integral part of our drive to make Newcastle Students' Union the best value venue in Newcastle. I am very proud of the marketing team and everyone who has worked so hard to bring these kinds of savings to students". So, if you can't get down to the Union in time for the super-cheap happy hour (5-7pm Monday to



Pick up your RED Card here!

Friday in the Mens Bar) just pick up your red card for the princely sum of £1 in the Mens Bar, for savings all day and all night long. Another bonus - all the money spent is ploughed straight back into YOUR Union.

By JOANNE LAVENDER

Not so UNI-form

Those of you returning to the university after your well-earned summer break will have noticed several changes have been made to the union building- you first years will have to take my word for it, but trust me- things are looking pretty different from when we left in June.

The refit has cost more than £250,000, and is part of the officers' and staff's commitment to making the union a fun place to hang out.

The Bassment has received a new coat of black paint, and plenty has been spent on new equipment, such as projectors, a new lighting set up and sound gear, so that Solution on Friday nights should be an even better bash than its predecessor, Positive, which was a funky night out to begin with.

Most of you lot will notice most of all the changes that have been made to the union shop. They've knocked a few walls through at the back and expanded into the little-used card shop that used to be there, as well as incorporating disused office and storage space. The shop's manager, Ray Sydenham, is proud of his staff for pulling through a difficult refit, which had its share of problems, including a flood of biblical proportions. "we had the shop expanded to cope with the large numbers of students that come in here every day, it's a very well used facility and queues where becoming a problem for everyone" says Ray, who is a really helpful and friendly bloke, say hi to him if you see him. Any suggestions as to things the shop should sell that you can't find in there will be welcomed; they pride themselves on the variety of essentials available.

The men's bar also has been changed through the summer, and several pool tables have been moved into there from the old pool room upstairs, as well as a new

and wider variety of arcade machines becoming available to drinkers. Although one consequence of this is now a certain lack of seating space in the bar, which is causing some problems, there's still plenty of room around the corner in which to get quietly smashed. It's also been repainted the same snazzy beige it was before, you'll all be glad to read. On match days you can also marvel at the new 12-foot TV screen which gets pulled down on the back wall, one of the biggest in Newcastle, and sure make you feel like you're right on the touchline of St James Park, cheering on the Toon with the rest of the faithful. Ents Team members Neal Harrison and Jim Storrar are impressed with the alterations: "The new layout is an improvement on previous years" says Neal, adding: "the access to the pool tables is better and there's also a better atmosphere". The refit has coincided with the relaunch of the 'red card' scheme, which gives many drinks offers and discount on food around the building: "The red card scheme is a really good idea" enthuses Jim "anything to stretch out the loan cheque and get people into the union has to be a bonus". Happy hour is 5:00 until 7:30, with £1 a pint offers as well as other drinks promotions.

The juke box has also been replaced with a new system for your listening pleasure, and Tom Gorman, communications officer for the union, has assured the courier that should you not be able to find your personal anthem amongst its 2 million songs, the officers will buy you a pint. So get looking.

Tom is also pleased with the way the union building is looking now; and appeared somewhat relieved that the students have taken to using the new facilities straight away, although his only hang-up would be that their popularity has meant he can't get a game. The old airport lounge is now occupied by pool tables which used to be



hidden away on the top floor (how they got them down the stairs I don't know... this writer's just glad it wasn't his job!), and has had a lick of paint as well, why not admire the fetching shade of blue whilst you wait for your opponent to take his next shot? Or nip into the Cochrane lounge, to sample one of the range of continental beers they now sell there, if your amigo is really taking his time over it...

The old pool room has now become a very chill-oriented space, the Lounge, and is non-smoking and no alcohol is permitted there. Aimed mainly at those international students who do not indulge in said vices, anyone is welcome to head there if in need of a place to crash, have a coffee and read the papers. Next door's Global café has also been treated to new furniture and décor, and don't worry about negotiating the stairs next time you fall out of a gig in there hammered, as these obstacles have all been given big yellow strips, tactile paving and big handrails in line with new disability legislation.

Further chill-out space can be found on the first floor, where the job shop is now also home to a drop in area, filled with comfy chairs as well as information on societies, volunteer work and so on, so take a leaflet or just take a quick nap in the armchairs, again everyone's welcome.

By CHRIS STEPHENSON

Naughty Boy meets Cheeky Girl

By RACHEL DUPUY

AN UNEXPECTED love affair has developed over the summer between a certain Newcastle engineering student and one half of the infamous all-singing, all-dancing, identical Romanian pop duo we all know as the Cheeky Girls.

Ex-Ampleforth pupil turned vodka entrepreneur, Anthony Agnew, 22, has spent the summer months wooing Cheeky Girl Monica after meeting her at a film premiere sponsored by his vodka company Naughty Boy Ltd.

"I spotted Monica on the side of the dance floor and asked her to dance", he tells me. They danced together for two hours without saying one word to each other, but that first close encounter obviously made a strong impression on Monica who made her feelings clear via a 'cheeky' text: "I can teach you some moves if you want...for the next dance."

However, the pair have still found time to indulge in romantic pleasures such as a recent date in Regent's Park where they took a rowing boat out together. Monica speaks broken English but the language barrier is not a problem for the love birds. "We spend most of the time laughing together", Anthony tells me, smiling.

So can we expect to bump into the celebrity couple on Osborne road? Unfortunately for us, Anthony says "the girls are very busy. I would really like it if Monica could visit me in Newcastle but I doubt it's possible".

Anthony has been caught out only once by the identical twins, when he put his arm around Gabriella in the car, mistaking her for Monica. The girls are very close, but Anthony claims he can tell them apart if they're standing next to each other with their backs to him.

Proud mother, manager and songwriter for the twins, Margit Irimia, spoke to me exclusively about her daughters, their career and Anthony: "They have a very balanced relationship. They are both very busy and enjoy spending time together when they can. I think Anthony is a very nice boy".

However she informs me that "what you see on TV is very different from what you see in real life". "Monica is a laid back dreamer with romantic ideals. She doesn't socialise much and is not very streetwise".

There scope for joint publicity campaigns seems too good to be true but there are no plans for a professional Naughty Boy-Cheeky Girl collaboration as yet. Anthony admits it's a "possibility", and their mother agrees "The association would be good for both of them".

Personally, until I'm given a formal introduction to Anthony's new lady love, I will always associate the girls with their classic: "You are the cheeky boys, we are the cheeky girls, touch my bum, this is life".



SPOON-FED STUDENTS

Lecturers accuse students of expecting degrees on a plate

LECTURERS, IT seems, are never satisfied.

When students don't turn up to lectures we are accused of being lazy and uncommitted, and when we do turn up we apparently become over-dependent and reliant on "spoon-feeding."

This is according to a recent survey of 300 young academics (those below 40) which was conducted for The Times Higher Education supplement.

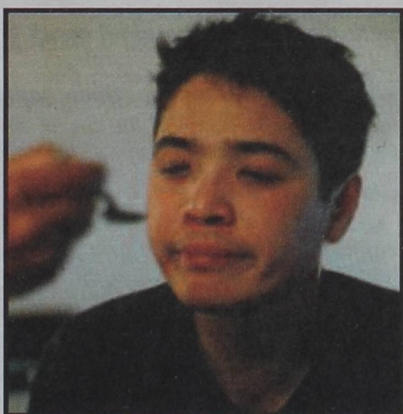
Almost 80% of those questioned felt that students today are more demanding and in greater need of spoon-feeding than when they went to university, although we must remember that these dedicated academics were 'paid' to go to university (for the younger amongst you, these were grants, just like loans only without the nasty 20-year after-taste) and tuition fees were a mere twinkle in Tony Blair's eye.

In response to the survey, the Association of University Teachers said students were getting more

demanding as a result of fees and the drive to enrol students from a wider range of socio-economic backgrounds.

Mr Jonathon Whitehead, head of public affairs at the AUT, said: "As students are treated more as customers, they are going to be demanding, and often rightly so."

Hannah Essex, the vice-president of



the NUS had this to say on the matter: "The report suggests that the widening participation agenda has not been backed up with a built-in support system."

"Students need and should have more pastoral and academic support from their tutors."

The question then must be, are students as customers getting value for money?

One anonymous third year politics student, found diligently studying in the Men's Bar at 1 p.m. thinks not: "Most lecturers don't want to know outside of lectures, they're academics not teachers and we're just a way for them to carry on researching. We're just a means to their ends."

So then, are students getting lazier, or is it the lecturers?

One possible answer is that it is neither. Perhaps increased financial strain, and greater numbers of students, simply result in a greater need for pastoral support.

By PHIL MCGOWAN

Little Eye on the Locals

By PHIL MCGOWAN

Well done us!

The *Evening Chronicle* recently told us that the North-East is the worst (or best) region in the country for binge-drinking. In a story that is thought to have created dangerous levels of laughter throughout the Bigg market, they warn us that men in the region regularly drink, wait for it, over 8 units a week and women over 6 units. Shocking I'm sure you'll agree! For new students you now know the task you face and for those returning, keep up the good work.

Struggling to care!

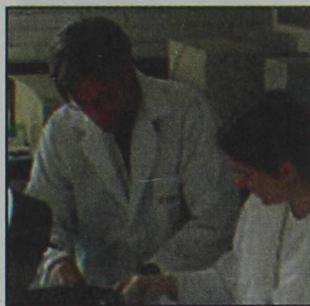
In other news from the outstanding *Evening Chronicle*, a local cabbie "splashed out" £25,000 on a new cab, and was then told he could not use it. Now maybe it's just me, but I'm struggling to have any sympathy for a taxi driver.

And finally...

You can't look at local news without at least one cat story - and "Today's Voice of the North" *The Journal* last week gave us the harrowing tale of Bullet, who returned home after a five-year absence in what they called "the latest chapter in Bullet's eventful 14-year life." What makes them think we care...

CLONING HITS CAMPUS CLONING HITS CAMPUS

By EMMA SHIPLEY and CATRIONA WRIGHT



SCIENTISTS from the University are leading the global field of biomedical research - after being granted the first European licence to carry out research on embryonic stem cells.

The scientists are part of the Newcastle Human Embryonic Stem Cell Group which involves the NHS,

Newcastle University and the Centre for Life, where the group is based.

The licence will allow scientists to gain a deeper insight into the

development of diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's and may lead to greater progress in the treatment of these diseases.

The group was established two years ago in order to see how stem cells could potentially aid the understanding of many serious and debilitating diseases. In 2003 it became one of the first two groups to derive human embryonic stem cells from spare IVF embryos and in 2004 they applied for the licence to carry out somatic cell nuclear transfer.

Professor Alison Murdoch of the Newcastle NHS fertility clinic was thrilled with the outcome: "The potential this area of research offers is immensely exciting and we are keen to take the work we have done so far to the next level.

"This research should give a valuable insight into the development of many diseases."

The procedure involves stem cells being extracted from days old human embryos, which are then capable of transforming into over 300 types of human cell.

As well as using this to treat diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and diabetes, scientists also plan to reduce the risk of rejection when someone else's tissue is used in an operation

- by using stem cells to clone a patient's DNA and grow the required tissue.

Although good news for biomedical research in Newcastle, the licence has created consternation among anti-abortion and pro-life activists who fear that this means "a further step down the slippery slope."

Mr Jack Scarisbrick is chairman of the group Life - who are currently attempting to overrule the licence granted by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority.

He said: "The work involves the manufacture of a new kind of human being with the express purpose of destroying that life once stem cells have been stripped from it. It is the manipulation, exploitation and trivialisation of human life."

Dr Simon Woods, a bioethicist at Newcastle's Policy, Ethics and Life Sciences Research Institute, said: "At PEALS we will continue to stimulate public debate and explore with researchers the ethical and social questions which arise alongside the technical and scientific issues in this promising area of science." Although such developments are bound to be controversial, they are also being hailed as a scientific breakthrough not only for the North-East, but also the UK.

Howard's Ho'way

By DAN LARGE

A CRUCIAL supporting role was played by Newcastle students in the Conservative fight to win the Hartlepool by-election last Friday.

A group from the University's branch of Conservative Future - formerly the Young Conservatives - went down to Hartlepool to show support for party leader Michael Howard and candidate Jeremy Middleton.

They formed a vital part of the Conservatives' campaign structure, accompanying Mr. Howard on his Hartlepool walkabout. Their involvement showed that Conservative Party commitment is no longer just the twin-set-and-pearls blue-rinse brigade that they are so often associated with. Party Deputy Chairman Charles Hendry said on Friday, "The Conservative Party is committed to tackling the problems young people have been lumbered with by Labour, and we are making every possible effort to ensure that young people's views and concerns are reflected in our policies."

Mr. Middleton seemed upbeat and positive about his campaign, saying, "People in Hartlepool feel let down by Labour and they are looking for an alternative. The more people I speak to, the more I hear that they agree with Conservative policies - whether on law and order, health, regional assemblies or Europe."

Chris Martin, President of Newcastle Conservative Future (CF), said of the event, "We're very happy at the way in which Michael Howard was received in Hartlepool. This is yet another indication that the Conservatives are alive and well in the North East. Once again Newcastle CF has played an important part in a visit from a member of the shadow cabinet."

Two officers of the Union society were also present in Hartlepool on Friday. Dan Large, Chair of Union Council, and Clifford Mace, Convenor of Debates, invited Mr. Howard to come and speak at the Union and Mr. Howard said that, time permitting, he would be delighted to do so in the future.

Newcastle University's Union Society has in recent years not seen much involvement in party politics. However, with the emergence of the Conservative Future branch here this looks set to change.

Anyone interested in joining the Newcastle University branch of Conservative Future should contact Chris Martin on chairman@newcastlecf.com. More information is available on the web at www.newcastlecf.com. They are also having a pub session at Bar Oz (Haymarket) at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday 12th October - all are welcome so get the date in your diary!



Howard and his homies

JOIN THE MOST OFFENSIVE SOCIETY IN THE UNION...
DEBATING
WEDNESDAYS 7.30PM, COMMITTEE ROOM B
BECAUSE WE LOVE CLIFFORD

EARLIER EXAMS EXPECTED

By KATIE WHITING &
ANNETTE WOODWORTH

A GOVERNMENT task-force has recommended changes to the admissions process that would see future students applying to universities after receiving their A-Level results.

The task-force, led by Professor Steven Schwartz, suggests that post-qualification applications (PQA) would make admissions fairer and more transparent.

This would mean students would be offered places on the basis of their actual results.

Prof. Schwartz said: "Too many decisions are made on unreliable information such as schools' forecasts of A-Level grades or impressionistic interviews."

He believes that the current system can leave students ill-informed and confused as to why their applications have not been successful.

