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THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF NEWCASTLE STUDENTS

FREE

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No love in Las Vegas

THEY say that drunken nights are the best, but it seems that one former Newcastle student got a little more than he was bargaining for.

Alex Ward, last year's Union Finance Officer, was talked into marriage after a drink-fuelled evening on the famous Las Vegas strip.

He tied the knot in the famous Four Weddings Chapel before being whisked off to the reception at a local strip-joint, where he bought his new wife a lap-dance.

FULL STORY: PAGE 3

Petitioning for Courage

NEWCASTLE Students' Union launched a fresh campaign on Wednesday to support a Nigerian student facing deportation.

Courage Idiagbonya, who has been arrested twice and detained by police officers and immigration officials, is in his second year at Newcastle studying Biochemistry.

In an exclusive interview with *The Courier* this week, Courage talks of the injustice he has faced at the hands of British authorities.

The Courier has thrown its full support behind Courage and the campaign.

FULL STORY: PAGE 3

Fight at the Poly

A RIVAL fight broke out between Newcastle and Northumbria students last Saturday, at the Poly's Saturday Night cheese-fest, Wiggle.

No-one was seriously injured in the brawl, but police had to intervene and escort the Northumbria students off campus.

FULL STORY: PAGE 4

EXPOSED: Uni accused of putting money-spinning cafe before student learning facilities

BISTRO BLUNDER

EXCLUSIVE BY TOM ARMITAGE

UNIVERSITY officials have come under fire after a much-needed learning resource centre for students was sidelined for a money-spinning Bistro.

The University's plan to revamp the Refectory and Ball Room, now renamed the King's Road Centre, was originally scheduled for completion by September and is believed to have cost a staggering £4 million.

Unfortunately, several weeks prior to opening, officials behind the state-of-the-art complex are alleged to have had to pay out for a few unexpected surprises - including a hefty tax bill.

Things declined further when they had to compensate the Union after accidentally dropping a lift shaft through the roof of their downstairs toilets.

However, University staff were quick to defend the decision.

FULL STORY: PAGE 5





EDITOR

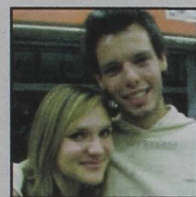
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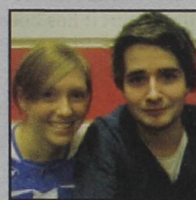
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UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE



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Photo: Amy Wilson Nikon Coolpix 5700

CONTINUED FROM
FRONT PAGE

Margaret Hunter, Director of Accommodation and Hospitality at the University, was quick to dismiss these allegations. She told *The Courier*: "I haven't a clue about this. To my knowledge it certainly hasn't opened with any defects." Despite several attempts to contact the University Safety Office, no-one was available for comment at the time of going to press.

Perhaps as a result of these alleged errors, the opening of the University's much-hyped Social Learning Space has been pushed back until later this year. This important facility, when eventually open, will

provide students with a relaxing area to work together on projects and surf the Internet.

Interestingly, and perhaps serving as an important wake-up call to the University, Northumbria University has had a similar facility in operation for several months, which it claims has been a 'great success' with its students.

But despite delays to the opening of the King's Road Centre, its Bistro's doors have still managed to open on time - drawing renewed criticism from students.

"It appears that, once again, the University has put its own profit margins ahead of our academic needs," said one third-year student, who wished to remain

anonymous.

But Ms. Hunter disagreed: "This delay is unavoidable. The only reason the Bistro was opened ahead of the Social Learning Centre was because it complied with the necessary fire safety regulations."

Indeed, it has not been an easy couple of weeks for the University, after several senior members of its Accommodation Office were photographed in last week's edition of *The Courier*, giving out promotional material for the Bistro on King's Road.

A Union representative is aware of the situation.

"This doesn't really come as a surprise. I've heard several complaints that the Bistro is boring and lacking in

"The delay is unavoidable..."

Margaret Hunter, Director, Accommodation & Hospitality

atmosphere."

But Ms. Hunter defended the University's decision: "I believe that all activities in support of students should be supported by all levels of management. This is a perfectly normal practice."

This comes at a time when dozens of freshers are still waiting anxiously for a place in University accommodation. The Accommodation Office declined to issue an exact figure when asked, claiming that it "changes on a daily basis."

Other University staff did not wish to comment on the issue but the Union's Communications Officer, Ally Robson has noted student concerns.

"I think everyone is extremely disappointed that the building is still not ready, particularly as it looked like it could provide students with a very valuable service."

University officials have asked contractors working on the King's Road Centre for a new opening date and are awaiting their response.

Do you feel safe walking around Newcastle after dark?

This week's question put to students by TOM FAGG and TOM MAVERLEY



Rohini Bajaj, 21, 4th Year Medicine

"Yes I feel safe. I am from Liverpool, which is considered a dangerous ghetto compared to Newcastle!"



Jamie McDonnell, 19, 2nd Year Politics

"On a week-night I consider myself safe... but I'm not so sure on a weekend."



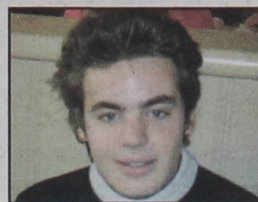
James Merewether, 19, 1st Year Civil Engineering

"During the week I feel safe because there are so many students. However, at the weekends the Geordies can be intimidating."



Anaick Daruty De Grayndpre, 21, 4th Year Business Studies

"Yes, I never walk anywhere on my own. But, I would be frightened if my friends were not there."



Mark Fulton, 19, 1st Year Economics

"Newcastle needs to do something about its chav population. I do not feel safe because they can be so aggressive for no reason."



Sarah Wilson, 19, 1st Year English Language

"Depends who I'm with, but most of the time yes. If I've had a few, I sometimes get lost and that can be scary."

Leaving love in Las Vegas



Ex- Union Finance Officer holds wedding reception in a strip club after wedding friend of two days on the famous desert strip

BY EDWARD SAWYER
NEWS EDITOR

A FORMER Newcastle student recently got hitched in Las Vegas - only to have his marriage annulled four weeks later.

Alex Ward, last year's Union Finance Officer, described the event as the "pinnacle of my hedonistic life."

Describing the occasion, which bears a close resemblance to one of Ross and Rachel's short-lived flings in the sitcom Friends, Ward said he felt like getting married simply because he was in Las Vegas.

"As the old saying goes," Ward told *The Courier* during an interview in The

Hague, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do."

The ceremony took place after the pair had each consumed a yard of Margarita. Ward told *The Courier* that they were both "obliterated."

The ceremony took place at the Four Weddings Chapel, infamous for where Paris Hilton's sister Nicky recently got hitched. The best man was Alex's best mate, who wore a T-shirt emblazoned with 'strippers to your bedroom' for the occasion.

The groom was blindfolded for the entire ceremony, including the signing of the registry, with a tie that he had stolen from a waitress in their hotel.

At the climax of the event, Alex produced a ring for his beloved bride - made from a Starbucks straw and wrapper. When the Minister asked the couple if they were serious, they replied: "Nah, we're only doing it for a laugh."

The wedding reception took place in one on Las Vegas' top strip-joints. For a wedding present, the bride was bought a lap dancer for the evening.

On his wife, Alex declared: "She's a strange wife - I've not seen her since the wedding. But it has been the best four weeks of my life."

The marriage has since been annulled, lasting and impressive and romantic four weeks.

The fight for Courage

BY PAUL LAEUNER

A MASS campaign was launched on Wednesday to support a Newcastle Uni student under threat of deportation.

Courage Idiagbonya, a Nigerian national, faces possible death at the hands of his government if he returns home.

The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness of Courage's situation and to put pressure on the government to allow him to finish his studies.

It is being spearheaded by senior lecturers from Newcastle University and the Students' Union Welfare Officer, Sophie White.

Courage has been detained twice while studying at Newcastle. On the first occasion, he was arrested while studying at home for his exams in January last year. On July 1st this year, plain-

clothed policemen and immigration officials again arrested him, while working in the Walton Library.

Jennifer Toomey, a Research Associate of Newcastle University believes that getting the students to support the campaign could make a huge difference.

In an interview with *The Courier*, she said: "It is a very worrying development that plain-clothed police can walk straight into a university library and detain a student during his studies."

"In recent times we have turned our backs upon our proud history of welcoming foreigners who are fleeing persecution and ask us for shelter. I am deeply ashamed of this."

Geoff Abbott, Senior Lecturer for Civil Engineering & Geosciences, also said that Courage simply wants to be left alone by the immigration

authorities so that he can pursue his course in Biochemistry.

For the Home Office, things are not so simple. When questioned by *The Courier* as to why they have twice arrested Courage and still continue to try and remove him from the country, they gave the following statement.

"We would seek to remove someone who does not have a legal right to be in the country. If someone is to be removed then it must be deemed safe for them to do so. People will only be removed if they have exhausted all avenues of appeal."

Letters and petitions signed have been sent to the Home Secretary, Charles Clarke, and local MP David Clelland. Mr Clelland has asked for a full report from the Home Office and is looking into the matter.

In response to the campaign, Courage told *The Courier*: "I

am very grateful to all those who have ensured the success of this campaign and have sustained my release from detention. I am indebted to them all."

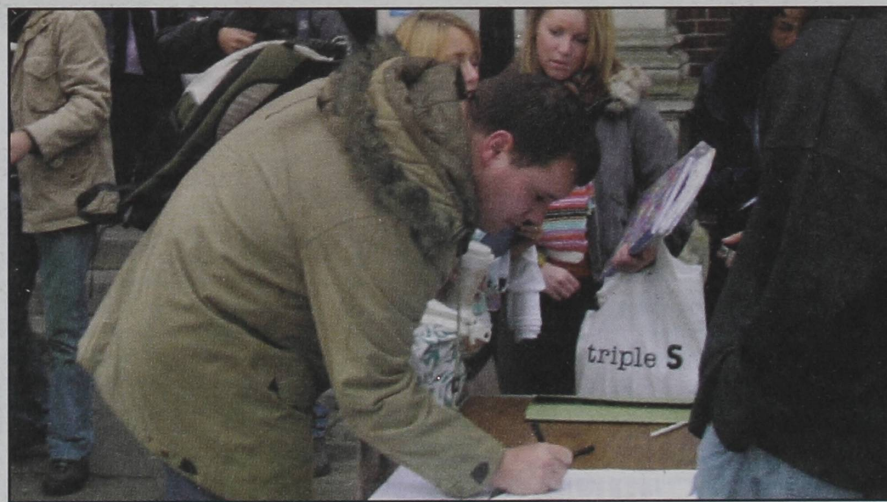
Sophie White, the Students' Union Welfare Officer added:

"I would urge everyone who has not yet signed their name to a petition or a letter to do so. A few minutes of your time really could make an enormous difference to Courage's situation."

The Courier is backing

Courage's petition, which can be signed by logging onto <http://www.unionsociety.co.uk/main/theunion/officers/welfare/courage>

FULL INTERVIEW WITH COURAGE: PAGE 5



Over 300 student signed Courage's petition outside the Union on Wednesday


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Poly punch-up

Fight at Wiggle as Newcastle and Northumbria students clash

BY KARL SAUNT and
RACHEL MURRAY

A CHAV-themed night ended in disaster after Newcastle and Northumbria students brawled at a Student Union night.

The fight broke out at Northumbria's Saturday student night, Wiggle, after a Newcastle student started imitating a Northumbria student's bad dancing.