The Education Secretary, Charles Clarke, has enthusiastically backed the proposals.

He said: "It must be fairer for students to know their final results before making important choices about where and what to study."

Headteachers welcome the Schwartz

recommendations. The Secondary Heads Association leader, Mr John Dunford, said that as a headteacher he had seen many pupils restricted by choices made before they receive their results.

However, a number of headteachers in the North have expressed concern that the changes will deprive children of vital time in school.

Mr Matthew Andrews, the secretary of the Admissions Practitioners Group, which represents admissions tutors from across the higher education sector, believes many problems concerning PQA are being overlooked.

Mr Andrews, who is also head of undergraduate admissions at Durham University, said: "We will be driven to look purely at grades rather than taking account of the broader applications...it will be a quantitative rather than qualitative decision."

Other problems have been identified by the Admissions Practitioners' Group, who say that changes to the process would give universities less time to build up a relationship with prospective students.

Also the changes would probably mean A-Levels being taken earlier in the year and the university term starting later.

Newcastle

University's Communications Officer, Tom Gorman, believes that the Schwartz report made valuable points and he emphasised that the Union is particularly pleased with the focus on transparency.

He added that the Union appreciates that there are a large number of candidates applying to universities with higher grades.

"I share the view of Matthew Andrews that admissions should not be judged on grade achievements alone," said Tom.

Furthermore, the possible changes of term dates could have the knock-on effect of making it harder for international students to attend British universities.

Tom Gorman agrees with the NUS that the report was a missed opportunity to improve access and creates further obstacles for potential applicants.

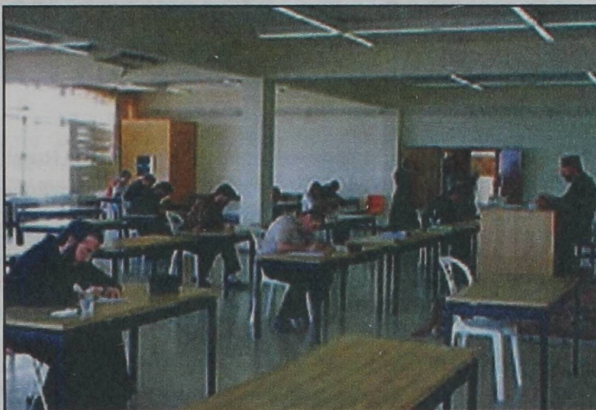
The NUS Vice-President for Education Hannah Essex said: "Applicants should be assessed on their potential rather than simply grades."

As students' abilities consist of more than just their exam results, Hannah believes a more "holistic approach" would help improve access for those with less traditional backgrounds.

A statement from a Newcastle University spokesman stated: "The principles enshrined in the Schwartz review are already at the heart of the universities approach to admissions."

A University source, present at a recent meeting with the Vice Chancellor, said that the University welcomed the idea of PQA and felt that a greater degree of transparency in the system can only be a good thing.

The proposals are not yet finalised. As the shadow Education Secretary Tim Collins highlighted: "The proposals for PQA applications was sensible in principle but will need detailed work in practice."



FOREIGN LEGION

Universities to face "spiral of decline" without more foreign students

EDUCATION SECRETARY Charles Clarke has warned that British universities must look internationally in order to maintain their current standard of excellence.

The eminent politician said thinking internationally is now "a necessity not an option" and also advised more British students to study abroad.

Clarke now faces pressure from university leaders after claiming that our universities will face a "spiral of decline" unless the more lucrative foreign students can be encouraged to study in Britain.

The announcement follows the speech by the President of Universities UK, Professor Ivor Crewe, at the group's annual Oxford conference.

Professor Crewe said public money and tuition fees do not meet the full cost of teaching

"The revenue from international student fees makes an important contribution."

Ella Ritchie

British and EU undergraduates. This is despite the upcoming introduction of top-up fees.

He said: "What will keep us afloat is our continuing ability to attract international students to these islands or to UK degree programmes developed overseas."



Clarke warns of possible future problems

Professor Ella Ritchie, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning at Newcastle University agrees that maximizing income is important.

She said: "The revenue from international student fees makes an important contribution." But she stressed that international students contribute much more to the quality of our universities, by creating "a truly global community, right here on campus."

Prof. Ritchie also stressed that foreign students bring "perspectives to the subject matter which all students study, thus broadening considerably the learning experience of their UK counterparts."

By ADAM HALLS

Freaky Dancing
MixMag no1 club in the North Jan '04

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DEEJAY PUNK ROC
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(www.Disruptivevinyl.co.uk)
Visuals: pre-amptive
(MTV UK VJ Award Winners 2004)

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FLAREDYCATS
(UK DMC Team Champions 2002)
THE BAGHDADDIES
(Full live band)
THE GUESSMEN
(Diesel U Music Award Winners 2003)
(Full live band)
PADDY FREEFORM
(Reverb/Method Lounge)

ROOM 3: BREAKBEAT SOCIETY
Deejay Punk Roc - Electrofried
Fun Size Jonny - Dave Murray
Alex Lafferty (Chunky)

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ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN AT FREAKY DANCING'S CARNAVAL IN THE CASTLE BY HARRY.

LIFE AFTER BESLAN

The Courier's Nick Francis examines the aftermath of the event which has been described as Russia's 9/11...

IT is rare that we are able to experience the anguish of the victims of the news stories that appear nightly on our screens. The relentlessness of the death and destruction that makes up our feed of the world beyond our horizons has given us the ability switch off to its agonies.

However, once in a while the images are so powerful that they cannot be ignored. The hijacking of Middle School Number One in Beslan, Russia was one such event. The suffering and the penetrating media access to it, allowed us to share in the shock and grief of the small North Ossetian community.

There was something unbelievable about the whole situation: The badly organised security services shooting blindly at unseen terrorists; groups of armed parents trying to fight their way into the school; screaming relatives, overdosing on grief and anxiety. And in the middle of it all, amongst the smoke and the bullets and the shrapnel, the dirty, shocked, staring pupils who had been forced to drink their own urine to stay alive. It was so terrible that it was difficult to accept as actually happening.

Like 9/11, the images broadcast across the world were so horrifyingly graphic they seemed implausible.

These events had such an effect because they set a precedent, a new standard of depravity in the modern world. Both constituted attacks on the respective country's sovereignty that were too great to be ignored.

President Putin came to power as a tough, self-styled security



tsar who was going to clean up corruption and make Russia strong again after the fall of the Soviet Union. His hard-line with the dissidents in Chechnya was very popular among Russians, who share an endemic hatred of their troublesome neighbours.

From the moment he came to power, President Putin set about consolidating it. After last month's atrocity, Putin changed the law so that the Kremlin now has the power to choose the

"...the images broadcast around the world were so horrifyingly graphic they seemed implausible..."

elective governors of the differing Russian Federations. This was done under the guise of providing greater security and control over unrest, and was something that he had been wanting to do since taking office. However, this undermining of the democratic process can only lead to less confidence in the system and thus more disorder. It was through putting a puppet government in power in Chechnya in the recent elections that Moscow provoked the latest spate of killing.

Beslan has also been extremely useful for George Bush's election campaign over in the States. Despite the news coverage of the massacre being shockingly sparse (most of the channels carried up to the minute coverage of the slickly stage-managed Republican convention), the American electorate saw enough of the scenes of child-slaughter to persuade them that he should be the next man in the Oval Office. For some reason they believe that an idiot who is a strong leader is preferable to a weaker man who might have some idea of where to lead them to. Re-electing George Bush now would be a bit like going down 'The Strawberry' after a game on a Saturday with your big beefy Sunderland mate on the understanding that if you get in a fight he'll protect you. It is ironic that the hard-line rightwing leaders whose interventionist policies provoke this kind of reaction are the first that people turn to to protect them.

Any major destabilisation of the Caucasus caused by the Beslan massacre maybe its most damaging effect. This area of Russia is known for its blood feuding. North Ossetia's relations with neighbouring Ingushetia have been particularly uneasy since a brief territorial dispute in 1992. The fact that nine of the hostage takers have turned out to be Ingush may well lead to reprisals. Many have already fled the area fearing a tit-for-tat



Shamil Basayev - The Chechen warlord has admitted responsibility for organising the Beslan siege

escalation into civil war.

Russia is one of the World's four main oil producers along with Saudi Arabia, Iran and Iraq. With the deteriorating situation in the Middle East and oil prices already at one of their highest points ever, the production of Caucasus oil is vital. The already precarious situation compounded by rapidly increasing demand from gargantuan China means that further loss of output could lead to a global economic crash which would ultimately be borne by the developing world.

"...as Mahatma Ghandi said "an eye for an eye only ends up making the whole World blind"..."

Violence begets violence; it has done throughout the history of man. The best thing for the North Ossetians to do would be to forgive and forget and not avenge the school massacre. Revenge can only worsen the situation, as Mahatma Ghandi said "an eye for an eye only ends up making the whole World blind". However, can you really tell a nation who has just suffered such a loss to reconcile their differences with its perpetrators?

Foxes, Farmers & Farce

Ben Duckworth's unique insight into the week's politics

Is it me, or has fox-hunting rumbled on as an issue for absolutely ages?

I remember debating this in a Politics seminar in the first year, and now I'm starting my third. I've also just discovered two private members' bill to restrict hunting were introduced in the Commons in 1949. That's 55 years of debates on hunting.

Fox-hunting appears to be as divisive as Iraq at the moment, but is it honestly worth all the time bestowed on it? Now, it looks like hunting will be banned by 2006. The Government has

conveniently timed this to be after the next general election to avoid pro-hunting demonstrations during campaigning. I'm sure if John Prescott doesn't mind punching a guy with a mullet holding an egg, then he will be more than happy to protect Tony Blair from a whip-wielding farmer.

Actually the fox-hunting issue has just descended into a long series of stereotypes. Pro-hunting supporters are portrayed as rich, ignorant, arrogant toffs determined not to have their fun spoiled by what they see as ignorant, unwashed trouble-making townies that have no understanding of life in the British countryside.

Fox-hunters insist the lead hound kills the fox neatly and efficiently while those against insist that the fox is torn apart by the pack of hounds while the hunters look on in glee. The Countryside Alliance claims to enjoy huge popularity but has done little to dispel the notion of its aristocratic support base.

Despite fox-hunting looking a fairly simple issue of for and against, it has become such a mess that Labour may have to invoke the little-used Parliament Act because the House of Lords twice rejected the Hunting bill in 2003. This has brought howls of protest from right-wing sections of the Commons, who don't believe that the Parliament Act should be used for such an insignificant issue that has already been legally blocked twice

by the upper house.

Tony Blair then stepped in to helpfully suggest to pro-hunting supporters that he was against a ban on hunting but was doing it for his party. It's funny that Tony Blair is willing to listen to his party on fox-hunting, but when it comes to Iraq he suddenly turns deaf.

Pro-hunting demonstrations have now reached the gates of Parliament with a mini-riot and a few cracks off the police truncheons in an attempt to get them to piss off. Otis Ferry, son of Bryan, managed to enter the House of Commons itself to protest along with a couple of his mates. As much as we criticise MPs, perhaps they deserve slightly more effective protection than the sergeants-at-arms with their tighties and shiny buckles.

Last week, a bloke from the Sun got a job in the Commons using dodgy references and took in a fake bomb. I bet they'd enjoyed making that in the newsroom. It looked good; resplendent with a clock, plasticine and some coiled wiring.

Even John Prescott would have struggled to protect Tony Blair if the bloke was from al-Qaeda and the bomb had been real. With all the warnings of a terrorist attack in the capital, you would think our democratic seat of power would be more effectively protected.

Is our nation secure?

After several high profile security breaches in the past fortnight, Henry de Renzy Martin questions whether we should be concerned by the flaws in Britain's security.

IT CERTAINLY has been a busy couple of weeks in the limelight for our nation's security forces.

Batman made a successful attempt at scaling Buckingham Palace (Robin didn't make it) and a crack team of pro-hunting protestors gained access to the House of Commons, only to be denied a few more minutes of fame by our modern day equivalent of the three musketeers (Not much seems to have changed for the Serjeants-at-Arms...)

The nation panicked and gasped in disbelief as the media turned upon David Blunkett MP, the man clearly responsible for the cock-up. He in turn passed the blame onto somebody else, and I believe at this moment in time it is currently lying on yet another somebody's lap...

And out of the battle (circus) came the victor: The Sun Newspaper, our nation's favourite, The People's Paper and The Forces' Paper. Their red hot reporter Anthony France managed to infiltrate the house of common's with fake bomb making equipment, much like he did at Birmingham Airport not so long ago. (His trick of getting giant blobs of blue-tak through metal detectors is uncanny.)

So what about it? Yes, it is a worry, but it depends on how you look at it. If bombs were being found in shopping centres, cinemas or restaurants, or if suicide bombers were being arrested just before pushing the button in school playgrounds, then I would be fearing for our security. But the nature of these 'attacks' tells its own story.

The people of Britain are tired of going about their daily routine pretending everything is alright. They are tired of complaining, but at the same time are far from content with the service their government are providing them with. So much like the hurricanes that are hitting the US and the Caribbean, protestors are rising up and letting the bureaucrats know how they feel. Good on them.

The ongoing threat of terrorism is an entirely

different issue. As we can see from the events of 9/11, from the atrocity in Beslan and from what occurs almost daily in Iraq these days, Al-Qaeda and Islamic fundamentalists are more interested in causing maximum civilian casualties than knocking out a few politicians or royals.

It's obviously not because they are an easier target, as recent events have shown (although one suspects that a turban-clad Batman or a Middle Eastern looking pro-hunting protestor would have had more trouble). Terrorists simply look to cause as much damage as possible.



Are these people really a threat to our National security? Left: Batman at Buckingham Palace. Right: The break-in at Parliament

So, getting onside with the security forces, I would agree with them that a royal-less Buckingham Palace is not so high up the priority list. As for the House of Commons, it is not their territory.

Everything has been blown out of proportion, and the media is missing the point. Nothing that has happened recently has proven that the security of this country is not under control. Batman (Jason Hatch, not Bruce Wayne) did well to make it as far as he did, but considering that no royalty was present at the Palace, how much of a threat was he to national security?

If it was national heritage that a potential suicide bomber was threatening, or if he was

merely seeking to damage royal property, then I myself am guilty of the same crime.

I had the pleasure of working at Buckingham Palace for a few hours this summer, and after having taken a chunk out of one of the tastefully decorated walls with a tea tray, I promptly cleared my second full tray of champagne glasses onto the expensive looking carpet (no-one seemed to care at this point).