Friends from both sides got involved and an aggressive argument erupted. Punches were thrown before bouncers intervened and asked the Northumbria students to leave. The Newcastle students cooperated with the bouncers by leaving the dance-floor and waiting in a separate room until the Northumbria students had been escorted out.

An onlooker, simply known as Pete, told of his experience on the night.

"The poly students were obviously well drunk. The song 'Time of My Life' was being played and one of my mates, as a joke, thought it would be funny to impersonate their dance.

"They thought they were Patrick Swayze and when he tried to grab this bird he was dancing with, we all couldn't stop laughing. This really pissed the Northumbria student off and he got really confrontational with us all.



SCRAP...took place at Wiggle after a Poly student thought a Newcastle student was mocking his dancing

"Then his mates got involved and started trying to push us about. The fact that we were still laughing probably made him even more annoyed. The bouncers came back and took them away after a couple of loose punches had been thrown.

"They were pretty fair and asked the Northumbria students to leave before we did, so the fight wouldn't carry on outside. When they wouldn't leave, they called the police who dealt with them." Northumbria police told *The Courier*: "We can confirm that officers were called to deal with a

case of nuisance behaviour in the early hours of Sunday morning at Northumbria University. There were no arrests made and our officers saw it fit to simply escort the students from the premises." This is not the first student fight of the year.

Last week the Newcastle Titans rugby team were involved in a bust-up with some local teenagers while out on a sports social, writes *Adam Halls*.

The team were walking along Gallowgate in the city centre when a mass of Geordie youths pounced on a member of the team.

Leaping to his defence, all the players became involved and a mass brawl erupted.

Police arrived quickly after receiving reports from worried passers-by and the team were cautioned. Northumbria Police estimate that there were around 25 rugby players involved. But Rugby secretary Cliff is taking the night in his stride.

"We just don't want to make a big deal out of it. We've had a bit of aggro from the locals before, especially when we are in fancy dress."



Photo: The Journal

Newcastle is ace!

BY ELIZABETH WALMSLEY

A NEWCASTLE University student is reaping the rewards of winning a competition by saying why he loves the North East.

Mechanical Engineering student Martin Reed, 21, entered the competition after hearing it advertised on local radio.

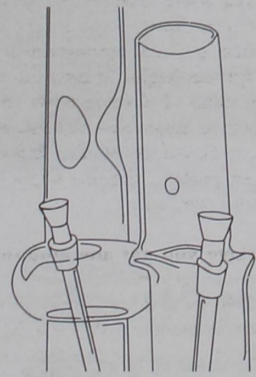
And the winning answer? "The North is the right side of the British Equator, the people are friendly, the nightlife is the best in the country, life is much more laid back and let's face it - it beats the South."

The Yorkshire lad has always had a soft spot for the North after finding that, compared to other universities that he visited across the country on

open days, Newcastle was the one that made him feel most welcome.

Having just embarked on the final year of his masters, Martin doesn't have any plans to leave Newcastle in a hurry after graduating, describing the south as "crap, dirty and expensive."

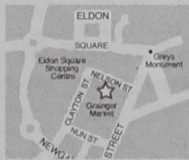
Martin and a friend won a two-night mini break at the 4-star De Vere Slaley Hall near Hexham.



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A courageous fight



Courage Idiagbonya, a Newcastle University Biochemistry student, has been arrested twice, imprisoned and had a close encounter with death. **NATASHA MARTIN** meets the Nigerian man fighting to stay in Britain

Natasha: Can you give us a bit of insight into your background?

Courage: I was a student leader at the University of Benin, Nigeria. It is a federal institution and one of the most vibrant political universities in sub-Saharan Africa. As a student leader we were fighting for the interests of students and were opposing the anti-people, anti-poor policies of the Government. These policies include dehumanisation and total disregard for the human rights of the Nigerian people. On these issues we have always wrestled with the Nigerian Government.

N: So why did you flee to Britain?

C: In 2001, the issue that actually sparked the whole fire was the Union Elections in which over thirty of the student candidates were disqualified unlawfully without any explanation. These candidates were the students' candidates - we had rested our hopes in them to improve their welfare and not compromise on issues that affect us as students.

There is a history with Nigerian

the voice of the voiceless and the hope of the hopeless.

N: Did you face a similar threat?

C: Well, on this specific occasion, we wrestled and fought against policy. We wanted them to stop the cancellation of the student candidates. This request led to a series of demonstrations which frustrated the state and resorted to the authorities bringing in mobile policemen who were heavily armed. On these occasions, the leaders of these demonstrations were declared as wanted.

N: What action did you take on hearing that you were on the government's wanted list?

C: Well, the fact is we have always been on their wanted list, as a result of us championing against their policies. The only safe haven we had at that time was the University campus because it was, for us, more of a republic that was not in line with the Nigerian State. However, it became very clear to us that the

which powers they were arresting me. I was taken into custody at North Shields Police Station and later transferred to Lindholm Detention Centre in Doncaster. Here they told me that I was being held under the Immigration Act as my asylum application had failed. They did not notify me of this before I was arrested.

N: What was Lindholm Detention Centre like?

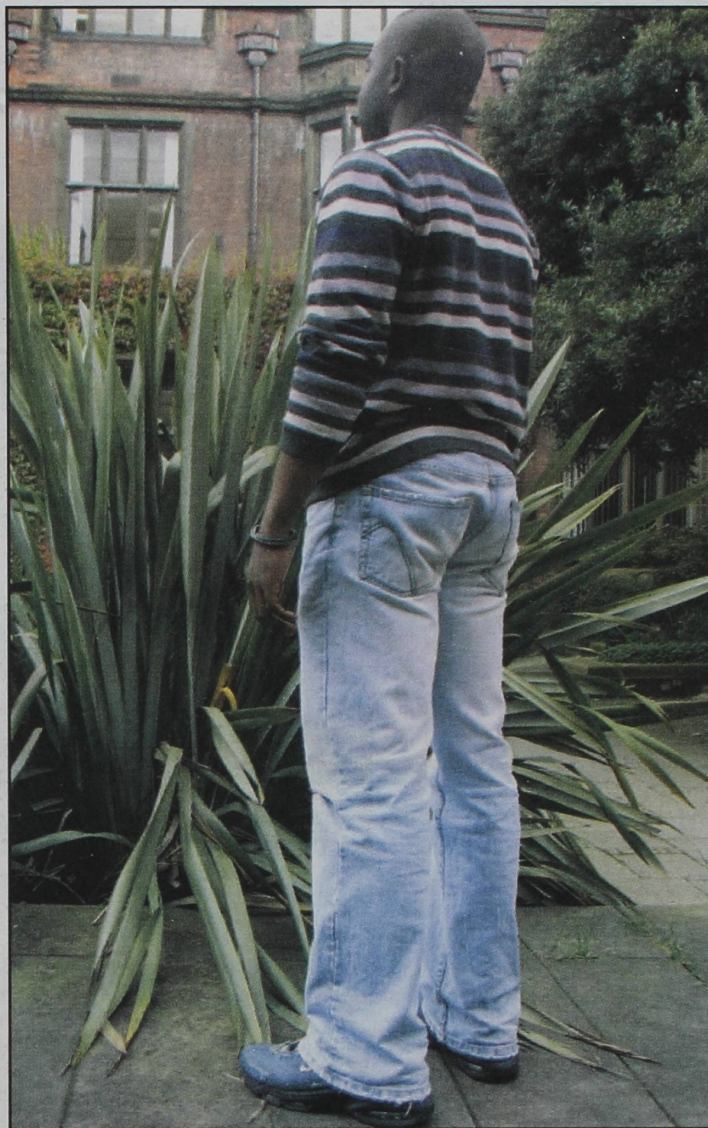
C: There were many issues, from open racism and every other thing that borders on going against the detainees welfare. The officers accused me of inciting fellow detainees not to obey orders. But all that I tried to do was let them know that we should not fight the officers. One particular officer always told his fellow colleagues that I was the most radical detainee there. It was an opportunity to jump on me and manipulate the situation.

N: Where did you go from there?

C: After a fracas with custody officers at Lindholm, I was handcuffed, restrained and carried down to the HMP Prison next to the Detention Centre, where I was incarcerated without any communication for three days - beyond the legal 48 hours. From then on, they tried to portray me as violent, and as a result used a secure cage-like cabin inside a secured vehicle to transfer me to Colnbrook Detention Centre in northwest London. I was further incarcerated here for over a month, where finally I was released on bail on April 7th. I then immediately returned to University to revise for my exams.

N: What happened when you were arrested for the second time?

C: It happened on the July 1st inside the Walton Library. I was fulfilling my bail conditions dogmatically, religiously, consistently and constantly - so why I was arrested again, I don't know. Another worrying aspect is that the policemen arrested me under the Immigration Act - yet there was not a single immigration officer in sight. I was half carried, half dragged into the lift and taken to a waiting



STANDING TALL... Courage is battling to stay in the UK to finish his studies

vehicle. As I speak to you now, I have had no explanation for why I was arrested.

N: What support did you receive from students in Newcastle?

C: A number of students were heavily supportive to me. The news spread fast and people started wanting to speak to me. But when students started to arrive at North Shields Police Station to question my whereabouts, the police retorted that I was not their prisoner. But they refused to let them speak to me nonetheless.

Furthermore, if I was not their prisoner, why did they come to the library and arrest me? Still no answers! The way they have treated me - arresting me for no reason and explanation - is a frightening dimension. My visitors were turned away and my requested letter-writing paper and stamps were taken away from me.

N: How do you feel about all of this?

C: It is all just so frightening. The way the policemen acted is not good for humanity at all. I abide by all the rules in this country - I contribute to the economy of this society, as I pay my own fees. My property is over 200 books and two manuscripts which I have written (one titled *The Life of a Struggler* and the other *Africa: the Oppressed and Exploited Continent*). I have laboured over the years to

write these texts. These have been confiscated by the police and immigration and up until now have not been returned.

N: What has been the worst treatment you have experienced in all of this?

C: When they put me in a van and drove me away. I asked to know where I was being taken but got no reply. I had an eight hour journey in a van without any idea where I was going. They had booked my plane [back to Nigeria] but at the last minute I was saved. They cannot send me home - I face death.

N: Do you feel others need to understand the situation that people like you are in?

C: We must understand the hype that emulates from the media. Asylum seekers, immigrants - these are terminologies to turn us against each other. I do not wish to force myself on England - all I ask is to be able to finish my studies in peace. I am so grateful for the support and help I have had.

N: Have you got any ambitions to return to Nigeria?

C: Eventually, I love my country and I want to make a difference there. All these events show me that I can be delayed but not be denied. If I go back now, however, I will surely be killed. They can deny me the right to live here - but not the right to live.

"As I speak to you now, I have had no explanation for why I was arrested."

dictators and Vice Chancellors who inject the university with these puppets - those who will become student leaders and compromise everyone's welfare. In fact, there has been murder brought to those who opposed them.

In 1997, at the University of Benin, the student Secretary General was murdered under the orders of the Vice Chancellor for his conflicting political opinions. This was repeated in 1999 at Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, when George Iwilade, at the time Secretary General of the Students' Union, was murdered on the orders of the then Vice Chancellor. Three other students were also murdered.

The government used this to silence the students who have always shown an interest in policies that affect the people, because we, the Nigerian students, see ourselves as

authorities were coming down on us - especially the President. There was a list of wanted students and my name was on it. The only thing to do was go into hiding.

N: How have you found living here in the UK?

C: Finding myself in this society, I immediately enrolled myself at Newcastle University. I am now in my second year of Bio-Chemistry but the authorities do not make it easy for me.

On the 16th January 2005, as I was preparing to take my first year exams, there was a knock at the door of my house and police officers from Northumberland Police Station said that I was under arrest.

N: Under what charge did they arrest you?

C: They did not spell out under

BY ALICE WAINWRIGHT

STUDENTS flocked to a lilac taxi cab on campus this week to celebrate their prized possessions.

'Every Object Tells a Story' is a nine-month project in association

with Channel 4 and local museums which encourages members of the public to improve their storytelling by sharing their memories of a particular object with a video camera inside the cab.

The lilac taxi visited Newcastle on Tuesday, and so far stories have

ranged from jewellery and childhood toys, to a stress ball used during labour!

Learning Officer and Newcastle graduate Trudi Bowen told *The Courier* that the project aims to "create personal stories from everyday objects".



A trip down memory lane

New research shows that adding seaweed to junk food could be the answer to beating the flab

Weed and wonderful

BY ALICE WAINWRIGHT

JUNK FOOD may be about to get a lot healthier if new research at the University is to be believed.

We all know we should be eating better, the health food craze has been on the up as of late, and an increasing amount of healthy options are available on the grab-and-go shelves of local bakeries and supermarkets. But come on, let's be honest; after suffering through morning lectures, bleary-eyed and nauseous from last night's fun, that low-fat tuna on wholemeal bread just isn't calling out your name.

Fear not though; Newcastle's Professor in the Institute for Cell and Molecular Biosciences Jeff Pearson is on the case, leading a team of researchers working to make that guilt-laden pork and apple pie decision a little less agonizing.

The Courier caught up with Dr. Pearson to discuss his latest research on the miracle food-additive alginate and soon discovered why his work is garnering international acclaim and taking the food science world by storm.

Alginate, a tasteless odourless

powder derived from two types of brown-coloured Norwegian seaweed, has been used in foods for its gelling properties for years. Pearson and his team have been taking a much closer look at this seaweed derivative, and discovering loads of health benefits this powerful compound can produce when added to everyday foods such as burgers and chips.

Dr Pearson is working on one form of alginate which can be added to flour to increase the fibre content of breads and cakes. Its content is then beneficial to the body by slowing the rate at which our bodies digest food, keeping insulin levels in check, and helping us stay fuller longer.

New EU regulations state we should eat an average of 18-30 grams of alginate, which is already present in many foods, a day to stay healthy, though the average Brit only gets about 12 grams.

This dilemma has proved the major driving force in researching specifically into getting more alginate into junk food, in order to improve health.

"We believe it's hard to change people's habits and that the most practical solution is to improve the

food they do eat," says Pearson. By adding small amounts of the alginate to white bread, Pearson has managed to nearly quadruple the amount of fibre in a single slice.

Alginate helps bread to retain water which makes it easier to chew, and also not taste of the seaweed.

Pearson explains that alginate has been used in foods for structural purposes, giving foods such as jam its gelatinous consistency. It is this textural property which allows alginate to act as a fat replacement in processed meats such as sausages and hamburgers.

Alginate is also being used for its obesity fighting potential. When alginate enters the stomach it effectively inhibits our body's digestion of fat.

Rising costs to food can also be ruled out as it is claimed that it would only cost an extra three to five pence to produce a loaf of bread.

While the department has been in contact with a number of bread companies about possible contracts, nothing has yet been finalised, but it seems that the future is bright. The future is seaweed.

BY KEN NOTT

UNIVERSITY Estate Security Services are sending out a stark warning to all students to be extra vigilant as the dark winter nights draw in - all those in accommodation are advised to be extra vigilant for thieves. University Police want residents

to check they have adequate lighting installed as dusk will soon begin at 4pm when the clocks go back on Sunday 30th October.

Light-sensitive, timer and programmed switches are all good ways to ensure a flat or room is lit at the right times and also gives the impression someone is home. Students are also encouraged to

travel together or use public transport and taxi cabs, stay within well lit areas and be aware of your surroundings.

The Estate Security Control Centre based in the Armstrong Building is available to students 24/7 regarding any concerns with personal safety. Or just give them a call on (0191) 2226817.

THE GRASS IS ALWAYS GREENER

Ever wondered what happens outside of the Toon? Then you've come to the right place. SARAH LEIGHTON and MEGAN DARBY take a peek at the weird and, er, wonderful, uni news from around the country

ANGLIA POLYTECHNIC: ...but it's no longer a poly!

The last institution to feature polytechnic in its title has decided to opt for something a little more ambitious, renaming itself 'Anglia Ruskin University.'

It's all very well choosing a distinguished name associated with learning, but it would be quite of a mouthful after a few drinks!

Why they didn't just name it Chelmsford University, after the town it is situated in, we can't imagine.

EXETER: Blobby fever haunts south west students once more.

A landlord, who spent over £4,000 painting the outside of his student-let property with carnation pink paint, was furious to find vandals had spray painted the outside with large yellow dots, Mr Blobby style.

The tenants, from Exeter University, failed to notice the 30 bright yellow splodges until a plumber pointed them out several days later.

BRISTOL: They say that alcohol numbs the pain...

An engineering student from Bristol University was left with an inch-and-a-half of his left ear missing after trouble flared on the dance floor of a club during Freshers' Week.

But Greg Coombs, 19, didn't realise he was missing part of his ear until his friend pointed it out.

He is now undergoing several minor operations to rebuild his lobe, after the bitten-off chunk was lost. And they say the Bigg Market is rough!

NOTTINGHAM TRENT: Honesty is always the best policy.

It seems that students from Nottingham Trent forgot to put on their rose-coloured specs in a recent student satisfaction survey, led by their university.

The students let their true feeling be known as they complained of cold rooms,

doddery old lecturers, and a dirty Students' Union with music so bad that it encouraged alcoholism, even though the beer apparently tastes like pee.

One helpful contributor added: 'Why am I wasting my time sitting like a prick on the A52 and attending university... to be told it's all in the books!'

ST ANDREWS: Chimpanzees talk! New research confirms suspicions that chimpanzees have better table manners than my flatmates.

The study, conducted on chimps at Edinburgh Zoo, found that they make conversation at mealtimes. Primate experts identified a range of grunts used by our closest animal relatives to describe different foodstuffs, from high-pitched sounds for their favourite snacks such as bread, to lower ones for apples and other less valued victuals.

This represents quite a breakthrough in the field, as it was previously thought that apes communicated solely through body gestures.

LANCASTER: Students rebel against uni funding sources.

Anti-capitalist campaigners will be appealing against their convictions after gate-crashing a corporate business meeting.

The six Lancaster students, dubbed the 'George Fox 6', used banners and leaflets to show their objection to the university's courting businesses with poor ethical records for funding. The university has come under fire from the human rights group Liberty, as well as students' and academics' unions for pressing criminal charges against peaceful protesters. The university thought that, in the act of interrupting a speech by Lord Sainsbury for five minutes and waving a few leaflets about, the protesters 'went beyond what would normally be accepted as peaceful protest,' and told the court how they 'damaged the university's reputation.'



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Truly Courageous

The Courier has thrown its support behind Courage's petition to remain in Britain.

In several articles that have been published in this newspaper, we have always maintained that Courage - a Nigerian student that faces serious threat if he returns to his homeland - has the right to remain in Britain to complete his studies.

On a number of occasions, Courage has spoken honestly to this newspaper about his intentions for the future - in particular, his dream to return home to Nigeria once he deems it safe to do so.

Up until now, none of the institutions that have detained him can give us a straightforward, legal reason for doing so. Furthermore, several academics from this University have stressed concerns about the political situation that we live in today - in particular, the fact that plain-clothed policeman can turn up on campus and arrest pupils, without even informing the University of their intentions beforehand.

The Courier therefore 100% supports Courage in his battle to remain in the UK for his studies - if the authorities are unable to provide any legitimate excuse to deport him, then we are proud to have him as a student at this University.

Rivalry remains

What would be the point in having two universities in the same city without a good bit of healthy rivalry?

In much the same way as we supported the illegal rave in last week's issue - obviously without condoning illegal activity - *The Courier* is secretly pleased to see that rivalry between our beloved institution and the Poly is still strong.

To those cynics out there who question the need for a good healthy rivalry, answer this. How good would a Bond film be without the villain? Would the Teenage Ninja Turtles be the same without their nemesis, Shredder? Popeye without Pluto..? Its a fact of life that rivalry exists - and its all around us.

Although some people might not like it, it's only a bit of fun. May the Newcastle v Poly noise contests in Blu Bambu continue for many a year!

Sporting success on the horizon?

Another year, another student sporting season.

As seen on this week's back page, BUSA kicked off last week. Although some results weren't the best, hopes are high that Newcastle can climb the rankings this year after a slight slip last time round.

With the new Sports Centre making an impact, and the introduction of Performance Sport catering for elite athletes, we're slowly putting together the infrastructure to compete with the big boys.

However, we mustn't forget the bread and butter of university sport - the Intra-Mural leagues. Running since the sixties, one of uni sport's best assets allows hundreds of students to get a game in a variety of sports every single week.

All-in-all, we're not so badly off. This University has a proud sporting heritage, in terms of both BUSA and Intra-Mural sport - long may this continue.

The Courier would like to wish all BUSA and Intra-Mural teams all the best for the season.

Leadership race - what a Con



Comment
APPARENTLY there is an enthralling battle going on at the moment between monolithic titans that simply cannot be missed.

In fact, on Tuesday night one of the embattled heavyweights, a certain Kenneth Clarke, dropped out of the clash, leaving just three contenders. And just as *The Courier* was going to press, Dr. Liam, the young right-winger, was the second casualty. That leaves David 'Tory Blair' Cameron and the dramatically-fading David Davis. The battle I am talking of is, of course, the Conservative leadership race.

Missed it thus far? I must say I have not lost that much sleep identifying the 'Camerons' from the 'Davites'. Why should we, the students, care or even take the vaguest

interest teetering on the minimal? The answer is simple. The Conservatives are THE student friendly party - well the most realistic of them at least. Their direction is very much in our interest.

To address the old cliché of Higher Education, the Conservatives are the most explicit party in terms of their Higher Education policy. They offer a realistic and practical approach. Namely their policy to replace student fees and government grants to universities such as Newcastle, with a new system of government-funded national scholarships to meet the cost of educating students. Sounds refreshingly simple and effective, eh? Well it is. Brilliant. Higher Education, however, is not a key issue in this race. Unfortunately for us, there are bigger, and perhaps more interesting, issues at stake.

What really takes the biscuit and gets my Goat simultaneously, however, is the Yankee-style mud-slinging game show-esque 'dirty' tactics that have been employed by David Cameron's opposition within

the Conservatives. Are you telling me that anyone really gives a toss if he had a drag or two on a bit of whacky-backy back in the day? Isn't university about experiencing life before things get boring?

I know I, for one, don't resent Cameron for his (alleged) experimentations. Many of us have already failed if we are judged on what happens along similar lines during University. He is clearly a very intelligent man who is young and can provide the modernisation that the Conservative party desperately needs. During this Labour government's infancy, there have been several drugs 'scandals' within the cabinet. If not an issue then, why is now an issue for the opposition?

Personality politics - or in other words, playing the man rather than the quality of his policy - is creating a mockery out of what is a very serious matter. The Conservative party are the official opposition, an essential arm in the process of checks and balances that ensure that the people are protected against harmful legislation and such

by an administration in government. To lower the contest to such cheap shots and dirty tactics conveys a divided Conservative party and hampers an often underplayed role of holding the government to account. Let's leave that to the Americans.