I just so happened to be approached by one of Camilla Parker-Bowles attire who asked me to direct them to the dining room as they had not been to that specific wing (the West Wing) of



the Palace for a couple of years. If you think about it logically, letting terrorists attack Buckingham Palace with no-one in it is a vastly superior strategy in terms of numbers than keeping security so tight that the terrorists decide it would be easier to blow up a public bus.

As for the threat on Westminster, it is a prominent point that its own security is dealt with by its own people, and David Blunkett and his merry men are not to blame. Nonetheless, it is my opinion that a reduced to rubble House of Commons or Lords (or both) could only mean good things. As the events of the past couple of weeks have highlighted, no-one much

appreciates the work of politicians anymore. It is a surprise to me how the political structure of modern nations has lasted as long as it has.

How can an institution be founded and operated on blatant lies and continued deceit? How can we be swung as a nation in favour of one party or the other, deceiving us with false promises, and never think twice about it? It can't carry on forever. I'll be apocalyptic about it and in my own hopeful way see these events of the past weeks as the beginning of the end of life in a nation ruled by lying, cheating, self-promoting scum.

Let us protect our families, our friends, our children, and let the government help us. As for the state of the Palace, I did twice as much damage Batman. Our government needs some big changes. It needs new personnel and an entirely different infrastructure if it is going to work for the people and satisfy their needs. I'm no hunter, but I keep seeing the same billboard about 59%... how do these men of such intellectual stature miss them, or worse still ignore them? And it's not exactly an important issue, just another chance for the political elite to take away a little more freedom from the people. A bomb in Parliament would do tremendous good in the long term. And at least three hundred children wouldn't be incinerate, only greedy smooth-talking bureaucrats who jeopardise the welfare of our nation for their own self-promotion.

Enough of the politics, though. In Britain we have been fortunate enough to avoid a major terrorist attack. Russia, Spain and of course the US have not been so fortunate. Something must be going right, and the only thing I am able to conclude is that the few that govern our national security are on top of the situation (although the inevitable must occur one day). Perhaps it is the only thing going right under our current government.

By HENRY DE RENZY MARTIN

How secure is our students' union?

The Courier puts Head of Security Rob Scott to the test

IT MAY not strike you as the obvious terrorist target, but as Head of Security of Newcastle Students' Union, Rob Evans has to think of everything.

"There is no security issue that we don't take seriously," said Rob. "If someone rang through and said there was a bomb in the basement or a chemical leak in the kitchens, we wouldn't laugh them off."

"Our procedure would be to sound the fire alarms and evacuate the building, and call the police down straight away. There would be no messing around."

But unfortunately for Rob, the issue of security does not stop there. "Our priority is everybody's safety. We employ enough staff to ensure this, but there are also staff to cover all the access points in the union to make sure the building is as secure as possible."

During the day, the union is unstaffed and so there is the opportunity for break-ins and other breaches of security.

But after 5pm, there are security staff on all the doors and others scattered throughout the building. However, Rob admits that, as hard as you try, there are always going to be loop-holes.

"Unfortunately, no system is infallible," explains Rob. "There are so many limitations



when it comes to security. We have a cost budget, and the availability of staff is a major restraint. To be honest, you can never have enough staff, but you have to work within a budget.

"Having said that, we are well covered at the moment. There is no way that students could break into the union or let their friends in without paying, as we have enough staff to cover all the access points."

At present, the union's bouncers are on an NVQ-

style training programme, to meet with new British laws being implemented at the end of the year.

"At the moment, all our staff are trained in basic elements of the law, the use of force, licensing regulations and the union rules."

"However, by Christmas, all our bouncers need to have passed two exams. Newcastle's students' union is a recognised training centre, and the programme has been running since the summer holidays."

When we asked Rob if there were any improvements he could make to his security, he had one simple answer. "I think we should have the use of guns. At the moment, none of the staff carry them, but I think this is a huge mistake."

By EDWARD SAWYER

Hall Life – warts n' all

It's like a third nipple - you only miss it when it's gone

WHETHER RECENTLY freed or a fresh detainee, you will no doubt be familiar with the concept of an area of land inhabited by largely uncontrollable delinquents having casual sex; we've all seen re-runs of Prisoner Cell Block H.

Yet what will you make of Halls by the time you leave? If you happen to have made a load of good friends, then you might not want to let go of the duty manager's hand as they wish you a fond 'bientot' on your voyage to maturity, and tell you that "bygones are bygones" as far as the shitting incident is concerned.

If you found yourself living with the kind of people you'd prevent your children from speaking to, then you'll want rid of halls as quickly as a piles victim would discard his tight underwear. Listed below are a few things you might recognise from halls, hate them as you may. But a bit like Stockholm syndrome, you sometimes only fall in love with your captors once you're free of them. Either that or you can rev your car on their lawn without repercussions.

The Residents

Sub-wardens: Usually former members of the SAS or Green Berets, trained immaculately in people skills, advanced first aid and hostage negotiation. They are not, as is rumoured, PhD students with few to no friends.

The Kitchen Staff: Supposedly never born in the conventional sense but instead created en-masse in Gondor, shortly before its siege. In much the same way as jackals, one staff-member tends to assume leadership (usually the one who was prematurely ripped out of her

mother's stomach before eating her). Short-sighted New Labour policy means they are still restricted to halls kitchens, not working the terminals at Dover and Folkstone, where they would not only ferret out all non-passport-holding asylum seekers, but prevent greedy tourists returning for seconds.

Those You Didn't Meet: Also referred to as 'geeks', 'hermits' and 'those guys who share a Primark sweater'. Obviously everyone you knew was the sophisticated cream of society,

Then Go To Breakfast With In The Morning: These are your friends. You just chose badly.

Tricky Scenarios

Going to supper: Scenario A - You find yourself ahead of a throng of friends, marching imperiously to supper like a ravenous pack of dogs. Scenario B - Everyone's out, there's only 20 minutes left of supper, and you're hungry. Your choices are fourfold. (1) Don't go.



"Got your hall cards?"

picked by your fair hand with all the thought and delight of John-Prescott in an offal pic'n'mix. Meanwhile anyone you didn't meet was obviously the social equivalent of snot. Why else wouldn't you have met them? Staggering past them at 2am rabidly drooling vodka recharge and eating your meal out of one communal bowl at supper, nudges at the fact that it wasn't down to their aversion to sunlight.

Those People You Met Drunk: Also go by the name of 'mate', 'buddy' and '...you...'. If cornered, conversations should be averted by looking at the floor, playing snake or, in inescapable situations, feigning a seizure or similar life-threatening attack. For example, if you think you have high-cholesterol, use it to full effect.

People You Meet Repeatedly When Drunk

Dangerous. Statistics show that 80% of vodka recharge deaths are down to empty stomachs, allowing the parasitic concoction to devour your intestine, liver, and any other organ it can lay its satanic tentacles on. (2) Arrive hoping to see friends. Again, risky. And a risk that takes on a new dimension if that member of The Salvation Army to whom you were showing a feigned interest in is dining. (3) Accost a vague acquaintance and, like a preying mantis, use them for all they are worth before coldly and calculatedly disposing of them when you spot vaguely improved company. Show no remorse - if they are the same sub-species as you, they will be acting similarly. (4) Sit with the sub-wardens. Alternatively wash down 60 paracetamol with a bottle of toilet duck.

Laundry Day: (Or, in lay terms, when you

finally realise that perplexing roadkill-esque smell is originating from your sock drawer). Dilemmas include working the machine and what to wear when everything else is being chemically purged of its radiological coating. Both situations are tricky, if not impossible. Firstly, try befriending someone who looks like they spend a lot of time there. Smiling and nodding when they discuss Warhammer could buy you some soap powder. If that fails, it is debatable whether you could subject another outfit to a further six weeks of tikka stains and splash-back without it looking for a flat of its own. If they'll let you, borrow clothes from a friend. If not, fashion your laundry basket into a contemporary take on sack-cloth. A recipe I prefer is a) phone your mum b) tell her you love her c) ask her to do your laundry at home d) ask for more money (optional).

Returning Drunk From A Night Out:

Remember, sub-wardens will hunt in packs. If you have recently urinated on the hall-manager's car, decorated yourself in unopened mail, or forcibly stolen someone that doesn't belong to you or the university, then expect them to appear. Similar to hyenas, they are largely nocturnal. Showing veloceraptor-esque teamwork, one will act as an unassuming foil, forcing you to take flight in the opposite direction, where a group of two to three will be waiting to devour your hall-card. Techniques of escape are scarce; once a sub-warden has his man, he will rarely show weakness to the pack by letting him go. Try working on the theme of your crime. For example, if you have just puked in the collection drawer of the vending machine, argue that you had a right as an unsatisfied customer. If all else fails, cry. It is a proven fact that physics graduates cannot handle the sights of tears, as they are unable to work out their chemical formula.

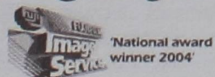
If you are lucky, you could look on your time in halls, surrounded by friends and empty vodka bottles, as one of the best in your life. If not, the chances are you learnt a thing or two. I discovered that you can squeeze in two pints and a turd between Countdown and Neighbours.

By TOM VAUGHAN

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Good to be back?

As Tooss found out after a year away, when starting uni again everything's the same but yet so different

"YOU LOOK like a foreign student" was the friendly comment I received today whilst waiting for my friend outside the union. Well, thanks mate that's how I feel. I have recently returned from a year abroad studying with the Erasmus scheme in France and Spain. Without wanting to make you all sick with jealousy (actually that is the point) I had the most incredible year, but have found returning to Newcastle as a fourth year bizarre to say the least.

For the first six months of the year I was in Grenoble in the Alps. It's a medium sized student city where it rains a lot and if you don't ski, there isn't much to do. If you do ski (or board) it's a phenomenal place to be. Often described as the gateway to the Alps, it is only one hour's drive to Les Deux Alps and within easy access to many other resorts. So with lectures sparsely placed throughout the week (strategically planned) I was able to go skiing three or four times most weeks. Another advantage of being a student at the University of Grenoble was the vastly reduced ski passes it offered. So all in all, despite a few hitches with personal safety, it was a great experience and if any of you have the opportunity to do a placement in France, make Grenoble your first choice. I was then lucky enough to spend the rest of my

placement in Cadiz in Spain. It's a tiny city on the beautiful Atlantic coast. As described by my crazy Dutch flat mate, our back garden was basically the beach. And what can I say? The Spanish way of siestas, late nights, sun-sea-sex and cheap living suited me! Newcastle Languages Department quite rightly encouraged us to meet as many Spanish people and spend as much time with them as possible. The added bonus was they didn't make exams compulsory to pass. Needless to say I had the time of my life.

So now that you are all crying and wondering why the hell you didn't do languages I'll tell you about coming back to the Toon. It feels like returning home except someone else has moved in. The Freshers are strutting around the place (I'm sure I waddled) like its theirs and has been for years. Scary

Mary is now turning up to lectures in the oh so glam Old Library Building in a pink floaty dress, glass slippers and the most ineffective poncho possible. The fashion this year must be Goosebumps. She is telling us all (including Rufus on the phone) that she can't decide whether to go to Attic or Apartment tonight - where the hell are they? Someone once said to



The sun setting in the typical glory of Cadiz

me students would be liked more if they talked quieter - he might have a point Scary Mary. The fact that Newcastle is turning into one giant pub is probably seen by most of us as a positive aspect of this great place. Not however, when a double Vodka and Coke costs £6.40 in some of these poncey new bars. When I arrived in Newcastle in 2001 you could

positively lapped me in the cool stakes.

Monday was my first day of lectures and after my amazing year of slacking I wanted to look really keen; so I turned up early with the aim of preparing myself for some hard work. I waddled (still do) into my building using the entrance and stairs I used to take and BANG into a closed door. You can apparently no longer access the building this way - Please use the other entrance. Well, they could have put that sign at the bottom of the stairs. Having found the other entrance in all its shiny-new-automatic-door glory and navigated myself to my lecture room, I sat down with a sigh of relief. Phew. Nervously looking around the place I realised I didn't actually know anyone and why were they speaking in English, wasn't this Spanish Interpreting? Um No, bad luck Tooss, wrong lecture.

So, I have already managed to slide back into the same old routine of watching Brain Rot on Daytime TV and, although it is only week 2, I have managed to have some really brilliant nights out. Basically it feels a bit like I've re-done freshers week, the same drinks and the same hangovers, but this time I have managed to do it better. That's the advantage of being a fourth year, you know what you like, you know who you like and you don't feel the pressure of having to follow everyone else to the poncey bars and the inadequate poncho shop. I might sound like a bitter granny (in fact I know I do) but the truth of the matter is I'm back baby and I'm loving it! The atmosphere in Newcastle, both at Uni and in and around the toon, is still sensational. As we all know, it's the place to be and despite my incredible year, I wouldn't want to be anywhere else. Welcome home everyone.

By TOOSS WILLIAMS

"She is telling us all (including Rufus on the phone) that she can't decide whether to go to Attic or Apartment tonight; where the hell are they?"

be Goosebumps. She is telling us all (including Rufus on the phone) that she can't decide whether to go to Attic or Apartment tonight - where the hell are they? Someone once said to



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Get Your Freak on @ Freaky Dancing this Saturday

At the end of the summer festival season it can be hard to find anything that comes close to recapturing the diversity and atmosphere of the best festivals. However, help is at hand this Saturday with Freaky Dancing's long awaited return to Newcastle University Union's Bassment with the highest quality & most diverse line up we've ever put on.

With 3 internationally respected DJ's from the worlds of Breaks, Techno & HipHop, a live electronic showcase of 3 of Newcastle's most talented electronic music producers, and 2 of the most exciting live bands Newcastle's produced combined with a host of the best local DJ's, MTV award winning live visuals & full decor across 3 rooms we fully expect this to be one of those rare nights where you end up running from room to room because you're scared of missing something. Definately a night not to be missed!

Freaky Dancing has been throwing some of the best parties around in Newcastle for 3 years, in venue's across the city. Since the last of the four amazing events we threw at the Uni last year we've been throwing parties in some of the maddest venues in town, including our MidSummer Ball in the Castle Keep (see photos below). We hope you'll join us as we return to the Union for another wicked year of parties.

Photo's taken by Harry at Freaky Dancing's Carnival in the Castle

Your Freaky Dancers for the night are...

Oliver Ho is one of the UK's most innovative electro techno producers and DJ's, and a regular performer at the biggest underground clubs around the world. Check out his critically acclaimed new album, 'The Soft Machine' out now on Meta Records.

Deejay Punk Roc will be playing two sets on the night, warming up in the main room before headlining in the Breaks Room. Rising to prominence in the late '90s with groundbreaking tunes such as 'My Beatbox' that still regularly take the roof off clubs today, Punk Roc is one of the most respected DJ's & Producers on the international Breaks circuit.