See, politics is just one long bitch-fight, and the world is full of it. Unfortunately, we need to pay attention to such events as this leadership race because it is a major component of the wider world we will be thrown into in a matter of years (or less).

There is also the case that the beauty of so called 'free' countries such as ours is that we have the freedom of choice as to which party we vote for - we abuse this fundamental human right by remaining ignorant and disaffected.

David Cameron: if elected by the Conservatives as leader, I don't envy your unenviable task of uniting a seemingly backbiting and divided rabble. Until you do, though, you won't have my vote back. I'm just not feeling it.



Comment
AN EMAIL popped into my inbox the other day, asking me why *The Courier* was so negative about Newcastle.

Personally, I don't agree. Whilst we may have some criticisms of the University, we exist to challenge them where necessary and conversely, we'll also give them a pat on the back where appropriate. However, one thing we're always positive about is the city itself!

Now, tasked with writing a comment piece, I'm going to prove that person wrong and write about how bloody great Newcastle is.

Whether you're a seasoned Medic relishing yet another academic year, or a bright-eyed Fresher still getting used to the view out of Castle Leazes' window, I'm sure we can all agree we've ended up in the right place.

I reckon we've got a pretty good deal up here in Newcastle. Alright, so we didn't win Capital of Culture, but then again I also reckon

The great side of Toon

Liverpool needs it more than us. Sage, Baltic, various assorted bridges, etc etc...

Then there's the nightlife. Speaking to as many students as I do, you get a pretty good indication of why students come to Newcastle. The variety of night-time entertainment is probably at the top of that list.

Haymarket, Central Station,

Quayside; there's so many great places to go drinking, have a laugh with your mates and generally make the most of being a student. After all, it's an opportunity that - for most of us - will never come round again.

I could go on forever listing the great things about Newcastle - the Geordies, football, and countless other

things, but I'll close with this.

Living in Newcastle certainly gives us, as students, a great opportunity to really live a little before settling down into a job. From freshers to finalists, we all still have an opportunity to experience this, so get out there while you can and bloody enjoy yourselves! It'd be a shame not to!



How thin is beautiful?

Are we starving and exercising ourselves towards disaster? Over to ADDERLEY PRESCOTT...

I'VE been wondering: how thin is beautiful? And how much self-deprivation and working-out must be endured before society deems you 'thin'?

Every day, hordes of students pour into the university gym attempting to sweat off the pounds. I think it's great to have an interest in your physical well-being, and it's also natural to have a desire to appeal sexually. But when have you done enough? When have you lost enough weight?

At our University, thin is unequivocally in. But this has its negative consequences: gym culture and the glorification of 'thin' is now an unavoidable reality every student must face.

'There is no simple weight-loss solution to an anti-fat society'

The BBC news recently reported that 58% more people go to the gym than just five years ago. In this desire to reach social physical perfection, where is the barometer? How do you know if you're thin enough, small enough, in shape enough to be attractive?

Simple: you don't. You can start running on that treadmill and simply never stop. How sad that in your quest to please the world around you, you might well never be good enough.

We are bombarded with impossible ideals. Hollywood implies that you can't be small enough until you're almost anorexic. So you starve, you live in the gym, you're smaller than all your friends, and one beautiful day you get to wear that size six.

But suddenly, you're too thin. You've surpassed what society and the media deem 'thin enough', and are now too thin. This is an even more serious no-no even though it seems unfair and hypocritical to judge so. So wherein lies the problem?

Lindsey Lohan, star of *Mean Girls*,

has recently been lambasted in the tabloids for falling victim to these very pressures.

She was quoted saying, "I don't understand what the big deal is: there are lots of actresses smaller than me". Although she's successful,

plump is appealing, from Michaelangelo to the Renaissance. Marilyn Monroe personified sexiness in the 50's. Globally, she has remained one of the most famous women of the 20th century, and she

such as Kate Moss. She has, for the last decade, remained one of the most sought after models internationally. Now women everywhere aspire to be like someone who has remained the same size since she was fourteen.

compromise?

Imagine if this was possible; our society might avoid the ravages of bulimia and anorexia, as well as obesity, and thin would not be an issue.

But as it stands, I think we enjoy knowing that we have met, or are at least close to meeting what is socially attractive. It's gratifying, being a part of the socially physical superlative.

Currently, Hollywood and the media dictate these standards of slim. But what's funny is that men often go for curvy girls. The very women who rally together everyday, to stand against the institutions we might deem 'boys clubs', often conform to man's ideal for women. In our current societal situation, the thinner are always presumed to achieve a level of happiness above the average mark.

This dysfunctional way of thinking is fed into our subconscious in every movie and commercial we view. We're told, by an industry whose roots are planted in fiction, that once thin, life will be perfect. You will be happy, find love, attain a good job and be fulfilled.

Is there any truth to this? Probably a grain, but not enough to warrant our current obsession with weight. Why can't we find love at our current weight? Why does happiness depend on reaching a weight we can't pin-point? Yet people still subscribe to the weight-loss challenge, presumably because deep down beneath the Calvin Klein and layers of fat, we all simply want to be accepted. Conforming is always easier than swimming against the tide.

Ultimately, we must decide how thin beautiful is. You can decide to never be beautiful, and never be satisfied.

Or, you can decide to accept yourself as good enough. Beauty is a word often used to persuade people into believing in an image, or buying into a fad, and it's time to buy ourselves out of it.



KNIGHTLEY... Hollywood's darling has faced criticism regarding her low weight

wealthy and attractive, she still felt the pressure to be thinner than thin.

Drawing the fine line between beautiful and anorexic is the common dilemma, then. There is seemingly no winning, no simple weight loss solution to an anti-fat society.

But all is not lost for the voluptuous. Historically, being

was the furthest thing from thin.

Then the late 80's saw the advent of the supermodel. These tall, curvy women sauntered down the catwalk with hips and breasts, and for a short-lived epoch, they were considered the standard for female perfection. Sadly, their reign was short and they were swiftly replaced by the waifs of more modern times,

When we think about it, there have to be problems with a physical barometer that's unseen and not exact. Is it safe or healthy to hope, or even attempt, to reach a social physical goal we can't quite put our finger on? We aren't often comfortable with how we are physically put together, but why can't we work out a happy

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A week in July

ALEX KIDD remembers the week that shook London to the core

NINE days of triumph, anti-climax, surprise, horror and defiance. Nine days in which thousands of people's lives were to be shaped forever.

Nine days which resonated around London and beyond, with an intensity that will probably never be repeated.

That week in July. Whether you were a war veteran squinting up into the skies for a glimpse of the past, or an aspiring athlete walking home from school, you could sense the change. The huge metropolis of London, too diverse and disparate for any great sense of unity, felt so much smaller and engaged.

The G8 summit was due to start on the Wednesday; in the preceding week the publicity had really begun to accelerate. Joined by luminaries such as Kofi Annan and the ubiquitous Bob Geldof, Tony Blair had loosened his tie and spent the week appearing on MTV and T4, answering questions put forward by a panel of young people and celebrities. It was a populist move, and set the tone for a ten-day populist movement. Seeing these prominent figures so close to everyday people and listening mostly in agreement, seemed to reduce the theoretical distance of those in authority and raised the profile of everyone else, subsequently creating a mood of hope and optimism. Something was at last going to be done to end the world's perpetual problems, addressing issues of HIV/AIDS, Trade, Debt, Aid and Climate Change. It was a motion that I was certainly seduced by.

For months leading up to the Gleneagles summit, this rapidly growing mood for change and action was punctuated by an intense schedule of discussions in the media, supplemented by public rallies and gatherings culminating in the 'Make Poverty History' campaign's global 'White Band Day' on Friday July 1st and Live 8 on the Saturday.

While watching the 8 hour extravaganza on a big screen in Hyde Park, I never quite felt at ease with the conflict of interests which seemed to dog me all day. Why was I there? To take part in a pivotal moment in history and support the cause, or to see UB40? Why were there so few African artists, and why, after scoring over 20 number 1 singles did Mariah Carey choose to sing her distinctly average



DEVASTATED...This bus bomb was just one of a series of attacks on London transport

current release? I think we can all make our own conclusions as to why.

It is always spectacular to see so many people in one place, and participating in something that has gripped the entire country. However, perhaps the G8 summit taking place on our shores and led by the British leader, was, to an extent, a subconscious source of national pride; "Britain at its best" said Gordon Brown.

Nevertheless it was a success in so much that the event succeeded in raising awareness and moreover, in bringing so many people together, it had achieved its ultimate goal in making those in power aware of this acknowledgment. Make Poverty History had distributed six million wristbands, 200,000 people attended the Hyde Park concert and in Britain alone, ten million people watched it on television. Five days later the G8 leaders pledged to implement a programme of debt relief targeting Africa's poorest nations, as well as doubling aid to the continent by 25 billion dollars a year.

Through this mass demonstration of unity and show of support for a single cause, the momentum grew stronger. In London, the feeling was palpable. However, if the resulting

breakthrough at Gleneagles was a vindication of the efforts put in to pressurise the government and make our voices heard, we were sadly not going to hear much about it.

The show continued. A huge rally in Edinburgh coincided with the G8 Summit. Then on Wednesday 6th July, the focus shifted from an international consensus to a national one. Inadvertently making the trip into London that day and unaware of the timing of the announcement, I stepped onto the platform at Waterloo and a ripple of excited conversation swept through the station. By the time my ticket was expected at the gate I was greeted with the news that our capital city was to host the Olympic Games in 2012. The uninhibited way in which people were telling each other about our victory was out of step with the usual frosty and preoccupied behaviour of Londoners. It was very refreshing, not that I was thinking too much about the harmony within London at the time. I was just baffled by the fact that we had won. I am sure most people had prepared themselves for the cynical reaction in the likely event that we lost. For someone of my generation 'Victorious London' was a strange

but attractive concept.

Before we had a chance to revel in the success, the day London had feared arrived. I have never felt such a powerful pendulum of emotion swing so sharply from one end to the other. 52 people died. It was such cruel, cruel timing. The terrorists struck during a summit with the intention to empower and improve millions of people's lives around the world and when the capital had just won the right to hold an event which would change and fulfil so many young people's aspirations. A lot was made of the stoic and defiant attitude of the Londoners in the aftermath of the bombings but that was really how it was. I didn't sense any great Islamic backlash either. Without command, Londoners did not react to the rage of the terrorists with reciprocal rage; if anything it was evidence for the Olympic Association that we were the open and tolerant city that lured them into giving us the Olympics in Singapore the day before.

It was still an unnerving experience to travel on public transport in the following weeks. The top decks of buses were often empty apart from a cluster of people squashed towards the front, but when the train bumped around in the tube, occasionally creating loud sudden noises, it was dealt with by relieved smiles rather than panic.

Perhaps it is important to remember, however, that the young people who blew themselves up probably would not have done so had they been able to identify with the country they lived in. The tragedy of July 7th highlighted the need for us to address the underlying problems of our modern multi-ethnic society.

There is no doubt that the terrorists who inflicted violence upon London had timed the bombings to coincide with the G8 summit and perhaps, with almost deadly foresight, the Olympic victory. Despite this, on the Sunday I went to the V.E. day commemoration outside Buckingham Palace. Underneath all the pomp and circumstance, it was a poignant reminder that terrorism cannot undermine our achievements, and that we must continue the fight to protect not only our lives, but also our values.

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CELEBRATIONS...When London won the bid to hold the Olympics in 2012

Vivisection *Vs.* Violation?