The Flaredycats are officially dead good, having won the 2002 UK DMC Team Championship, so expect some serious turntablist skills from these canny cats.

The Baghdaddies have deservedly been one of Newcastle's most popular & most successful live bands for more than a decade, regularly playing at major festivals around the world. This year saw the Baghdaddies playing one of the headlining sets on the Avalon stage at Glastonbury, just before LAMB, which should give you an idea of just how good they really are.

The Guessmen, winners of a prestigious Diesel U Music Award in 2004, have developed their own unique style blending influences from Jazz, funk, punk, electro & Warp style electronica. With recent releases on the influential Tummy Touch label, The Guessmen are definately a band with a big future ahead of them - remember you saw them here 1st.

The electronic funksters from Elastik Trickery will be showcasing a brand new live set, which promises to be something special. The Trickery have been playing live since 1995 with releases on Insert Recordings & DreamTime Records. Sharad craftily fuses Aphex Twin style twisted electronica with lush electro to make him a decent candidate for being them next SquarePusher. Chris Littlewood specialises in tearing up dancefloors with his storming live sets, as those who've seen him at The Green Festival or Freaky Dancing will know.

The night will feature full live visuals provided by pre-amptive, who last month were crowned as the best VJ's in the country at the MTV UK awards.

DJ's are Paddy Freeform, Electrofried, FunSize Jonny & Chunky residents Alex Lafferty & Dave Murray. Freaky Dancing - Saturday 2nd October @ Newcastle University 10pm-3am, £8 ADV +BF, last entry 11.30pm, Nil Welcome Over 18's Only, ROAR, C.U There... FD Communique Ends



THE COURIER ASKS...

OF COURSE, The Courier was doing the rounds during Freshers' Week 2004 to bring you the very best of the festivities. In the first 'The Courier Asks...' of the year, some of the participants give us their views of the week...



Ben Potter (4th Year Architecture)
"My most random moment of the week? When two of my crew members streaked outside the union, then had to go back and do it again as the drivers missed it!", said Supervisor Ben, who selected "on your knees" (usually quickly followed by a funnel) as his favourite quote. "I'd compare Freshers' Week to Guyere cheese as it's strong-smelling and yellow like the crew t-shirts!"



Maddy Taylor (1st Year History); Laura Hutcheon (1st Year Geography); Eleanor Warren (1st Year History)
The girls told our reporter, "one of the crew pulling a drag act, that was pretty funny. We'd definitely love to be on the crew next year, it's all good!" And what about the comparison to cheese? "definitely something really, really cheesy - extra mature!"



Tom (1st Year Architecture) and Luke (1st Year History)
"That driver guy as Mr. T is quality!", Tom said. "I'm well up for being crew next year, I think we'd both look good in yellow!" Any comparisons to cheese? "Feta cheese - something that leaves a nasty taste when you wake up in the morning!"



PC Smith, Northumbria Police (just visiting!)
Obviously loving his experience of Freshers' Week, PC Smith told our reporter: "I've enjoyed reading all the interesting stuff on the crew's t-shirts, especially 'guns don't kill people, drivers do!' I'd love to be on the crew - if beer and women are involved!" When asked to compare Freshers' Week to a type of cheese, the bobby plumped for "something that gives you a bit of get up and go!"



Michael Williamson, a.k.a 'Thor'
"Myself and another crew member were slagged off by all the comedians on the Sunday, and the next morning I woke up on my bedroom floor naked apart from my security pass, is that random enough for you? Freshers' Week is definitely like Camembert - it smells like my t-shirt! I'd definitely want to be on the crew again though. Oh yeah, by the way, did you know that the Queen drinks Skol? " Bizarre.



Meg (1st Year Business & Economics), Duncan & Sarah (Both 1st Year Combined Studies)
"We thought the guys painted silver in the Bassment on the Saturday night were really cool", the trio told our reporter, "and our random quote was from our very own Duncan going on about foot fetishes during a particularly devastating drinking game. We'd definitely love to be crew next year, as long as the points system is still around!"

Freshers' Week?

The Courier's Lucy Sherwood gives us her take on Freshers' Week

ON ARRIVAL at halls my stomach was in knots, hands were shaking, and I was sweating like an overweight buffalo. I was sure that I might as well have had 'unapproachable' stapled on my forehead. However, the parents made it their duty to make everyone they encountered feel at home.

As a result, when I arrived I was greeted by thousands of strangers grinning inanely at everybody they passed.

This served as a warm up for what was yet to come; meeting the neighbours. I spent my first three hours here recounting my name, A-level results, what I'm studying and where I live.

The biggest trial for me during Freshers Week was registering. Waking up after the Falaraki-esque partying the night before was effort enough but I naively reassured myself that all I had to do was to get my form stamped, and I had a whole day to do it. Three days later I was still in the registering queue and I was starting to think that maybe this was a test to see if you could handle the truly fierce demands of a Geography degree.

Finally, when I reached the front of the queue, the top of the ladder, Ground Zero I was greeted by an outrageously happy blonde grinning to the point of gloating. With a swift stamp and a flourish of bangles she was done with me and in reaction to my exasperation she responded "I know, isn't it exciting!"

I did eventually get my NUS card and it joined the hundreds of others that now reside in my wallet. Cards for drinking, partying, the library, the metro and the essential Hall card. Some of these did actually save money and helped buy many strangers very cheap drinks; money can't buy you love but alcohol can!

There was one thing that stayed with me throughout the week though and that was my orange wristband: £42 of good honest fun and a very attractive fashion accessory. During my first 5 days I went bowling, paintballing and had two free burgers and some good times in

the Union. These events, although involving a bit of queuing and some self-organisation were very worthwhile.

All of this was lubricated by (and could not have happened without) the yellow people. Roudy, beerlarious, and often quite scary, this unique breed would have licked Alan Shearer's chest in the name of fun.

Newcastle has a well deserved reputation and if I've learnt anything from being here it's how to party. From our first week it was clear that there was no reason to stay in. Every night was party night, there were stories of drunken debauchery and there's nothing quite like shared embarrassment to break the ice. Rooms filled with 30 people, drunken food fights progressing from cereal to lethal apple throwing and waking up to a room filled with your own chunder.

Freshers' Week? Nay, Freshers strong!

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Find out more at BUNAC's Volunteering Programmes Presentation on Wed 19th May, 6-7pm, Northumbria University, Room 007, Northumberland Building, Sandford Road, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne.

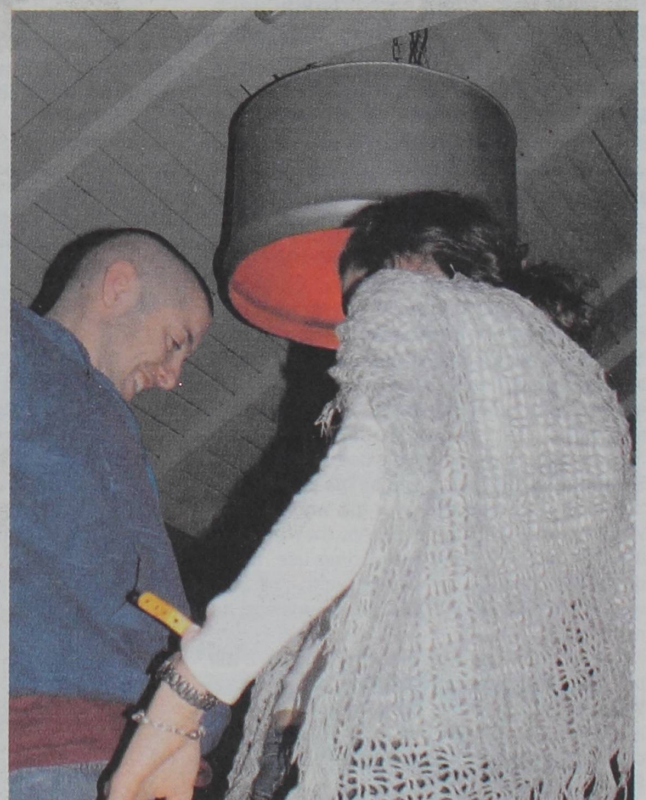


BUNAC, 16 Bowling Green Lane, London EC1R 0QH. E-mail: volunteer@bunac.org.uk

020 7251 3472 www.bunac.org







Getting Fresh 2004

BEFORE I start ranting and raving about Freshers Week, I would like to stick my metaphorical hand in the air and admit, I am completely and utterly biased.

I have been involved in Freshers Week three times, firstly as a fresher, secondly as a crew member and most recently as a supervisor, and you know what? It just gets better and better. In fact I would go so far as to say, I will happily backslap anyone who has anything other than heaps of praise to bestow on the wonder that is Newcastle University FYC! So if you are not a fan of Freshers Week, stop reading.....just about.....now! Otherwise, read on...

It's a sad time at the moment for the three hundred or so crew, supervisors, drivers, officers and organisers, who recently gave up two weeks, a large chunk of cash and half their liver function in the name of all things Fresh. No longer can we pick each other out of the crowds in our brightly coloured t-shirts covered in obscene graffiti. No longer can we justify snogging the freshers/each other/anything with a pulse, all to aid that mysterious 'points system'. No longer can we run amok round Castle Leazes and Richardson Road gathering flocks of first years and forcing them to shout ridiculous phrases such as, "Embrace the Lash!" And a very personal loss for the supervisors and perhaps the drivers too, is the

absent ability to sing sweet melodies to each other across Newcastle, at the touch of a handy walkie-talkie button.

But it's not all sadness and gloom; there are some pluses from emerging relatively unscathed back into the 'real' world. Personally, I will not miss the severe lack of sleep involved in getting to bed at 3ish every night, only to be up again at 8am. Nor will I miss trying to keep a leash on my lovable yet filthy crew, whilst not going off on a major power trip (I blame the mind warping qualities

of the green t-shirts!) As for trying to direct new, terrified international students towards the Jeremy Clarkson International Language Building whilst barely being able to see through my stonking haze of a hangover, woohoo! Now I can just admit complete ignorance and gesture towards the Old Library, they all seem to end up there anyway!

Seriously though, besides alcohol, pulling anyone and everyone, lowering your morals by about 200% and, well, more alcohol... there is a proper point to Freshers Week. Namely,

friends. Mates. Buddies. The nice people who carried you home and held your hair back as you were violently sick. I remember totally bricking it the week before starting uni, what if I didn't like anyone? What if no-one liked me? What if I hated my course or had to share a flat with the student equivalent of Hannibal Lecter? Starting university is a scary time for even the most confident of us and I don't believe anyone who reckons they felt no twinges of anxiety. But, imagine how much harder it would have been without the dollop of silliness that is Freshers Week?! Without the paintballing - go-karting - ice-skating - aquarium visiting - band watching - pub crawling madness, how much sooner would have all the first years died of boredom from answering the same three questions? (Where are you from? What course are you doing? Oh yeah, what's your name?)

Freshers Week serves a purpose and a fantastic one at that. It starts some great cogs in the machine of university life, friends being the wheels, alcohol being the oil and of course, the freshers and crew being the engine behind it all. I had an awesome time and I really hope everyone else (especially those who touched, groped and licked the golden boobs) did too.

Now run to the Mens Bar, get a pint of diesel and down it quick!

By ANNA HOWEY



Be my buddy

FRESHERS' WEEK is part of our National Heritage, an institution. 'A'-Level candidates view the experience as a seminal event in their lives: their first taste of freedom and independence from their parents. It's the ideal opportunity to get up to no good away from the watchful (and worried) eyes of their family; a fresh start and the beginning of a new life. Every student who has been part of Freshers Week in the UK can remember their experiences, the people they met... and how they spent the next year trying to avoid those people.

From the point of view of the universities, Freshers Week is a mixed blessing. On one hand, it is a critical process in the student's path to familiarising themselves with their new environment, and settling in emotionally. A successful event can have a drastic effect on the retention rates for universities, for example. But at the same time, much as the parents do, they cast a worried eye over the whole event. What are they getting up to? Are they meeting the right people? Promiscuity, drug use, binge drinking and personal safety worry parents whose beloved offspring leave for universities nationwide.

Disconcerting as these thoughts may be, it will be of some consolation to know that Freshers Week in the UK is undergoing a quiet revolution. My experience of Freshers Week certainly lived up to its hedonistic reputation. But student unions, which run the event, are acutely aware of the changing attitudes of the

student community today, and its drastically changing demographics. The sharp increase in enrolment from foreign countries, and the broader social base from which students are now obtained, brings in a much wider range of temperaments, cultures, social backgrounds.

It is this spirit of diversity which has driven Freshers Week to adapt in order to survive. At Newcastle University, this effect is especially marked. AMSU, a division of the NUS, is a collaboration of Student Union marketing departments from across the country. During its spring conference this year, Newcastle was hailed as an example for others to follow.

Beyond its leading range of programmed events, Newcastle has gone one step further. Introducing a new range of activities that appeal to mature, international and more subdued students has given everyone the choice of activities like taster courses in Salsa dancing, guided historical tours and relaxing evening cruises on the Tyne.

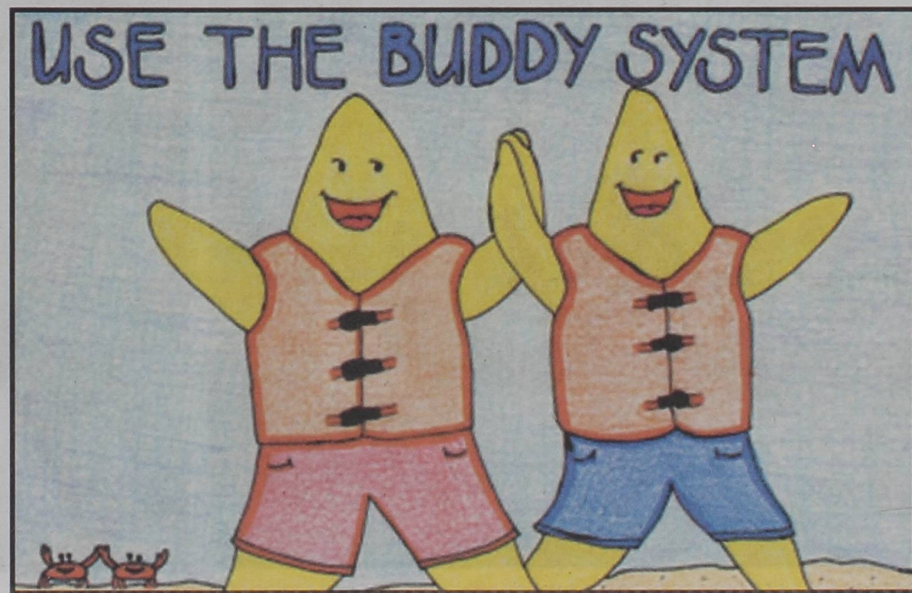
Radically altering the landscape of Freshers Week from a high-octane party for teenagers to a festival appealing to students who are parents (and their children), those who don't speak English as their first language and those averse to the drinking culture is no mean feat,

but it has successfully integrated the concept of inclusiveness to a point unparalleled by any other University in the UK: accessibility. In its third year, Newcastle has prided itself in its own 'Buddy System'. This voluntary programme gives Freshers with partial sight and mobility impairment the unique opportunity to participate fully alongside everyone else. Specially selected members of the 'Crew', who comprise some 350 2nd and 3rd years involved in the manning of the event, join the programme with the sole intent of making themselves unconditionally available to students who require additional support. The student requiring the support calls all the shots - the buddy providing as much, or as little assistance as is required, and sometimes accompanying them throughout the entire week.