PETER MERCER explains why animal testing is a necessary evil

TERROR-stricken primates impounded in barren steel cages. Dogs left incapacitated by toxicity experiments. Surgically-mutilated rodents with necrotic injuries.

These are images that fire our emotions. However, the reality of animal testing is somewhat less sensational than the tabloids proclaim.

The longstanding debate regarding animal experimentation revolves around two issues: the perceived benefits to humans vs. the moral and physical implications for the animals. Animal rights advocates assert that any kind of testing is a violation of the animals' inherent rights.

Yet the accusations of species-selectivity by

undercover footage - in research laboratories. However, most institutions abide by strictly enforced regulations, along with quarantine and inspection provisions.

It is also mandatory for test facilities to adhere

'The reality of animal testing is less sensational than the tabloids proclaim'

to the 'three R's': reduce the number of animals used, refine procedures and replace with non-animal tests wherever possible.

As a result, animal testing has halved in the last 30 years bringing the figure of tests that don't use animals up to 90%. As difficult as this

CAT BAILEY asks whether, in a civilised society, we can justify the forced suffering of animals

THE GOVERNMENT claims that Britain is at the forefront of research that will ultimately end animal experimentation.

With one of the strictest policies on vivisection in the world, then why are more tests on animals carried out in the UK than in any other EU country?

The number of animal tests in Britain is no longer falling, in one year it rose by 2.4%, an outwardly small percentage but it represents some 200,000 animals. The percentage of experiments carried out in Universities is now 40%, a 15% rise in one year.

If a pet is abused the perpetrator can expect to be punished because under the 1911 act it is illegal to 'cause any unnecessary suffering to an animal'. However, licensed experiments are deliberately excluded from the 1986 animal act.

Rather than being an offence, it is both legal and profitable to inflict immense cruelty behind the closed doors of a laboratory. The act claims to protect animals, what kind of protection is allowing them to be poisoned, mutilated, and then left to die? The only individuals it protects are vivisectionists.

On the 1st of December 2004, Tony Blair claimed that illegal campaigning is not justified because of Britain's strict regulatory system for animal experiments. However, the evidence of these regulations being enforced is scarce. The government hides behind the media's demonisation of animal rights activists and uses it as an excuse to do nothing.

Most people remember the hate campaign waged on the owners of Darley Oaks guinea pig farm (which I am not condoning), but not the guinea pigs found dead in their filthy cages. The government refused to investigate; just one of the many failures of the regulatory system.

Pro-vivisectionists claim that it is their aim to refine tests making them less cruel. Nevertheless, researchers refuse to introduce mental stimuli or bedding to cages because it will apparently compromise experiments. Yet teams of researchers found that 20 mice kept in enriched cages performed the same as those

kept in barren ones. Surely acute boredom and stress are more likely to compromise results. These animals are being used as models for humans but isolation and a complete lack of stimuli hardly seem the most accurate representation of a human's lifestyle.

Although many groups welcome the new 3 R's research centre, they are not happy with the way that its progress in reducing animal tests is recorded, or not as the case may be. Researchers claim that to use 'headline' figures would not present a true picture of the cuts

'Researchers must now question the relevance of animal tests in toxicology'

being made. However they cannot ignore the figures, without which we would have no proof of these cuts.

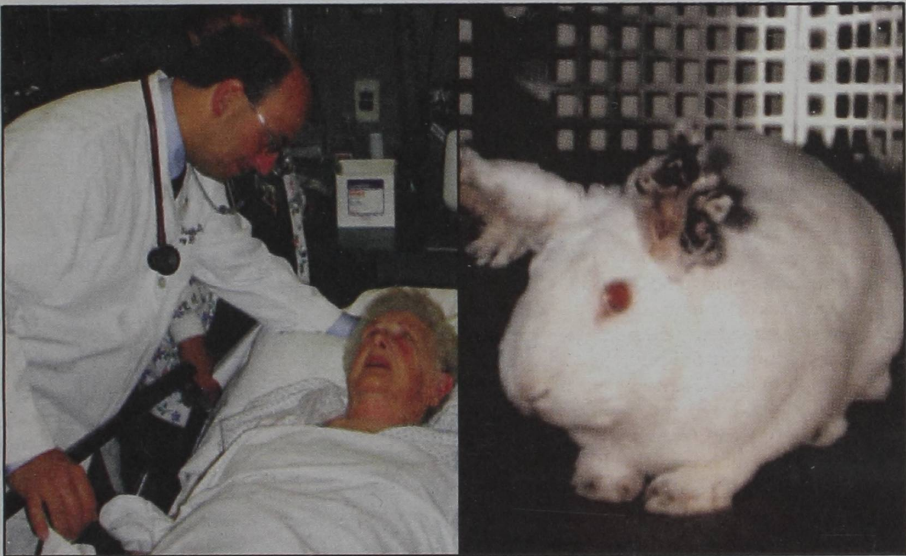
Furthermore, procedures that could reduce the number of genetic tests on animals have been developed but have not been implemented due to the restrictions of the government's toxicology remit.

Researchers must now question the relevance of animal tests in toxicology. Mice and rats are used as models for humans but their reactions to toxins can differ greatly. Rezulin was fatal to humans despite there being no indication from animal experiments. Conversely, Serevent was a success in humans despite negative test results.

This is true of many chemicals and the fact is that animal tests are often a gamble. Pharmagene labs are animal free; instead they use human data from tissues and computers and still produce safe drugs.

In order for the Government to support the 3Rs as much as it claims to it needs to cut its ties with the dominant vivisection industry and become an unbiased arbiter, judging on the merit of each side's argument rather than guarding its financial interests.

Refinement, Reduction and Replacement: nice dreams, but whilst the government does little to enforce them, that's what they'll remain.



MORAL DILEMMA... It's her or the rabbit

the anti-lobby neglect one minor detail: members of different species are different, and not superficially so either.

It would be naïve to claim that animals lack the ability to reciprocate emotionally (for example, some domesticated animals often return affection), but to go as far as to say that they exhibit moral agency is an unfounded assumption - they may simply be emulating the observed codes of human behaviour.

So, possessing as we do a distinct moral code, can we justify experimenting on animals? Unfortunately, the criteria for discrimination used by some animal rights campaigners is doubtful.

Ethical philosophers have suggested that testing should not take place if the animal has

'The NHS simply cannot operate without animal testing'

the capacity to suffer in some way, but how could this impossible condition be realised? Are we to draw a chart specifying those animals with highly developed central nervous systems and those without?

Most medical researchers would agree that cosmetic testing is an unnecessary procedure and thus it has been banned in the UK since 1998 (despite the apparent legal loop-holes). It is also true that there have been examples of abuse and mistreatment - as documented by

is to enforce, it is undoubtedly in the laboratories' interests to find alternative means of testing, not only for ethical reasons but also because they improve test accuracy and efficiency.

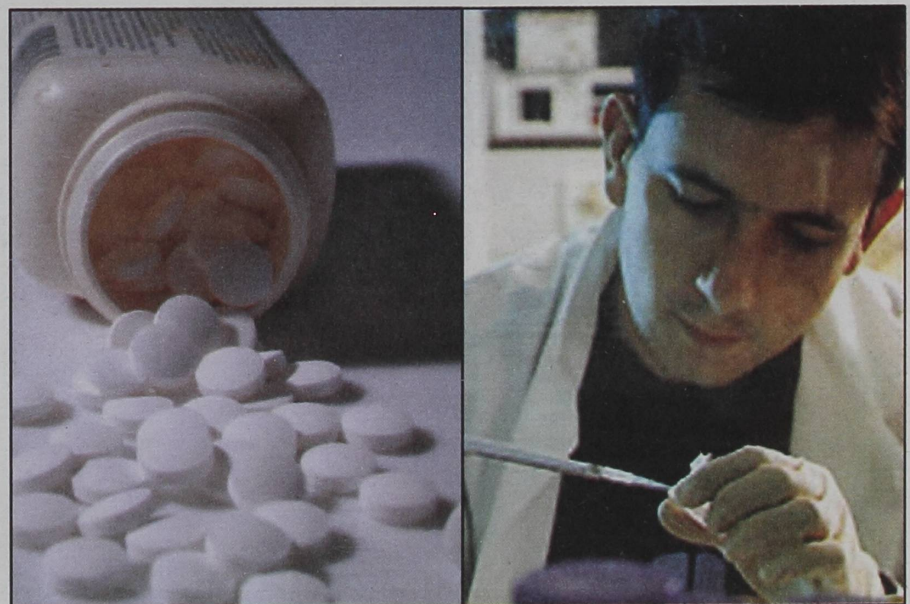
The alternatives to date are *in vitro* testing (reaction tests carried out outside of a living organism), use of databases containing results of past tests, and human 'clinical trial' tests.

But whilst being popular with animal rights extremists and students strapped for cash, human trials have limited volunteers; it would seem that despite the protesting, people aren't exactly queuing up outside the laboratory doors.

The facts must speak for themselves. Animal testing has enabled the development of vaccines (against polio, measles, mumps, rubella, rabies and TB), it has aided the practice of organ transplant and open-heart surgery, and it is determined - with increasingly promising results - in finding further antibiotics, HIV drugs and cancer treatments.

A point often omitted is that the NHS simply cannot operate without the research that animal testing allows. To quote Lord Warner, '[it] has contributed to almost every medical advance of the last century.'

So condemning animal testing would be the height of hypocrisy: many lament the suffering of the animals, but not so many would be willing to deny the medical advances testing has achieved.



CRUNCH TIME...The pharmaceutical industry relies on animal testing

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Is Africa the new England?

LEANNE O'CONNOR remembers teaching kids in Malawi, and considers Africa's identity crisis

E NGLAND. A land where cars only carry five people, as opposed to 25 with another seven on the roof.

A land of pothole-free roads and a McDonald's drive-through at every junction. A land where you aren't bombarded with an array of pineapples, dough balls, stolen macadamia nuts and every type of bottled fizzy drink you can think of every time you open the car window. Everything runs smoothly, is organised and predictable. These are just some things I noticed only on the drive back home from Heathrow, back to normality, back to the Western world, back from Africa.

Landing back at Heathrow was a similar experience to that of arriving in Lilongwe, Malawi: bizarre. And bizarre was to be the most commonly used word during my seven-month gap-stay in Africa. At that moment, and during those first few days, seven months seemed like seventy years, and the thought of coming home seemed so out of reach it was unimaginable. Nevertheless, the cliché rings true; time flew, and I now look back on Africa as one of the best experiences I've ever had.