In its first year, freshers with visual impairment as well as wheelchair users were actively involved in more of the Freshers Week events than most. Their experiences of the beginning of their academic careers have been profound and resulted in greater involvement in university life.

Newcastle University's Student Union has dedicated itself to setting an example for the nation by demonstrating that its approach to inclusiveness can provide a richer and much more fulfilling experience of University Life. This is a cliché of course but perhaps it's something we should all be thinking about.

By PAUL OWEN



TRAVEL

STA TRAVEL

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KIWI PARADISE

Sometimes the accisental decisions are the best ones. as Angel found out in New Zealand...

When contemplating my post A level gap year, I naturally went through the whole process of trying to decide where to go and what to do etc etc... Obviously I was going to go to Australia. I mean, doesn't everyone? At the time I don't think I was even aware of the alternatives. Except for Africa and I thought that would be too expensive.

Deciding on the Round the World option seemed to be the natural decision. It would be relatively safe if we chose the right countries and it was also good value for money. Round

the World tickets often cover America, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Singapore and Thailand, which seemed perfect for me. Perfect, that is, except for the New Zealand part. One of

my friends had told me that New Zealand was like the Wales of the Southern Hemisphere. Surprisingly enough I was hardly encouraged by this: I'd spent a lot of time in Wales and was hoping for something a little different and

hopefully slightly warmer. My heart sunk when the assistant in STA told me that we'd need to spend at least a month there to make the most of it (I'd planned on about 10 days at the most just to show willing) and, afraid to show my ignorance, I agreed with him. Before I'd left the branch I had already decided to change the date of my flights as soon as I left the country.

Looking back now it seems almost incomprehensible that I nearly didn't even visit the country which above all others I would love to live in. I'm not sure I could say that New Zealand was enchanting exactly but it certainly seems to capture its visitors in an unforgettable way. After spending one night in Auckland I

"Looking back now it seems almost incomprehensible that I nearly didn't even visit the country which above all others I would love to live in"

knew I was going to enjoy my time there. Admittedly it may have had something to do with the \$5 [about £1.50] we'd paid for 8 drinks and a meal (!) but I was more consumed by the atmosphere. If

you're looking for a challenge, I wouldn't recommend New Zealand as a perfect travel opportunity but if you want to chill out, relax and meet interesting people it's an excellent place to spend time in.



Sunrising over the Bay of Islands

I think one of the things that struck me most about New Zealand is the variety which the country as a whole has to offer. In a time span of about a month we'd sunbathed on beaches on the Corimandel Peninsula of the North Island and snowboarded in Queenstown in the South Island. Fox's Glacier on the South Island

is one of only 3 places (the other 2 being in South America) in the world where you can find a glacier and a rainforest side by side.

For an amazingly relaxed country it is incredible the amount of activities you can get involved in as well. New Zealand is sometimes dubbed the extreme sports capital of the world and with good reason. Everyone I have spoken to who has visited the country has done a sky dive over the beautiful Lake Taupo or the "Nevis Bungee" in Queenstown. I doubt half the country's visitors intended to put themselves through so much fear on arrival but you kind of get swept up in the excitement when you're there.

Perhaps the best thing about travelling in New Zealand is the fact that the actual travelling is so much fun. It may sound like a stupid comment but so many people love to see

different places but can't stand the journeys which visiting them involves. We travelled round in a camper van and I don't think I was bored once. The main routes from town to town take you across mountain ranges and beautiful countryside which is impossible to ignore and the lack of traffic on the roads allows you to

"For a relaxed country it is incredible the amount of activities you can get involved in..."

totally absorb yourself. In the time we were there the longest traffic jam we encountered consisted of 3 cars. I suppose for a country with about 6 times as many sheep as people

that shouldn't really be surprising but I think it's pretty impressive nonetheless.

Whilst moving around it is impossible not to notice the combination of dramatic and awe-inspiring scenery with wonderfully friendly and easygoing people. Every local I came across raved about their homeland and every visitor can't wait to go back, which is more than you can say for a lot of places. If this is really what Wales is like I think I'd like to spend a little more time there!

By ANGEL PRETTORI



Beautiful waterfall near Taupo

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STA TRAVEL

Abby's Alphabet

Column

more than
just ABC

ABBY'S ALPHABET Column was born on September the 27th, 2003, at 5.16pm.

She lived a short, but eventful 3 weeks as the centre-fold for the Small Tissue; whilst she only made it to the letter C, her impact on that esteemed publication's readership was huge.

It is only now, through the power invested in me by Fian (that's Editor Fran to you) that I bring you the return of Abby's Alphabet Column...

The concept is simple, each week a different letter stars in the column...it's week one, which can only meet one thing...yes kids, you've guessed it...it's time for the letter A.

A is for Aardvark, Artichoke, Ass, Arse, Anti-disestablishmentarianism, Arnold Schwarzenegger (who is arguably doing an amazing job of acting like the Governor of California) and Angels. I'm not talking about Angel Gabriel, wings and halo type angels; but those people who live amongst us bringing joy into our lives. Most angels don't even realise that they're special, in fact, it's probably best to keep it that way. However, those whose lives are touched by an angel never forget it.

Take heed from the angels and remember that anger is something nobody likes; being angry will not resolve a situation, it will merely aggravate it. To avoid anger, take a deep breath and realise that you cannot change people you can merely change how you relate to them.

Here's something to wet your appetites - Abby's Amazing Aubergine Bake came about one evening when my flatmates challenged me to Ready Steady Cook. In our kitchen we had:

- 1 aubergine
- 1 jar of Pesto
- 1 pack of Feta cheese
- 1 pack of grated mozzarella
- 1 carton of passata (about 500mls)
- Balsamic vinegar
- Tomato puree
- Sugar
- Salt
- Dried Basil
- 2 medium potatoes
- milk
- Butter

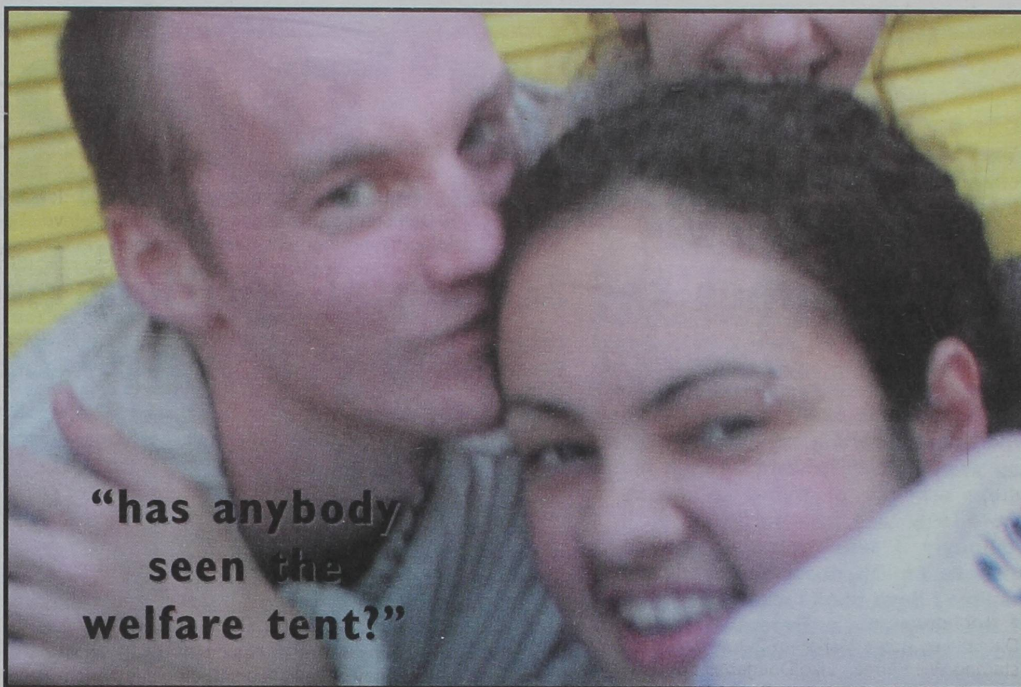
And a shallow roasting tin/oven dish.

Pre-heat the oven to 220°C. Top and tail the aubergine and slice it length ways into slices no thicker than 1cm and sprinkle with salt. Spread Pesto on to both sides of each slice and leave them to marinate for 20 minutes. Empty the passata into a bowl, add a teaspoon of salt, a table spoon of sugar, a dash of balsamic vinegar, a squirt of tomato puree and a few pinches of basil and give it a good stir.

Abby's Amazing Aubergine Bake, is a little like lasagne in its concept. And you need to bear this in mind when making it. Line the bottom of the dish with aubergine slices. Crumble some feta and mozzarella on top. And then spoon a layer of mixture on top of that. Repeat aubergine-cheese-sauce until all the slices of aubergine have gone. Make sure that the top layer is sauce. Place in the oven for 40 minutes. Meanwhile, peel the potatoes and chop them into quarters and drop them in a pan of boiling water. When they are cooked through, add a splash of milk, a knob of butter, some salt, and a tablespoon of pesto and mash away! If you have any cheese left mix that in too. To check if the aubergine is ready, take a sharp knife and poke it through the centre of the bake. The aubergine needs to be really soft, and the sauce needs to be bubbling away. When it is ready, spoon the mash on top and put it back into the oven for another 5 to 10 minutes, until the mash is slightly brown on top.

I hope you have enjoyed Abby's Alphabet Column, see you next week when we'll be tackling the letter B. And remember kids, An Apple a day keeps the doctor Away.

LOVE ON A MONDAY MORNING



"has anybody
seen the
welfare tent?"

If you want to tell that special someone how you feel send your love
email to courier.letters@ncl.ac.uk

POPPETSTM

THE BALLSY CHOCOLATES

POPPETS - BACK WITH ATTITUDE

The Courier is offering one lucky reader the chance to win a supply of Poppets, the ballsy little chocolates, for one whole year!

They might be little, but when it comes to chocolates you can't pick a ballsier bite than a pack of Poppets. Bursting with five top flavours - they're different, they're exciting and most importantly they're back on the shelves, with bags of attitude to boot.

Rebranded in sexy black boxes, Poppets have kept the great taste and famous rattle that have made them one of Britain's best loved sweets, but with cheeky on-pack dares just begging to be carried out, they're no longer a chocolate for the light-hearted.

Whether you choose to take up their mad-cap challenges or not, the dark and milk chocolate covered treats are decidedly irresistible and now there's an even wider range to choose from. Old skool favourites - Toffee, Mint and Raisin - are now joined by two new kids on the block, Crunchy Cookies and Orange.

Poppets are available to buy at most retailers, an absolute steal at 33p for a carton or £1.10 for a bag. Also, Endsleigh Insurance will give away packets of Poppets, while stocks last, to any student who pops in to their Union branch for a property insurance quote.

To win a years supply of
Poppets, just answer this simple
question:

What time is the Union's daily
happy hour?

Send answers to
editor.union@ncl.ac.uk





james flopster dunlop



joost golabek



GET OFF YOUR FAT ARSE AND DO SOMETHING!
You've had the whole summer practising your channel hopping whilst vegetating your life away on the couch. We reckon your thumbs have had enough of a work out. Time to get out the house and hit the Toon.

We've decided to be kind enough this year to grace you with our extensive wisdom of North Eastern tropical delicacies. Our expert research will guide and aid you to better yourself and your time throughout this year. Others may think they know better, let them have their say, for we know they are wrong.

Newcastle is a thriving, pumping, sensuous, cultural hotbed, where every taste is tailored to the needs of the individual. You. If we haven't already got your juices flowing, be patient, there is more to come...

TOP 5 FILMS

1. Anchorman

Directed by Adam McKay of Saturday Night Live fame and starring Will Ferrell. Like Dodgeball this film relies on the comedic talents of its stars. Ferrell is again on top form playing the egotist lead, and Jack Black has a brilliant wee cameo. If you liked Elf and Dodgeball you won't be disappointed.

2. Motorcycle Diaries

Che Guevara, the face of rebellion adorned across walls in student flats the world over. The mythological voyage of one man across South America. Beautifully filmed, funny, and profoundly moving. Go and see this.

3. Dodgeball

Ben Stiller and Vince Vaughn do battle with a ball. Brilliant comedy performances. You won't be able to stop laughing.

4. Open Water

Based on a true story. The new Blair Witch. No special effects, what scares you most is what you don't see. Shit-scary.

5. Collateral

A lot darker than most summer films. I was sceptical due to the casting of Cruise, but the master of suspense Michael Mann pulls it off. A rare character driven action film, almost perfectly executed.

OTHER FILMS

Along with the blockbusters, we selected what we believed to be the more interesting and thought provoking silver screen pictures to give you the option. 'Supersize Me' was created by Morgan Spurlock and gives a simplistic yet indigestion inducing account of the 'McDonalds' effect. It takes unhealthy eating to the extreme yet this satirical punch in the gut makes some valuable statements. 'La Finestra di Fronte' also known as 'Facing windows' will be showing at the Tyneside Cinema as

well this week. Directed by Ferzan Ozpetek, the film demonstrates that desire knows no bounds. For the more mainstream viewing experience take a glance at 'The Bourne Supremacy', the sequel to '...Identity', stars Matt Damon in continued action adventure. Steven Spielberg's 'The Terminal' sees Tom Hanks camping out in an airport as an eastern immigrant. Colin Firth's character wishes he had never woken up in Marc Evans' 'Trauma'.

MUSIC

The Delgados

They've created four albums of beautifully skewed 'n' dreamy folk-pop. Their last album, Hate was described as an album of dark nursery rhymes for grown ups. The Scots band hit the Global Café, Saturday 2nd October. Highly recommended.