I had signed up to work in Mayeya School so, completely inexperienced and culture-shocked, and having spent half an hour surrounded by quite literally hundreds of little faces staring as if I was as famous as Kylie Minogue, I was thrown into my classroom. 60 faces gazed across at their new muzungu (Chichewa for white person) teacher with utter excitement. "Good morning madam,

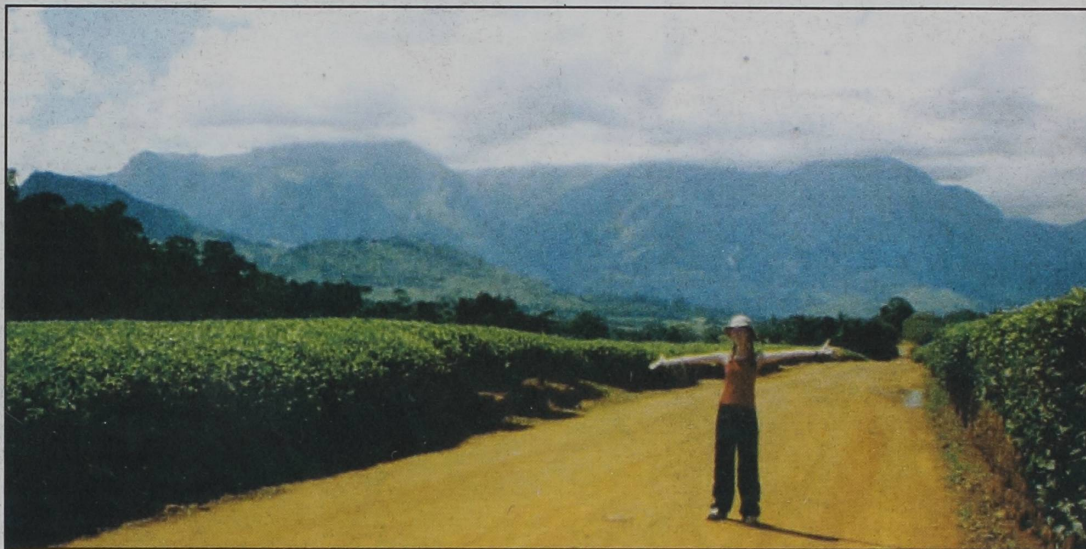
how are you?" they asked in their much rehearsed, broken English.

The age range in my class differed from 9 - 18 year olds. I taught Standard six (equivalent to top primary school level in Britain) English, Mathematics, Creative Arts and P.E for two terms. Learning names was particularly difficult, and some ridiculously hard to pronounce - much to the children's amusement. But they all had their own traits, and within days a sea of faces became a group of individuals.

There was Letisha, nine years old and the brightest student in my class; Vincent, who for some reason enjoyed splashing all the girls with paint during Art lessons, and Gift who made a habit of marking his own work and awarding himself with 'excellent work' smiley faces. There was Mphatso, who had a passion for Liverpool Football Club and spent the majority of his time sketching around the Stephen Gerrard pictures plastered all over his exercise books.

There was my team of six girls who came round to our house everyday for after school lessons and just to sit with us, goggling at photographs from home and fighting over which CD they could put on next from our collection - Macarena being a particular favourite.

My GAP partner, Anne-Marie, and myself lived in a house on the school grounds without running water or electricity along with five other members of staff and their families. Our house was basic but well-kept and certainly not the mud hut I had



THE BIG PICTURE... Leanne at the base of Mulanje mountain

envisaged - even the long drop toilet was bearable!

Both Mayeya School and the village are poorly-resourced, but both receive occasional funding from the local tea plantation, Lujeri Tea Estate. And we couldn't have lived in a more picturesque spot, right at the foot of the spectacular Mulanje Mountain and surrounded by acres and acres of Lujeri tea. We lived an hour's walk from the main road but if we were lucky could catch a tea trailer or tractor headed our way and hitch a ride on that - one of the many interesting modes of transport in Africa!

Adjusting to life within a small, African community was difficult but after a few short weeks it all became pretty normal to us.

The highs were so great they nearly, almost cancelled out the lows. At times I would have to remind myself that I was in Africa. I had to accept the often laid-back attitude to work and the regular absence in the classroom on the part of the teaching staff. Then again, I had to ask myself, 'would you turn up for work willingly having only been paid twice in six months by the government?'

There were the unavoidably harsh realities; illness, poverty, and, even closer to home, hunger; I had to remember not to eat my banana on

my front porch, as I didn't know when the kids walking by had last eaten. The teachers would tell me little snippets about the home situations the kids in my class lived in. Many were orphans, having to deal with hunger, abortion, witch doctors, parenting and divorce at the tender age of 15. And, of course, AIDS. On the face of it I saw happy children playing football at break time, teenage flirting and failure to hand work in, but their lives were often much bigger than that - something I admit that I was completely blind to at times.

So what will happen to these tragic communities, not just in Malawi, but in the whole of Africa? The population continues to multiply, AIDS continues to prevail and politicians persistently corrupt the country. Southern Africa is currently suffering terribly due to lack of rainfall this year and on coach trips through Zambia and Mozambique I saw acres of dried-up maize fields juxtaposed alongside such breathtaking sights as Victoria Falls. Since arriving home I have seen various news features on Malawi. Starvation is feared as food prices double and the whole country is struggling to deal with the failure of the second harvest. Sometimes I have to remind myself that I lived there, a place

where starvation and illness were directly on my doorstep.

Ultimately, the Africans want to help themselves, but are facing a terrible paradox. Money, aid and provisions, although indisputably vital, might have made Africa's fragile society too dependent on aid. Is this through fault of the Western world? It seems to me that if an African president decides he wants a new Mercedes, he just has to ask for another handout.

My real concern for Africa, however, is that its people, instead of aiming for a bettered Africa, aim for a new England. There is a want for electricity, computer rooms and sports stadiums, but the basic resources are lacking. Aid patches the holes, but doesn't deal with the elemental problems Africa faces. There is no making use of the land on the school grounds for vegetation and planting, and the farming industry is being destroyed by its more evolved competition.

As someone said to me whilst in Africa, 'You do realise that although you may be helping a small pocket of Africa, you can't change the overall picture.' But I couldn't disagree more. Not only have I grown in more ways than I could have imagined throughout this experience, I may well have changed one or two lives along the way.



VILLAGE LIFE... The families Leanne worked with

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STA TRAVEL

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ISSUE 29 · 24.10.05

THIS WEEK...
The Futureheads
Great Expectations
Wallace & Gromit
Jamie Davis



MUSICFILMTHEATREARTENTERTAINMENT

+

Pulp.Music

On the opening night of Carling Academy Newcastle, Pulp caught headliners *The Futureheads* during soundcheck to probe them about this momentous occasion and the forthcoming new album...

P: How's the new album going?

F: It's going very well. We've been writing the songs for quite a long time now, though we haven't had much time to rehearse them yet. We're starting recording on Friday. We've hired a farm house in Scarborough and are spending the next ten weeks recording there. We're looking at a mid-2006 release.

P: What will it sound like?

F: I think it's going to be more spacious. Our first album was made by angry teenagers - we're not angry teenagers any more. We feel that we have to develop and move in another direction. There are many aspects of our music that we can focus on and develop, and that will make it a lot easier. It's not like we don't have a clue where it's going to go.

P: You've been praised by critics for your originality, but haven't achieved quite as much mainstream success as more derivative bands like the Kaiser Chiefs. Is it difficult to strike a balance between being creative and selling records?

F: It depends if you want your music to be in the background of people's lives or if you want it to be something they're very passionate about. We want the latter. Background music and daytime radio are there to be ignored. Music is there to be listened to. It's like a pair of trousers, if you don't wear them they're just pieces of cloth, not a pair of trousers.

P: How difficult is it to get all the vocal harmonies in at the right time when playing live?

F: It's never been that much of a problem. We love singing. We're singing all the time. Everyone should do it! In the early days we used to go and write a song and play it instrumentally and then we'd start adding vocals to it. It allowed us to concentrate on trying to hold it and develop it properly and made us more confident with it.

P: The ever-charming Noel Gallagher was quoted this week as saying 'there are no young bands coming through, there has been nothing to challenge Oasis at all'. Any thoughts on this?

F: If he's talking culturally, I think he's probably right. But what happened with Oasis doesn't really happen that often. That was an era where, especially in the North-East, people were getting over quite a lot of poverty and misery. The 80s were basically ruined. The mid 90s got its strength back and I think because of the political and cultural things that were happening in that era, music became more important. Just like Bob Dylan and Jimi Hendrix at the time of the Vietnam war. Oasis came out of mass unemployment in Manchester. You have more passion in your music when there's political upheaval. As a culture I feel we're shutting off political events a lot more now.

P: Has Kate Bush expressed an opinion on your cover of 'Hounds of Love'?

No.

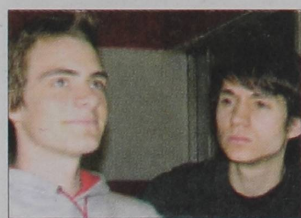
P: Crazy Frog or Coldplay?

Coldplay have produced top quality music. The Crazy Frog is just a marketing symbol and it completely devalues music.

Turns out that the Futureheads are good guys...but can they put on a decent show? Let's find out...

The floors are not yet sticky, the toilets have yet to be encrusted in vomit, even the doormen are all charm. The new Carling Academy is, for now, gleaming. Happily, no-one seems to mind that a band from Sunderland is opening it. Never ones to mess around unnecessarily, *The Futureheads* open with crowd-pleaser 'Decent Days and Nights' before racing through much of their debut album. Tradition dictates that the audience are divided in half for 'Hounds of Love' in a Ross-versus-Jaff sing-off. The verve of roof-raising 'A to B' is completely at odds with lyrics that tell of lethargy. Forthcoming single 'Areas' is a cracker, and the band close with a cover of Television Personalities' 'A Picture of Dorian Gray'. Through their harmonious vocals, tight sets, and erratic, energy charged songs *The Futureheads* have developed into one of the most impressive live acts around at the moment.

Adrian Bunting



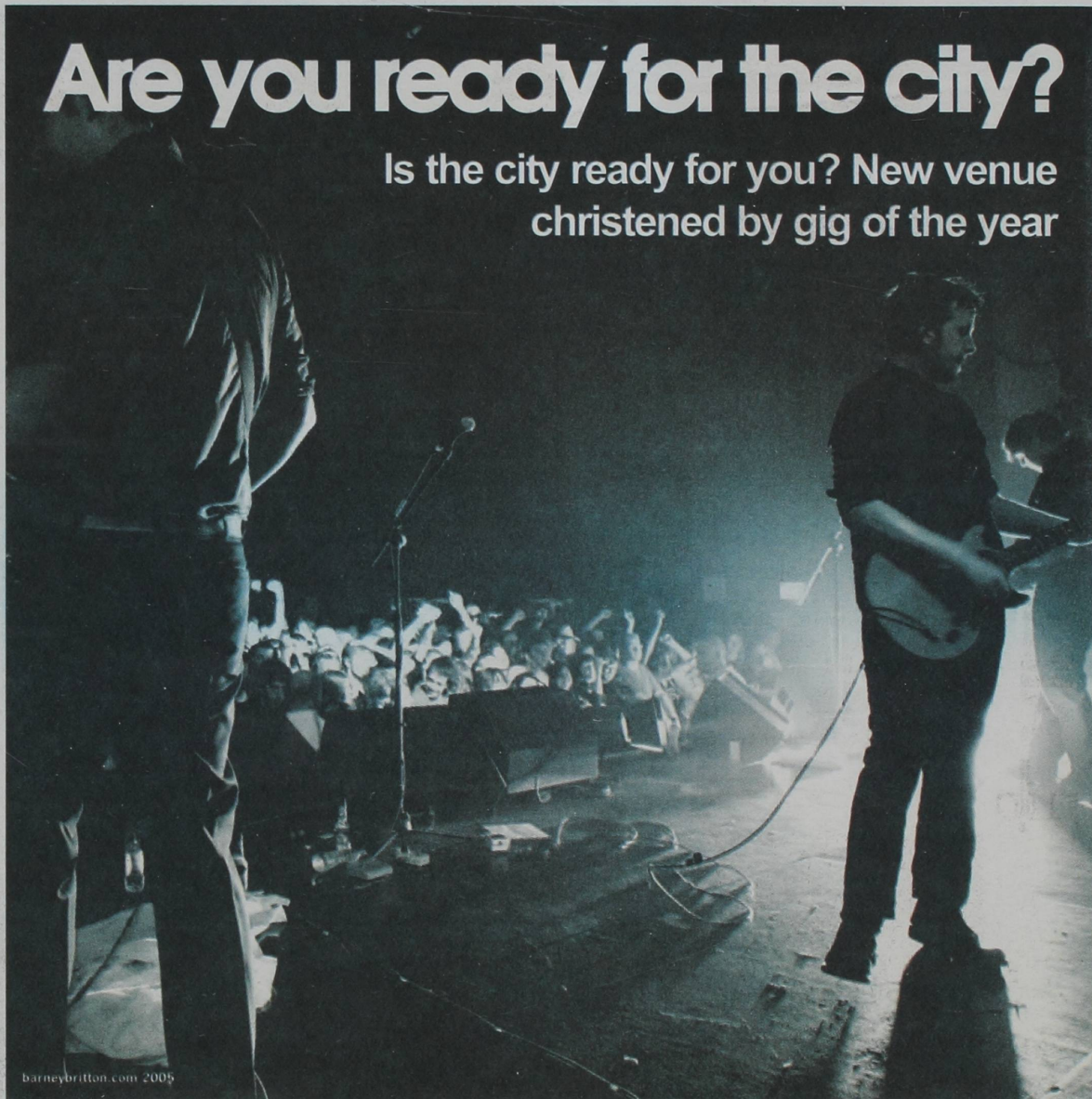
Your friendly Music Editors -

Roger Macklin & Matt Marlow

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Are you ready for the city?