Bowling For Soup

Grammy nominated drunken rockers caused a real storm last time they were in Toon. Their giddy performance will have you moshing your heart out and chanting along regardless of whether you know the words or not. Not my cup of tea, but my house mate says they're not to be missed. He's a bit mad, mind. (Sunday 3rd October, The Union).

Blake Wilner Quartet

The Cluny states that "live music is fundamental to the soul" of their abode. Recognised as one of the most important venues for breaking bands in the region and a natural outlet for mid-range, underground national and international touring bands, the Cluny presents The Blake Wilner Quartet. Jazz chops with outside rock and funk elements; they are considered to be one of the most exciting, individualistic and innovative young jazz groups performing in the UK at the moment. (Thursday 30th September, The Cluny).

The Music

Beatle-esque "yeah yeah yeah," crashing guitars, and dub effects, this bunch is not about subtlety. Mainly a wild mix of blues metal and alt-rock. The Leeds boys head up to the North East. It's great to hear a British indie band that's unafraid to rock. (Sunday 3rd October, Northumbria University)

ARTS

The Baltic: Carlos Capelan's 'Only You' exhibition shows self expression from his own nail clippings to fizzy drinks through the mediums of wall drawing, sculpture and projection. Key Date: October 2nd

Side Gallery: Sophia Evans exhibits her artistic journeys through solitude. Displayed is the Nicaraguan's emotional attachment to the Mosquito Coast she visited as a child. Key Dates: runs till October 17th

Hyena Comedy Club: If You really don't feel like going out but

just need a pint and a good laugh then get yourself down to the Hyena. Best Comedy in town by far. Key Dates: Thursdays

Newcastle Comedy Festival: For a further injection of humour its across to Exhibition Park as Newcastle host the funniest event of the year.

Key Dates: October 1st - 10th
Hancock Museum: Sea Monsters, a Walking with dinosaurs exhibition by the BBC, floods the halls as you are taken into the seven most deadly seas.

Key Dates: runs till October 31st

CLUB NIGHTS

Solution

Friday night, 1800 capacity, all Friday night, 1800 capacity, all building, party at our beloved Union. Six bars, three different music rooms with different styles. All sorts of prizes and giveaways. You know you love it. (Friday 1st October, The Union)

Stonelove

For anyone who likes decent music head to Foundation on a Thursday, Stone Love. It rocks. Great for Indie fans, no, actually great for everyone! (Thursday 30th September, Foundation)

Lovedough 30th

R&B and Hip Hop. With the look of an aircraft hanger, IKON one of the largest clubs in Newcastle and is regularly packed on the students nights. The DJs play live on galaxy radio which gives you an idea of the sort of music played. (Thursday 30th September, IKON)

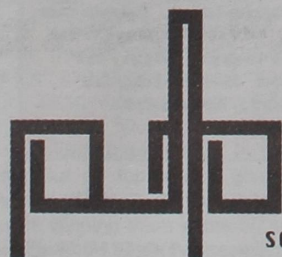
Shindig

Hailed as one of the only true house clubs in the country (winning a Muzik award for Underground Club Of The Year 2001/02). This week with Ross O'Donnel and Craig Dewson up in the loft. (Saturday 2nd October, Foundation)

OTHER EVENTS

The UEFA Cup First Round game on September 30th Newcastle United Vs Bnei Sachnin will allow the Magpies to flourish on the European scene and October 3rd brings the **Newcastle United Vs Birmingham** game and even if you don't support the team you live in the city so check it out. Kick off at 15:00. **The Paralympics in Athens** will ascend to its spectacular finale on September 28th, when the closing ceremony ends the Olympic experience for another four years. For all those rugby union fans out there, you can watch the **Falcons Vs Leicester** and see if they can increase their lead at the top of the table. Kick off at 14:45 on October 2nd at their Home Ground, Kingston Park. Finally, for those looking to do something a little different the next **Horse Racing at Gosforth Park** takes place on September 29th so get your bets in!

That's all from us for this week but if you would like to get in touch with us about an event, to make any comment or ideas or you just want a chat then send an email to ourier@yahoo.co.uk



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UNION JOB SHOP jobs of the week

Vacancy 3658

Sandwich Artist required to work at counter making salads and sandwiches, food preparation, bread/cookie baking and keeping the store clean. Previous experience desirable but not essential. You should be outgoing, team spirited and willing to be flexible.

Hours of work: shifts available: 8pm-3.30am sat 12-6pm Monday + 2pm-7pm Friday
5/hr + 7.50/hr after midnight (plus taxi fare for late shifts)

Closing date: 30/09/04

Vacancy 3656

Data Inputters required for inputting data onto an apple mac pc and dealing with the public, but not selling products to them. Interviews to be held on site at Newcastle airport.

Applicants must have good IT skills, excellent interpersonal skills and good spoken and written English. Full training provided.

Hours of work: Evenings 5-8pm + weekends various between 8am-9pm

Pay: 6.66/hr

Closing date: asap

To apply for either of these or various jobs, visit the Job Shop on the first floor of the Union during opening hours.

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Get out of the red

Sick of boring summer jobs in bars or offices ? Pandora chose something a little different...

WHAT DID you do this summer? Went travelling? Got bar work in your hometown? Possibly even managed to find some work experience?

I did something different...I stayed up North and had an amazing time. I travelled (well, all round the North East and Wales), got better paid than people who do temping or bar work, and my job looks great on my CV. Essentially, I was involved in promotions and marketing. "Ahh," you're thinking, "that's a smart name for wearing skimpy outfits and handing out freebies." If you thought that, you'd be wrong!

I worked for the Newcastle Red Bull Team this summer, and yes, we did hand out

factory workers at 3:30am, other times it'd be office workers in their mid-afternoon slump. Our task was to help them when they really needed it with a can of Red Bull. But we did get to go to all sorts of exciting places too. No really!

We had a lot of freedom in deciding where



and when we wanted to work. So if I went out 'on the lash', we then chose not to work until midday. Or if I wanted to go to the beach one afternoon, I'd finish work after a couple of hours. We only had to work a minimum of thirty hours a week so we did it when it suited us.

And the best bit is that because I was in the right place at the right time thanks to the job,

I've been white water rafting; rally driving in a 250bhp BMW Mini S, indoor karting, outdoor

"...the best bit is that I was in the right place at the right time thanks to the job..."

karting, had the chance to go to the Olympics for a month, met world renowned decathlete Dean Macey, been partying in Knebworth after the famous Red Bull Soapbox Race, met Trevor Eve from 'Waking the Dead' when he was filming for 'Lawless' in Newcastle, spoken to Andi Peters and watched the warm ups for TOTOPs in Gateshead and even 'energised' Justin Timberlake himself...Having said all that, we do work hard - honest!

By Pandora Weller

"Our task was to help them when they really needed it..."

complimentary cans of Red Bull, but only to people who were tired. Sometimes we found

Part-time & vacation jobs Fair

Hosted by

Newcastle and Northumbria Universities Job Shops

**on Tuesday 28th September 2004
11am - 3.30pm**

to be held at

**The Venue, Students' Union Building,
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MARKS & SPENCER

Sou-ness or not Sou-ness, that is the question

BY DAVID SIMMONDS

ANAGRAMS ARE a rather fascinating form of word manipulation. For hours, one can simply place names or sentences into the proverbial word mixer and be pleasantly surprised at their random and sometimes strangely acute outcome. The dictionary defines an anagram as "a word or phrase consisting of the re-arranged letters of another word".

Here are some examples. "Newcastle United Football Club" when placed into the word mixer becomes "Club of downbeat intellectuals". "The Football Association" ironically becomes "A lot of chaos? It is notable". Graeme Souness is, perhaps quite appropriately, "a gruesomeness". But perhaps the most peculiar and interesting of all is the outcome for just "Newcastle United" which translates as "Dense wet lunatic".

How is this strange or even remotely interesting I hear you ask? In this article I shall try to explain why the newly appointed manager of Newcastle United is neither "dense", "wet" or indeed, "a lunatic". As everyone knows, Sir Bobby Robson, one of football's most respected and loved managers was removed from his position and in the furore that ensued around Tyneside, 51 year old Graeme Souness was appointed by chairman Freddie Sheppard. Many Newcastle fans would agree that it was time that Robson stepped aside and allowed someone stricter, stronger and more ambitious to take the reins but at the same time

would also concur that the manner in which the 71 year old left the club was quite unacceptable.

So why Souness then? Is he really the man to take Newcastle forward and achieve what every Geordie has been striving for which is ultimately silverware? He was clearly not the fans first choice and depending on which press you read not the Chairman's either. But Graeme Souness took the job ahead the likes of Sam Allardyce, Steve Bruce or even fan's favourite Martin O'Neill. And Souness definitely has his plus points. For a start he is not "dense". Souness, in my opinion, one of the most tactically astute managers in the English game. Yes, Blackburn were going no-where and he was indeed running out of time, but Souness is still a manager who believes in the philosophy of "work hard, play hard", a motto that epitomises the general way of life in Newcastle as a whole, and some players in particular. Against Southampton last weekend, he opted to play striker Craig Bellamy on the right instead of Laurent Robert. This, according to Souness, was to make Newcastle a little more unconventional and therefore harder to read. This daring ploy worked wonders and Newcastle won 2-1 in Southampton for the first time in 32 years.

As a player and a manager, he has won 27



A match made in heaven? Souness' arrival at St. James has raised eyebrows, but will it raise the fortunes of football's great derachievers?

trophies so if the Toon Army wants silverware, Graeme Souness has it coming out of his ears. He has won something at every club he has been to, a factor that I'm sure was in his favour over the other contenders for the post.

It is also well known that Souness is not "wet". In fact he is not wet at all. As Andy Cole and Dwight Yorke found out at Blackburn Rovers you cross Souness only if you are wearing full medieval body armour, run as fast as a cheetah on steroids or do it from the safety of your best friend's heavily armoured tank. I realise that this makes Souness sound a little hot-headed and temperamental but in fact it could be just what Newcastle need. It has been well documented that there is a brat pack within the Newcastle squad and Souness could be just the man to quell some rather puffed egos. But instead of entering and stamping on the supposed offenders, he has taken a calmer approach. Regarding troubled midfielder Kieron Dyer, Souness has apparently wiped the slate clean. "When I was 22 I went to Liverpool thinking I knew all the answers," he said. "I learned far more from senior players about football and how to live my life away from it". Clean slate or dirty, scabby tile, Dyer has been given a fresh start by the new boss and if he abuses it, Souness will be displaying him in the shop window.

But there are other problems that the new manager must face and these problems lie within the skill of his squad. With the departure

of Jonathan Woodgate to Real Madrid, Souness has lost one of the best defenders in the league. Although Andy O'Brien and Robbie Elliot are both industrious centre backs, they lack real quality that a player such as Woodgate gave to the squad. It is obviously a worry to the new manager already, drafting in experienced centre back Ronnie Johnsen on a free transfer. But then even in attack, Souness finds that he has problems. He has too many quality strikers. Juggling the likes of Shearer, Bellamy and Kluyvert is an attractive problem to any manager but with them all wanting first team football, Souness has already conceded that players will have to get used to playing out of position from time to time.

But the supporters and the chairman are expectant and silverware must arrive on Tyneside soon. Sheppard has already made it clear that Souness doesn't have the luxury of a transitional year, meaning the new man must deliver almost immediately. But Sheppard obviously believes that Souness is up to the task or he would never have appointed him to the position in the first place. At the end of the day no-one can predict what will happen at St. James Park under Souness and whether the marriage will be a happy and successful one, or the divorce papers will soon be sent for. What I can tell you now is that Souness got the job over Alan Shearer because of his anagram. It's true. "Alan Shearer of Newcastle and England" becomes "New renegade fondles anal charlatans" and that really wouldn't have been a good omen would it?

"...the new man must deliver almost immediately..."

"... only cross Souness if you run as fast as a cheetah on steroids..."

NO FALSE START FOR SWIMMING TEAM

THE CURTAIN raiser for the Newcastle swimming squad's season was a trip down to Scarborough for the NECASA Masters Championship. This is normally a good warm up for BUSA events ahead, giving competitors the chance to see how much they need to train to achieve their pre-lazy summer form. The team took a slightly smaller squad than in previous years of 18 but this by no means affected the medal haul tally, returning with 38 individual medals and 6 relay team medals.

Undoubtedly this year was dominated by ex-compatriots' success as their experience shone through. Rob Whittle was the star of the 25-29 age category taking 6 individual golds in the 50 and 100m Freestyle, 50 and 100m Backstroke, 50m Butterfly and 100m Individual Medley (IM). In the 19-24 category Chris Hulme came out on top with 3 golds in the 50 and 100m Backstroke and 100m Butterfly. Chris also managed to take home 3 silvers winning them in the 50 and 100m Freestyle and 50m Butterfly events. Butterfly specialist Nick Jackson returned to the pool in an emphatic manner winning 2 gold (100 and 200m Fly), 1 silver (100m Breaststroke) and 1 bronze (100m IM). Conor Boyd put in a gutsy performance in the gruelling

200m Butterfly to take a silver medal, following up this effort with 2 further bronze medals. Dave Baldwin and Michelle Hepples also returned to competition to win a silver medal each in the 50m Breaststroke and 100m Butterfly respectively. Also, newly



qualified doctor Scott Watson took a break from his hectic schedule to win 2 bronze medals in the 50m Breaststroke and 100m IM.

However the current BUSA eligible half of the team had something to shout about too as Sarah and Pete Germain showed the rest of the field how Breaststroke should be swum.

Sarah completed the clean sweep of 3 gold medals in the Breaststroke discipline (50, 100 and 200m), whilst Pete equalled this feat also adding a silver in the 100m IM to his impressive gold medal collection. President Emily Rowbotham also led by example, taking 4 individual silver medals in the 50, 100 and 200m Backstroke and 100m Freestyle. Women's Water Polo Captain Rachel Lundean showed how her turn of speed could be transformed into medal glory, taking 2 bronze medals in the 50 and 200m Backstroke, whilst Women's Swimming Captain Linda Strettle showed a swift return to form, despite a 3 month lay off, to take bronze in the 100m Freestyle. The team as a whole also notched up 11 other top 5 finishes, just missing out on the medals.

In the much shorter 4x25m relays Newcastle also performed quite well taking 1 gold in the Men's Freestyle Relay, 4 silvers and 1 bronze in total. The team now have their eyes firmly set on the BUSA Short Course Nationals staged for the first time at Sheffield's Ponds Forge pool in November and are anticipating another successful competition.

By IAN RUSHTON

SUMMER OF '04

It may have come 35 years too late to be a Bryan Adams hit, but the summer of 2004 still produced some of the most memorable sporting moments for years. *Ryan Jennings and Michael Fry* look at the highlights.

DESPITE MANY fears of a barren Olympics for the Great Britain and Northern Ireland team the 2004 Olympics turned out to be quite a success. Britain



Great Britain's new heroine can't hide her delight after hearing her picture will be in the next edition of the Courier

finished with 30 medals overall, nine of which were gold, whilst the Americans yet again proved their dominance, finishing top of the medals table, followed by China and Russia in second and third place respectively.

Kelly Holmes proved to be the British hero winning an unprecedented two gold medals, in the 800 metres and the 1500 metres. Britain's other track success came in the form of the 4x100metre relay team which included Jason Gardener, Marlon Devenish, Darren Campbell and Mark Lewis-Francis. Kelly Sotherton picked up a bronze medal in the heptathlon while both Dean Macey and Steve Backley came fourth in their individual events. There were many surprises at the games, most notably the American Justin Gatlin's victory in the men's 100 metres, ahead of Francis Obikwelu and Maurice Green.

Other successes for Team GB away from the track included Ben Ainslie's victory in the men's Finn sailing event and silver medals were picked up by Amir Kahn in the 57-60kg Boxing, and Nathan Robertson and Gail Emms in the mixed doubles Badminton. However it was Matthew Pinsent's fourth gold medal in the Coxless fours which the Athens 2004 games will be remembered for. This brings him one closer to Steve Redgrave's record which he set alongside Pinsent in Sydney in 2000.

The Games proved to be more successful than anticipated for the Great Britain and Northern Irish Olympians who, despite much criticism beforehand, proved they can still compete in world sport.

The England cricket team entered the 2004 summer looking forward to hosting New Zealand and West Indies after an

impressive series victory in the Caribbean during the spring. First up, Michael Vaughan's side faced the Kiwis who, similarly to England, have been steadily improving on the Test circuit over the past couple of years.

The first Test was at Lord's and saw the England debut of Andrew Strauss who struck 112 in the first innings. However, it was Nasser Hussain who was the hero, hitting 103 runs in the second innings to take England to victory by 7 wickets. After the game Hussain remarked "It was one of the best days of my cricketing life", and it was clear that the century meant a lot to the

former England captain. Steve Harmison also proved his status as one of the best bowlers in Test cricket taking eight wickets in the match.

Mark

Richardson stood out for the visitors scoring 93 in the first innings and 101 in the second.

The second test once again saw victory for England, this time by nine wickets, with Marcus Trescothick top scoring with 132, supported by another

impressive display by Harmison who took seven wickets. The game is also memorable as the stage for the first century by England's young wicket-keeper,

Geraint Jones. England completed the whitewash in the third and final Test, winning by 4 wickets, Graham Thorpe making 104 and Ashley Giles taking four wickets in the second innings. However, this was by far the closest contest of the series with the New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming scoring 117 and Chris Cairns taking 9 wickets in his final test match.

Between the two test series came the Natwest Triangular series where England's good form deserted them. The two touring sides played each other in the final, with New Zealand winning the game at Lords by 107 runs.

The four match test series against the West Indies then began with

England looking to continue their run of good form. This they achieved as they won by the comprehensive margin of 210 runs, Robert Key scoring a memorable 221 and Giles

taking 9 wickets in the match, as he continued his good form to defy his critics amongst fans and the press alike. Shivnarine Chanderpaul impressed for the West

Indian side making unbeaten scores of 128 and 97. The second Test saw England continue their winning streak, defeating the Windies by 256 runs. The match included an impressive innings of 167 by Andrew Flintoff which included sixes and 17 fours.

England then completed their second successful whitewash of the summer with victory in the last two Tests, by 7 wickets and 10 wickets respectively. England needed only one run to



It's all Greek to the rest of the world as Otto Reihagel's men celebrate their momentous triumph in Portugal

win in the last innings of the final test, Steve Harmison impressed yet again taking nine wickets in the match, confirming his status as the world's number one bowler in the process. England travel to South Africa in the winter to face a strong side, however, on the back of two impressive victories a very tight series is anticipated.

The European Championship of 2004, evidence if it was needed, that these so-called 'big' teams simply cannot perform on the world stage when it is needed. So much so that a team with no outstanding players, with a relatively small population, who's primary aim in a match is simply not to lose, can emerge victorious, similar to the Porto team which won the Champions League last year. However, who am I to criticise these teams as, despite their obvious weaknesses, both are champions.

Praise must be given to the Portuguese for both the manner in which the tournament was organised and keeping its own public interested by progressing throughout. Three teams spring to mind who did not achieve this; Italy, Spain and France. Though, for all, underachieving has become a habit.

With these thoughts in mind it is also interesting to acknowledge the stand outs of the competition. Wayne Rooney showed exactly why he had to leave Everton; has he ever put out a display in any way similar to those against France and Croatia for Everton? I struggle to find one. The simple fact is that a footballer plays better football when amongst better footballers. A second teenager who stood out was Cristiano Ronaldo. His development from the 'step-over prince' to his current state has been a pleasure to watch, much credit, I believe is due upon Sir Alex for this. The extent of Ronaldo's displays can, perhaps, be best shown in Rui Costa's absence from the starting line-up. Would anyone have conceived of the idea of leaving out one of Portugal's Golden Age in the lead up to the championship?

While the tournament brought to the fore a few individuals, one could not help but notice the Czechs. Led by an aging, though still brilliant, Pavel Nedved, the Czechs seemed to get to grips with the new ball much quicker

than other sides. Another blast from the past, Karel Poborsky, bought by Manchester United after starring in Euro 96, produced some memorable performances, which should not have come as a shock to those who have witnessed his form with Sparta Prague.

While avoiding turning The Courier into a tabloid, the performances of the England side should be touched upon. The defensive partnership of Campbell and Terry, seemed to pay off, while Ledley King proved to be an able deputy when required. It is in the

middle of the field where Sven's selection let him down. For an England manager to pick his best eleven, perhaps less so following the international retirement of Paul Scholes, he must make use of his pool of midfield players. Lampard, Gerrard, Scholes, Dyer, Hargreaves, Beckham all merit a place in on the pitch, but using a diamond midfield and placing Lampard at the rear of it is simply a waste of offensive talent. Steven Gerrard's performances do present a manager with a dilemma, though both must play if England wish to progress at any level.

Many would see this summer as being a football orientated one. There has been other news worth noting, perhaps the biggest surprise being the unprecedented move from Rugby Union to football undertaken by Sir Clive Woodward while many find it difficult enough to switch codes. The rebuilding of the England side will be interesting to view, following captain Lawrence D'Allaglio's retirement. However, the reintroduction of Jonny Wilkinson should bring new life to a nation seriously in need of it. Ireland's development continued with the help of 'find of the season' Gordon D'Arcy. The centre



Beck to the drawing board: England's Euro 2004 dream ends in tears

partnership of D'Arcy and O'Driscoll has proved to be a match for any opposition, with O'Driscoll's reputation creating the space in which D'Arcy has flourished. The autumn internationals should show the extent of the Home nations' ability.

By RYAN JENNINGS and
MICHAEL FRY

All eyes are on the New University Sports Centre - Opening 1st June 2005

All eyes are on the New University Sports Centre, see picture for a sneak preview.

A major move involving twenty staff and 4,000 users per week is not easy and not without inconvenience and irritation, but we will get there with The New Centre providing sufficient motivation to ensure it will be all worth it.

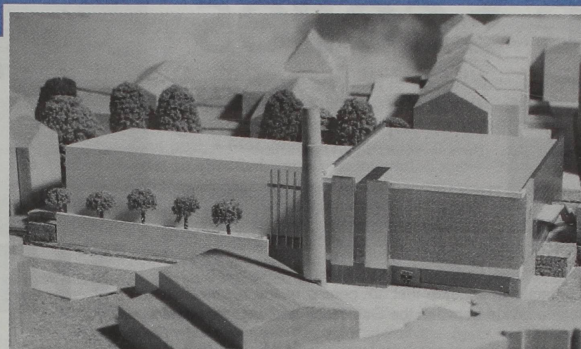
Constant changes to schedules and programmes will be inevitable, please be proactive in searching out and keeping up to date by visiting our website <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/cprs> and keeping your eyes on our notice boards. It simply is not possible to inform all of our 7,000 members all of the time, please help us to help you.

The current schedule should see us remain in King's Walk until the end of the Easter Term i.e. 18th March 2005. We will then have very limited indoor facilities until the New University Sports Centre is scheduled to open on 1st June 2005.

Representative sport is flourishing, as we continue to support our clubs and teams with the appointment of professional staff in rowing and rugby. The Government's TASS (Talented Athletes Scholarship Scheme) will see the establishment of Newcastle University as the lead institution for Golf and Orienteering.

The Centre's Mission Statement has never been more relevant and we welcome you to join us in our pursuit of it.

"The Centre aims to maintain the position of Newcastle University as one of the top ten universities for sport in the Country in terms of facility provision, performance of athletic union teams and quality of service offered to its members. The strategy adopted to achieve this status will be in full consideration of The Sports Continuum, Sports Equity and Sport for All".



To keep up to date with the progress of the New Sports Centre visit our webpages at:
<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/cprs/>



The Centre for Physical Recreation & Sport 2004/5

Sports Centre Membership

Student (Undergraduate & Postgraduate)

Recreation Only	£28.00
+ Swimming	£44.00
+ Health & Fitness Suites	£55.00
+ Swimming and Health & Fitness Suites	£61.00
1st time graduate from undergraduate course	
Recreation Only	£33.00
+ Health & Fitness Suite	£60.00
(original proof of graduation required)	

All members will be eligible for:

FREE PRIZE DRAW

4 Mini Cruise Breaks for 2 to Amsterdam.

There will be one holiday available for each of the first four weeks of membership enrolment. Entry forms will be issued and should be completed when joining the Centre.
e-mail: physical-recreation-sport@ncl.ac.uk
Web Page: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/cprs>



The Autumn 2004 Recreation Programme

The Centre runs a comprehensive recreation programme for all levels of fitness. Classes range from boxercise, step and squash coaching to Latin American dance, yoga and pilates. We have also extended our programme into the Halls of Residence.

You can still register this week at King's Walk Sports Centre.

Intra Mural Programme

The Intra Mural Programme is one of the most extensive in university sport with 8 sports on offer and over 2,500 participants. The sports include football, rugby, netball, basketball and hockey. The programme is aimed at the recreational player and it is where groups of friends, departments or those living in halls get together to form a team. A full league and cup programme is scheduled in the sports and runs over terms 1 and 2.
e-mail: i.m.sport@ncl.ac.uk
web page: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/cprs>

Sports Bursaries

Every year several Sports Bursaries are awarded to successful candidates who have demonstrated a high level of achievement and commitment in their chosen sport. This year over £30,000 is available for the Sports Bursaries. Details and application forms are now obtainable from the Centre for Physical Recreation & Sport, King's Walk Sports Centre. **Closing date 11th October 2004.**

Elite Athletes Squad

The Elite Athletes Squad has just completed its ninth fully operational year in its new format and has proved to be very successful. There are places for 15 athletes from many sporting disciplines of national and international standard or with potential to achieve that level. Selection is based on current and past performance, attitude and determination to succeed. The squad have easy access to sports science support in physiology, psychology, nutrition, time management, fitness training, social welfare and are allocated a personal tutor. All squad members receive full medical and physiotherapy

screening. Details and application forms are now obtainable from the Centre for Physical Recreation & Sport, King's Walk Sports Centre. **Closing date 11th October 2004.**

Fitness Testing

Our Health and Fitness Staff are able to offer detailed lifestyle analysis, fitness assessment and personalised training programmes. Also throughout the year we will be running a series of fitness challenges to help members with incentives & goals in their training programmes.

Cost to Student Members:

Fitness Assessment	£7.00
Personal Programme	£4.00

Fitness Support for Athletic Union (AU) Clubs

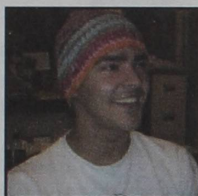
CPRS, in liaison with the AU, is offering a new fitness development, testing and monitoring framework to AU clubs and individuals for 2004/5. The aim is to prepare AU clubs and individuals for competition- the ultimate test of their abilities. The programme will be tailored to each clubs requirements and consist of initial fitness assessments, programme development in liaison with club coaches and ongoing monitoring and evaluation. For further details contact:
Colin Blackburn Tel 0191 222 8666
or via email at Colin.Blackburn@ncl.ac.uk.

Sports Injury & Sports Massage Clinics

The clinic based at King's Walk Sports Centre, is a service provided by the Centre for Physical Recreation & Sport for the benefit of staff & student members during terms 1 & 2.

Cost to Student Members - £10.00 per visit

He Shoots, He Scores



Sports Editor Martin Crow takes his weekly look at the sporting world

THEY'VE WON 29 league titles, nine European Cups, and currently boast the most sought after squad in world football. So what the hell has gone wrong at Real Madrid?

After sacking Carlos Quieroz in the summer, new coach Jose Antonio Camacho has lasted just six games at the helm, amid allegations of a divide between the Galacticos and the rest of the squad.

Camacho's fate was sealed last week when he dropped Bernabeu legend Raul for the 1-0 defeat in Espanyol, in favour of Michael Owen, a move which led to a player's revolt, and it seems new coach Mariano Garcia Remon will have his work cut out in his attempt to mend the rift between his group of superstars.

It is nigh on impossible to conceive that a club which employs Beckham, Zidane, Figo, Ronaldo, Owen and Raul are facing up to such a crisis, (a crisis worsened by the 3-0 defeat to Bayer Leverkusen in their first Champions League group match) and the man who should be shouldering the blame for the entire farce is president Florentino Perez, the only man at the club who has job security for another four years.

The Spaniard, who was re-elected by Madrid fans in June, has single-handedly taken over the club, removing any power Camacho may have had, by signing the players he wanted to see in a Real shirt, rather than giving free reign to his new head coach. Despite Camacho's wish to lure Patrick Vieira from Arsenal, Perez insisted on the purchases of Owen and Walter Samuel from Roma. Any self-respecting coach would act in exactly the same way as Camacho, and full credit to him for taking the decision to walk out.