Is the city ready for you? New venue christened by gig of the year



Prior to their mid-slot on the night's bill, Pulp spoke to Peter Brewis of *Field Music*; ex-drummer of *The Futureheads* and an integral figure in the rise of the Northeast music scene!

P: So Peter, general feelings about tonight?

PB: Good! It didn't really sink in until I saw a billboard outside the actual Academy. I thought I was just doing a gig with my mates but it's more really...

P: What impact do you think the new Academy will have on Newcastle?

PB: I'm just looking forward to there being more good bands playing up here really. Coming from Sunderland we don't have a proper music venue, so having a new one in Newcastle is good cos it's where I go to gigs.

P: What other local bands would you put on tonight's bill?

PB: Maximo Park, Amateur Dramatics, Golden Virgins... they're my favourite bands so I'd get them on!

P: Given all the north East bands you've been involved with in the past, is *Field Music* your main project now?

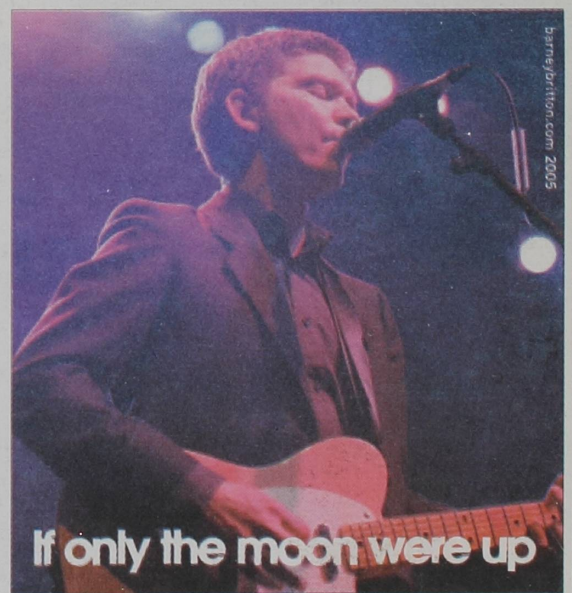
PB: Oh yeh, without a doubt. We're hoping to do it full-time next year; we've got a little tour coming up with Maximo Park. The bands me and Dave (Brewis) have been in before were a bit ad-hoc really.

P: Are you doing the promotional stuff at the moment?

PB: We're not going to do that much touring really, we want to get back into the studio for the next record and try and move forward with it; try and cram as much into 35 minutes as possible. But we want to get better live, do gigs with a string section as we're only 3-piece at the moment. Make things a bit bigger in terms of performance.

P: It'll be interesting to see how you bring the album across live...

PB: It's just louder (laughs) and we haven't got as many instruments so we play everything a bit faster and more aggressive, it's not as sweet and acoustic as the album; it's electric guitar, keyboards and drums. So yeah, it's louder which is great!

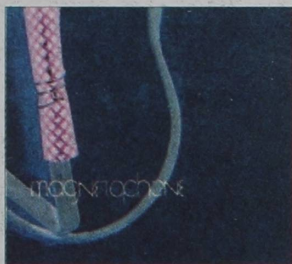


Field Music venture onstage as 'Good Vibrations' fades out on the venue speakers; apt given their sweeter than sweet Beach Boys-style harmonies and pop-genius arrangements. Despite the stripped-back live setup, the instrumental layers of the Sunderland trio's recorded work don't seem too lost in the transition. As promised, album favourites such as 'Got To Get The Nerve' are delivered faster and punchier; but without losing their perfect alt-pop spark. They play with beaming smiles throughout which the crowd can't help but return. Hopefully tonight earned them the wider audience they so deserve.

Matt Marlow

Pulp.Music

Albums



Album of the Week

Magnetophone
The Man Who Ate The Man

This is original music. It's not for everyone. It's not for many. It's a bleeped-out masterpiece of synth weirdness, cd-skip technology, gunshots, and psycho-candy lyrics lifted out of cereal boxes and 60's hippie bullshit. And it's communicated by whales in the North sea. Perfect for fans of Portishead, Brian Eno, Sigur Ros, and Boards of Canada. It's got a knockout punch like Tyson, but lasts for 40 minutes. Consider it the Zappa/Beefheart baby of the digital age, but infinitely more listenable. The experimental freaks are back and they're breathtaking with a capital 'B'.

Romain Chenet ★★★★★



Gemma Hayes
The Roads Don't Love You

Following on from her Mercury nominated album 'Night On My Side', Gemma Hayes returns with an upbeat album full of well written, catchy tunes. 'Two Step' opens the album, and sets a precedent for the rest of the cd - infectious sing-a-long songs, with 'Something In My Way' and the first single 'Happy Sad' being highlights. The haunting piano chords on 'Helen' give the song a folk feel; in contrast, the acoustic 'Easy On The Eye' shows off Gemma's guitar skills. All in all, this is a great album which showcases Gemma's singer-songwriter skills brilliantly.

Rosie Duffield

★★★★★



Eurythmics
Ultimate Collection

For Eurythmics fans this collection is no big improvement over their previous 7 greatest hits albums, although Ultimate Collection is more complete than some earlier attempts and has less tracks from 1999's lacklustre Peace. The main draw here is the new song 'I've Got A Life' recorded when the band reformed this year. Lennox's voice has matured over the years and sounds better than ever, while the song itself has a rich even choral sound; although the lyrics are a disappointment. One for completists and the un-initiated only.

Adam Halls

★★★★★



El Presidente
El Presidente

The Glasgow rock/funk outfit achieve an originality most bands desire of their debut album, and this will serve to get them noticed. Yet their sound seems to be repetitive and its novelty doesn't last on further listens. This is not to say that it is a bad album, it's rather quite good - but not outstanding. The singles on the LP do stand out, and 'without you' deserves special attention, although I'm unsure about '100mph'. There is talent in *El Presidente*, and their debut album displays. But I am left to think the album lacks an edge that it will separate it from the rest.

Mark Edward

★★★★★

Jamie Cullum - *Catching Tales*

When thousands of kittens are being drowned every year by Welsh farmers it's hard to care about the new album by coffee table king *Jamie Cullum*.

But back in the strange confines of Sleaford town hall in 2003 this little scamp was pretty amazing - hell, I even led the damn standing ovation. But on record he has honed the art of boring us all to tears. Gosh it's confusing. Why? Why doesn't anything in life make sense?

Roger Mackin

★★★★★

The Fiery Furnaces - *Rehearsing My Choir*

The latest offering from this brother-sister duo could loosely be described as a concept album. The concept being to unleash their grandmother, Olga Sarantos. Each of the eleven tracks features Granny Sarantos recalling an incident from her past. And the result? A bemusing combination of abstract lyrics spoken by a voice reminiscent of a certain Sesame Street character over a schizophrenic mish-mash of organ, synth, piano and acoustic guitar with the odd sound effect added for good measure. Musical genius? Perhaps not. A crappy concept? Bingo.

Holly Poynton

★★★★★

Live



The Subways @ Newcastle Uni

The air drips with anticipation as the *Subways* take to the stage tonight. The audience is packed so tightly you hardly dare move. Crowd surfing is already causing commotion as drummer Josh Morgan begins a thundering attack on his skins. A firing strike of guitars and the music erupts leaving us in no doubt that the band is here to do business. An avalanche of dirty, explosive riffs follows. Lead singer Billy Lunn with sweat pouring from his shirt howls his observations on teenage life while Charlotte Cooper, strap slung over her shoulder with such attitude rips into Kim Deal like bass carnage. Guitar freak outs and frantic crossing vocals inject more and more energy creating a hollering vibrancy demonstrating that this band very much has it's finger on the pulse of British rock n roll.

Angela Moulding



BRMC @ Northumbria Uni

The year is 1969. The venue San Quentin Jail, California. The lights go out, the crowd hush. From the dry ice a bulky man appears, complete with the most slicked back hair you've ever seen. And the crowd hush... well, if you squint a little. Tonight *BRMC* start with just a solitary guitar and a Johnny Cash/super-retro style voice (and the mega slicked-back 'do). It's all 50s roots rock n roll, with a bit of delta blues whanged in the mega-mix too. However, too much of tonight seemed to rely on exactly this kind of stripped-back theme, and that kind of grates after a while. Live shows need some kind of energy and vibrancy, which *BRMC* definitely have, but also an X-factor. Or even a Y factor, or...well some kind of factor is needed to make any gig extra special, and it was not quite here tonight.

Ed McCabe

★★★★★



The Paddingtons @ Newc Uni

The Paddingtons swaggered on stage, the lead singer Tom spitting water onto the crowd and receiving beer back as a reply; then a condom, a lighter, and more beer. The boundary between band and fans became increasingly blurred, with frequent stage invasions and repeated appearances of a drunken man on stage, visibly overwhelmed at his own tremendous sense of wit.

Once you get past the slightly too self-conscious and studied 70s punk rock dress sense and sneering attitude, *The Paddingtons* are a really good, passionate live band. The gig was energetic, vibrant and certainly memorable, with a power cut (met with childlike glee by all) adding to the chaotic rock atmosphere.

Anna Coatman

★★★★★

Singles



Single of the Week
Fightstar
Grand Unification (Part 1)

Whilst *Fightstar* aren't showing any sign of deviating from their angsty loud-quiet-loud formula, they still deserve to be given a chance. Charlie Simpson sounds like a man hellbent on proving himself as more than 'him out of *Busted*', and there's more enjoyment to be found in *Fightstar*'s bushy eyebrows than in any number of other similar bands.

Dave Carr

★★★★★

Tom Vek - *Nothing But Green Lights*

Tom Vek looks like just another of those long-haired vintage-jacket types that seem to be sprawling out of London at the moment, but his single sounds like Ian Brown would if he used to be in Bloc Party, which is no bad thing. A pity about the lack of chorus.

Theo Johnson

★★★★★

Buck 65 - *Kennedy Killed The Hat*

Coming in at just over two minutes, 'Kennedy Killed The Hat' is a romp of sleazy electro guitar and techno meets hip-hop beats. *Buck 65*'s lyrics are humorously sexed-up and sordid at the same time. You feel dirty just listening to it.