Remon's appointment appears to be a temporary one, and at the head of Perez's wanted list is Sven Goran Eriksson. The popularity of the sleazy Swede is rapidly diminishing amongst the British public, and his relationship with the Football Association is hanging by the proverbial thread, in the aftermath of revelations about his rather colourful private life. Never has the location of F.A. headquarters in Soho seemed more ironic than when the news of Faria Alam's affairs with both Eriksson and disgraced chief executive Mark Palios was revealed to the British public, and ever since, the men who matter have been praying for a way to remove Eriksson without giving him the massive pay-off his £4.5m contract would demand. Make no mistake, if Real come calling, the F.A. will pack Sven's sunscreen and speedos if it hastens his departure to sunnier climes, enabling them to dispose of a manager they cannot afford to keep, and appoint the Englishman the public are desperate to be in charge of their national side.

Much is made of Eriksson's record of only three competitive defeats in four years, but those defeats, against Brazil in Saipan and France and Portugal in Euro 2004, have been England's biggest tests; tests they have failed to pass. Many forget the lacklustre draws against Greece and Macedonia, as well as the embarrassment that was losing at home to Australia, albeit in a friendly match.

Eriksson's departure from the England hotseat would be lamented by few, and his experience of club football, as well as the respect he would undoubtedly earn from the Real players, Beckham and Owen in particular, might just make him the right man to replace Camacho in the long term. Senoritas of Madrid - you have been warned.

"If Real come calling, the F.A. will pack Sven's sunscreen and speedos if it hastens his departure to sunnier climes"

IN MEMORY OF A LEGEND

LAST WEEK saw the tragic death of one of football's true legends. Brian Clough was a man known across the world, universally respected by everyone who knew him. His no-nonsense approach to football management made him truly unique, and The Courier would like to remember him in the only way we saw fit.

"I wouldn't say I was the best manager in the business. But I was definitely in the top one." Cloughie reflects on his managerial success.

"At last England have appointed a manager who can speak English better than the players." On the appointment of Sven as England boss.

"I can't even spell 'spaghetti' never mind talk Italian. How could I tell an Italian to 'get the ball'? He might grab mine." On the influx of foreigners into English football.

"I like my women to be feminine, not sliding into tackles and covered in mud." His somewhat forthright views on women's football.

"I want no epitaphs of profound history and all that type of thing. I contributed - I hope they will say that. And I hope somebody liked me."

We don't like you, Brian, we love you.

THE BUSA DEBATE

BY RACHAEL WATSON

THE BIG QUESTION IS Wednesdays or Saturdays!! This is the current debate facing BUSA organisers, when should the weekly competitions be held. So what are the issues to be considered and which are the most important; the academic or the social ones.

University teams, which are playing in their relevant leagues, currently play on a Wednesday afternoon, which all students have free in their timetable for this exact purpose. But is the current system the right system? Although Wednesday afternoon are free, some students have lectures up to 1pm. If traveling to away matches, teams often have to leave before this time and can miss some lectures. Not an ideal situation, which wouldn't be a problem if the matches were played on a Saturday. Nor would the hangovers from the legendary Wednesday AU nights in Sea if everyone could lie in on Sundays without any guilt instead of missing Thursday morning lectures, or the whole day if it was a good night!

However in defense of Wednesday afternoons, could the AU night be as legendary on a Saturday when there are loads of non-students around? It would most probably lack the feel good, fun and friendly atmosphere of a university night out. The social side of sport in general is often what makes a group of people into a team, especially in university sports!

Weekend games could also cause a lot of inconvenience, as it is after all our own time, when we do non-uni related things. Some people go away, be it home or to visit friends.



Some people have part time jobs, which are essential to their survival at university! Others are frantically trying to catch up with the work they should have been doing during the whole week!!

Instead of simply losing an afternoon and evening on a Wednesday, it

would probably be the whole day on a Saturday. The games would be played earlier, as away teams could travel earlier. Teams would probably hang around after the game for a little longer to socialize with the opposition.

Using Saturdays, in terms of the lectures and timetabling, makes a lot of sense, as without BUSA games I can't imagine we would still get the afternoon off!! But it would cause a lot of problems on an individual level, as university team sports would now be in competition with several other commitments some of which are unavoidable.

Wednesday afternoons and nights are a university tradition, be it traveling back with your teammates late in the evening celebrating a great victory or heading out on the town to drown your sorrows! University sport could too easily become just another game of football, hockey or rugby without the buzz of celebration within the university as a whole and I think Saturday fixtures would be devastating for the spirit of BUSA sport.

THE TIPSTER'S CORNER

Your weekly guide to stretching the loan a little further by taking the bookies money!

HELLO AND WELCOME to "The Tipster", your indispensable new friend who just loves to help you beat the bookies. This weekend we have some juicy action for you in the rugby and football worlds plus cricket's Champions trophy final.



Moving straight on to football where a few fixtures catch the eye. A sluggish and dare I say it struggling Manchester United travel to White Hart Lane to play a buoyant and still unbeaten Spurs. Put your money on a draw at 12-5. Chelsea travel northward for a tricky tie with Middlesbrough who might be worth a shot for the draw at 11-5 especially if they're allowed to park their bus across the pitch! Avoid the matches Man City Vs Arsenal, Liverpool Vs Norwich and Newcastle Vs West Brom, as the three big teams look certain bankers.

In rugby union Newcastle Falcons travel to Gloucester, both riding high in the league but whose unbeaten start will fall on Saturday? Will the Falcons be brought down to earth? No. I fancy Newcastle to win at BLANK to 1.

Finally the ICC Champions trophy draws to a close at the Oval on Saturday and weather permitting England take on the West Indies. If you had your money on this final from the start you're laughing. The bookies make England just the favorites but it's a tough one to call, both sides are pretty even so if you're going to bet on it take a shot on Sarwan to be West Indies highest scorer at 7-4.

FLYING WITHOUT WINGS

But the parachute club are ready for take off

BY ROB HUCKIN

WHEN I WALKED into our beloved Mens Bar to meet with Richie Dunk and Stu Ferguson (good extreme sport names) I did have a preconception of what they would look and sound like. I had an image of two dreadlocked dudes telling me about how "the parachute was a metaphor for like life itself and the ground represents the state oppressing the masses, dude, it's all so crazy!". The guys I talked to, however, could not have been more down to earth (or less so I guess) and seemed about as narley-dude as Alan Partridge. Unlike Alan, however, these guys were passionate about parachuting.

The university club offers tandem jumping, which is basically a ride with an instructor where you fall at break neck speeds from up to 15,000 feet. Now I know for me that sounds about as appealing as an afternoon with Gordon Brown but to these guys it seems a bit of an obsession. On asking them how they maintained bowel control when staring at the ground from 15,000 feet Richie Dunk calmly replied, "If it was totally safe we wouldn't be doing it, it's the fear that makes you want to go back up". These guys could well be clinically insane adrenaline junkies but they do make it all sound very easy and, for all you buzz-lovers, very appealing.

As well as the tandem jump, there are unlimited advancement courses so that you could become an instructor yourself if you wanted to. Lindsay



Widdall, last year's president, has gone to New Zealand to do just that. The N U P C (Newcastle University Parachuting Club), of which Richie is treasurer, had 70

members last year. This year the club could be doubling its membership in just one term.

Already, three weekends have been booked up to gain an introduction and basic training in skydiving and a fourth is likely. The team itself finished 3rd in the British Collegiate inter-university league year and go on tours to Europe to gain a more advanced level of training every year. Despite this fast-track progress, however, the state and our union are reluctant to fund this growing success story.

To me at least, it seems that this is not only all very good fun but also a serious society that is shedding the dreaded tag of "minority sport". These guys are good at what they do and there are clearly more and more people who want to be just as successful. However, they need the great financial "wings" of the university in order to fulfil their massive potential.

If you are interested (or just want to go out on the lash with some drunken daredevils) then there is an NUPC pub crawl on the 4th October, meeting in the Mens Bar at 7.30pm.

UNI STILL SEEKING FIRST WIN

HEDDON 3
NEWCASTLE 1ST XI 2

BY CHRIS DOUGLAS

THE UNIVERSITY continued their Northern Alliance Premier Division campaign with a floodlit match against high-flying Heddon. The students started brightly with Ashley Wilkinson stamping his authority on the centre of midfield with some crunching tackles and exquisite passing. The opening exchanges produced few clear-cut opportunities until sloppy defending allowed Ojo to have a clear run on goal, and he slotted past the keeper to give the University the lead on twenty minutes.

The home team responded around ten minutes later as Heddon's left-sided midfielder found himself in enough space to drill home the equaliser. A Lazabaru free-kick had the Heddon keeper scrambling across his goal-line, but shortly before half-time a well-worked move and pinpoint cross produced a goal to send Heddon 2-1 up at the break.

Sustained university pressure in the second-half resulted in several half-chances, but a defensive mix-up presented Heddon with the chance to take a somewhat undeserved 3-1 lead. Daniel Biggins was denied by a great save from the home keeper but the students finally pulled one back in the dying stages, thanks to Andy Graham, who scrambled the ball home from a corner, but it was too little, too late for Newcastle who are still searching for their first league win of the season.

EDITORIAL

BY NICK MEAKIN

Individuals prove sport is a team game

COLIN MONTGOMERIE'S 18th hole putt to win the 2004 Ryder Cup was just perfect. It was an Oscar winning conclusion to Monty's *annus horribilis*. Forgotten were his poor form, his absent wife and impending divorce. One putt, 4 foot, golfing immortality. It was all so simple, so effective, yet in this individual sport Europe's victory was a truly team performance.

Teams define sport and however good a group of individuals are, skill can often get unstuck against determination, unity and friendship. Greece for instance never should have won Euro 2004, but they were a well-trained, compact unit who brushed aside the much more skilful and illustrious Portuguese with ease.

Golf however is the classic individual sport. It places a player not only against his opponents but also against the ever changing forces of nature and the ever-corrupting forces of himself. Yet despite golf's individuality, every two years Europe's finest take on their American cousins in a team competition that enthral the world. Super stars like Phil Mickelson and Tiger Woods are forced for a weekend to shed their selfish, lonesome preparations and walk, talk and dress like a team. And the Americans just can't seem to be able to do it.

Just before Monty's winning piece the TV cameras swept over the glum faces of the home support and limp American flags in the their hands before focusing on a group sitting cross legged on the grass just behind the green. Dressed in matching clothes and with smiles brimming on their excited faces the European team resembled a group of young boys on a day out from school. These were global stars; both fantastically rich and fantastically skilful yet they sat as children enthralled by their success. It struck me as the defining image of the greatness of this European team; together, equal, unassuming, laughing. All traits that merged together to create this famous victory. Obviously it was their skilful play that achieved victory but Europe's success was in their ability as a team to all play to their highest ability for that team. Spirit coaxed the best out of Bernard Langer's men with truly remarkable results.

Langer deserves great praise for his team's performance but so does another captain tasting sweet victory at the moment. The last seven months have seen Michael Vaughan's boys turn into the most successful of men. 10 test wins out of 11 and potentially the Champions Trophy as well and English cricket is very much alive and kicking. Once again this team seem the best of friends, quick to praise, swifter to defend, today's England fight for each other. We've even become such a unit that we thrashed the Aussies at their own game. We bowled tightly, fielded well and then batted in such a clinical way that they didn't ever have a chance. It was fantastic and it was all about the team.

Before the game, Steve Harmison and Andrew Flintoff were highlighted as the danger men, neutralising them would achieve victory Australia believed. But the visitors were pegged back by Vaughan and Ashley Giles and then dispatched by Marcus Threscothick, Andrew Strauss and the skipper. Individuals shone but the team succeeded and the Aussies ran scarred.

"Dressed in matching clothes and with smiles brimming on their excited faces, the European team resembled a group of young boys on a day out from school"

Headline of the Week

"Geordies face Butt probe"

Nicky Butt's sending off against Hapoel Bnei Sakhnin could have more severe repercussions than first thought

**SIGN UP FOR
CLUBS ON
MONDAY 27TH
SEPTEMBER IN
THE UNION**

CASH IN THE ATTIC

“ Newcastle University teams have been very successful in previous years and so we want to give further support this year...”

BY ELISE BELCHER

POPULAR CITY CENTRE venue Attic has been a generous sponsor for the Athletic Union for the 2004-2005 season. The sponsorship will provide much needed funds for the A.U. for kit, maintenance of pitches and tour subsidies. It will definitely enhance Newcastle's possibilities of moving up the BUSA leagues and rank as one of the top ten universities for sport.

This is first time the A.U. has been sponsored in such a way, and A.U. Officer, Alex O'Leary, has been impressed with the professionalism of Attic and their generosity. "There are loads of benefits for everyone in the A.U. As well as money for social nights, kit and tours we can now send elite athletes on sports science programmes where they will be able to study other aspects of their sport such as psychological effects".



Marketing manager of Attic Mike Hesketh told the Courier "Newcastle University teams have been very successful in previous years and so we want to be associated with them and give further support this year." 60 per cent will go directly to clubs providing kit and 40 per cent will enhance the development of

the teams. "It is a committed partnership too, and providing all goes well this year, sponsorship is planned to be continued for the next three years".

The four teams nominated by Attic to benefit most from the deal are Men's Football, Rugby League and Hockey as well as Ladies Netball. Chris Jones, the Hockey Club Captain, is delighted with the sponsorship. "It's going to be really useful in subsidising kit as it gets pretty expensive." The Rugby League team, captained by Alan Robinson, are excited to be going on tour this year. "We've haven't been for three years. The money will go a long way in contributing to one this year."

Attic are also very kindly offering a corporate box at St. James Park this season as part of their sponsorship. The teams will be able to auction it off in fund-raising or use it themselves for a great day out. Discussions with the Attic have been ongoing over the last year and former A.U. Officer Paul O' Leary worked hard in ensuring all the arrangements were secure.

The Attic is already a popular attraction in the city and now the official A.U. venue on Wednesday nights. Mike Hesketh said "We aim to look after the sports students - not just throw money at the A.U." That means for other teams in the A.U. sponsorship comes with the bonus of student 'Privilege Passes' and, on Wednesday's, free entry and free selected drinks. Evenings at the trendy Mosley Street club will give customers three floors of various kinds of music and a great atmosphere.

With such generous financial backing this term Newcastle's teams are looking forward to some exciting and successful seasons. The Netball team has realistic aims of reaching the BUSA Premiership as do Men's Hockey. The Football team were disappointed with their mid-table finish last year but are still hoping to finish top. With a great set-up of Attic sponsorship and guaranteed good nights out Andy Graham, Club Captain for Men's Football is looking forward to the year ahead.



Pictured are: Mike Hesketh, Marketing Manager, The Attic, Andy Graham, Club Captain, Football, Chris Jones, Club Captain, Men's Hockey, Alan Robinson, 1st Team Captain, Rugby League, Sarah Strudwicke, Social Secretary, Netball. photos by DUNCAN STRUTHERS

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