Rich Fawcett

★★★★★

Electrelane - *I Want To Be The President*

Funky, techno re-release from Brighton's feminist four-piece. With Kraftwerk-esque keyboards and haunting (yet slightly droning) vocals this is a great track to dance along to either alone or in public and is a wonderful reminder (or introduction) of what *Electrelane* do best; evocative sound-scapes and jazzy synth sounds.

Charlotte Otter

★★★★★

The Modern - *Jane Falls Down*

The Modern present a glistening, gleaming electrical foray into synth glam - Madonna fused with Rammstein and Erasure, intended to grab as many tragic kids/electro-goths/cyberpunks as possible. A polished and soulless debut single that will doubtless do well, but only because we haven't yet run out of overdraft.

John Prudhoe

★★★★★

U2 - *All Because Of You*

Island Records and U2 have produced a 'watery' single that opens with an arbitrary guitar thrash and really, at best, plateaus from there. Highlights include the lines, 'I'm not broke but you can see the cracks,' and 'I like the sound of my own voice' in which Bono manages to write his own review I'm afraid.

Kristan Caryl

★★★★★

Pulp.Music



Supergrass get hideously lost on the Road To Rouen and end up in Newcastle. Carnage ensues...

They were young! They were free! They had teeth...etcetera.

But over a decade on, *Supergrass* have finally grown up. Their fifth album, *Road To Rouen*, introduces us to a more mature sound and is an indelible sign that they have moved far from the 'cheeky' days of *I Should Coco*.

Eleven years in the business and Gaz, Danny, Mick and Rob are still caught by the buzz. "We try to make the tours different by trying new things", explains Danny; "it keeps it exciting that way". Indeed, this autumn, the 'Grass dabbled with an acoustic sound, using suitcases and hat-boxes as drums. This is just one step in the move away from their original image.

Typically dubbed as those 'pesky' pop rockers, Gaz admits that there are still moments when they are ridiculous: "Danny and I still tend to do 'funny' things in interviews. I guess it's sort of an embarrassment thing". Yet it is an image that they have been trying to shake off for some time; according to Danny, since the second album. "But we didn't quite pull it off".

So, what was it that finally pushed the guys into their new sound? "With doing the 10-year 'best of' last year", says Gaz, "we could see what we'd done so far, but also see the gaps. We hadn't made a record with strong intent in one direction, which is what we tried to achieve with *Road To Rouen*".

"But it was natural", Danny argues. "It's a point in life. The first albums just reflected the excitement of it all".

Despite this, the new album received mixed reviews; some praising the musical shift, others condemning it. "It's not what was expected of us, but that's a good thing. It's about moving on...every record is a reaction to the last". Which, in the world of *Supergrass*, means experimentation. Danny explains, "we like our 'oldie' stuff. We definitely experimented with that whole weird Floyd sound". Indeed, *Road To Rouen* employs some memorable instruments, including a zither, and a 'dampened' acoustic guitar to imitate a ukulele.

And it doesn't end there. All this was achieved in a custom-built studio in Normandy. "The idea was to have somewhere we could just write, chill out and drink wine. It was all very organic - we didn't know how it was going to sound".

Well, good, apparently. The tour is, so far, going very well. Physically, the guys are exhausted. "My voice is f**ked", says Gaz. "The next day is always hard, but the gigs are a buzz and then you get to do it all over again". And it's certainly going down a storm: "The crowds have been mental - it's great that the new stuff has been received so well".

So can we expect more from *Supergrass* anytime soon? We've heard *Tales Of Endurance*, Parts 4, 5, and 6; so what about parts 1, 2, and 3? "They'll be along in 15 years or so", laughs Gaz, "like something out of a *Star Wars* trilogy". They hope so, and so do we.

Hannah Boylin

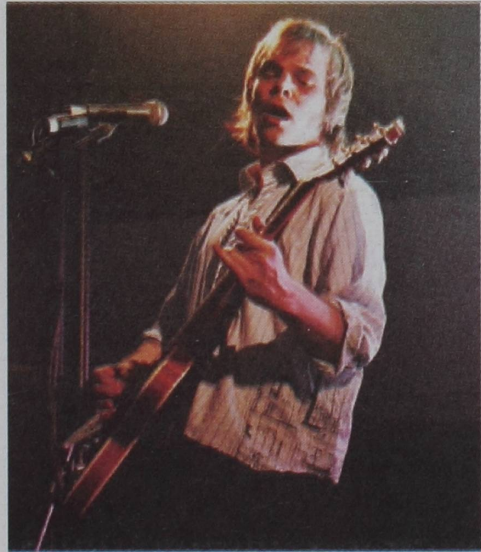
Supergrass @ Carling Academy - 17/10/05

Support on the night came from Son of Dave. His bluesy style was "different" but the man's definitely a bit of a legend! I'm not really a follower of *Supergrass* so there were quite a few songs I didn't recognise.

That didn't matter though - the music was still quality. Slightly disappointed the band didn't play my two favourites: 'Alright' and 'Seen the Light' but not going to diss the boys for that. The winning track for me was 'Moving'. When the chorus kicked in everyone just went mad! Another definite crowd-pleaser was 'Pumping On Your Stereo' which the band played in their encore. Venue-wise I was well impressed with the Carling Academy.

My only criticism is the £2.85 I had to pay for a pint! But, all in all it was a top class night. I would definitely put *Supergrass* on your list of must-see live acts.

Sarah Douglas



Kubichek! @ Carling Academy Opening Night

It would have been easy to dismiss Kubichek! as just another support band, but the sold-out Carling Academy audience realised they were watching something special, a band that could easily be the headliners.

Opening with *Nightjoy*, *Kubichek!* quickly reverted to furious drumming and infectious guitar melodies with the likes of 'Stutter' and closing with 'Hometown Strategies', also treating the fans to a new song in the process. It seemed like *Kubichek!* were feeding off the fans' energy, and with performances like that it will be sooner rather than later that they will be headlining the Carling Academy. Newcastle University, you have been warned!

Paul Appleby

Pulp: What were your feelings about the gig last night?

Kubichek!: When we first walked into the venue with our equipment we were all canny gob-smacked! It's a lovely venue, and absolutely huge - Field Music were soundchecking at the time and everyone just seemed to have this cheeky grin on their faces like a sort of 'how good is this going to be!?' The atmosphere in the gig was like that of a big party of friends, I spent all night trying to catch up with people who I hadn't seen in ages whilst dancing my legs off to The Futureheads. We missed all of Field Music as we were thrown out onto the street with our equipment after we played. Gutted!

What other local bands would you have put on? The 3 bands last night were quite different but seemed to fit together quite well, don't you think?

If we were in that sort of situation ourselves where we had to pick our supports, I'm not sure who we'd pick. We'd definitely pick DARTZ!, and probably We Start Fires, Field Music, Lachrymose One, Ever Since The Lake Caught Fire, The Motorettes, The Catweasels.

We saw you in the crowd after your set, how did you find the crowd reaction?

The crowd for The Futureheads was brilliant, me and my mates



went completely mental throughout. I'm not going to play it all cool when I'm watching one of my favourite bands play a set which was so good - Carnival Kids was immense!

How were things behind the scenes? (The XFM DJ said there was a swimming pool and sauna, we presumed he was joking)

We didn't spend too much time there and neither did the other bands - why would you when you could be out front enjoying the atmosphere? It would be stupid! Before the gig, my mates were asking if I'd just be staying backstage after we played, I was like "Are you mental?!"

Finally, a lot of people round here think that Kubichek! are mint. How long before the whole country feels this way?

Well obviously everyone's opinions on music differ, but I suppose if we keep playing national shows and get more exposure through the press then it can definitely happen. We'll see, we're just enjoying meeting loads of ace bands and getting new friends all over the country whilst getting better as band.

This week's Pulp Music was brought to you by the number 21 and the words 'Carling', 'Academy' and 'bumrush'. We hope you like us, otherwise we'll cry. Later! pulp.music@ncl.ac.uk

Pulp.Film

Noir is the new chic...

Directors are taking a pitch black approach to film-making as of late; the Hollywood light is gradually being dimmed to a subtle hue that favours jagged edges and an ominous afterglow.

It seems we, as viewers, have finally tired of the SFX-laden paraphernalia offered in its droves over the last few years. While Christopher Nolan's *Batman Begins* made Burton's world look like a Disney sketch, *Sin City* defied anyone who claims they find black-and-white films 'boring', dragging us by the collar through an amoral world of filth and impurity.

Even our beloved sources of happiness are being transformed into a nightmarish vision of burning toys (*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*) and severed limbs (*Revenge of the Sith*). The question therefore conjured up is - why? Our desire for a gritty portrayal has seemingly never been greater. Has the saccharine taste of the average Hollywood flick perhaps worn off given its implausibility in such a troubled world?

With Daniel Craig in place for the new Bond outing *Casino Royale*, 007 will also be following in Hollywood's path into the dark annals of the psyche. Director Martin Campbell promises this prequel to bring Bond back to basics, with *Casino Royale* being a darker, more violent and inward looking jaunt than ever before. Pretty heavy for a Bond film? Only time will tell, but suffice to say that in such a troubled contemporary climate, our beloved secret agent will never be the same again.

BA

What's your take? Drop us a line at courierfilms@yahoo.co.uk

Wallace and Gromit: Curse of the Were Rabbit

Dir. Nick Park / Steve Box

Wallace and Gromit have made it to the big screen at last, this time on a hare-raising adventure in pursuit of a giant rabbit.

The movie certainly does not disappoint, with stars such as Helena Bonham Carter and Peter Kay lending their voices to the film. The humorous storyline makes the film run smoothly and in true *Wallace and Gromit* style the 'bun vac' and 'mind manipulation-o-matic' add to their extensive range of ingenious inventions.

Pulp found it difficult to fault the animation of this film; Nick Park and his team have certainly done themselves proud. There have been no attempt to glam up the animation style which is definitely a bonus, with every

model perfect down to the last detail. The scenes all fit together nicely and the character expressions make everything ten times funnier. As well as the obvious gags there are plenty of subtleties going on in the background of the film that give you plenty to watch.

Where a lengthy film might have dragged, Aardman and Dreamworks have done a cracking job to make sure *Wallace and Gromit* keeps audiences laughing for the full 94 minutes. Fans of the previous three animations will recognise the familiar plot style but there are plenty of new additions to the animated cast. One to watch out for is a particularly adorable rabbit who bears a striking resemblance to one half of the famous pair, with familiar catchphrases and a slightly over-sized tank top!

Despite being a U-rated film there is really no reason why any student would not enjoy the film, dotted with equally as many jokes aimed at adults. *Wallace and Gromit: Curse of the Were-Rabbit* has to be one of the top animations of the year. If you go to the cinema this month - go and see this.

Claire Purcell



Lord of War

Dir. Andrew Niccol

Nicholas Cage returns with another stab at movie magic in *Lord of War*.

Chronicling the life of Uri Orlov from his humble immigrant origins to his development

into a morally-challenged, multi-millionaire gunrunner, the film gets right into its mission of sorting out the pros and cons of selling weapons to absolutely anyone who wants to buy them.

Pretty-boy Jared Leto plays the druggy brother with commendable effort yet fails to grip on as an important character.

Indeed, *Lord of War* is essentially a one-man show, which may or may not be a good thing

depending on the viewer's interest in seeing Cage take them on a tour of the chaos that was 1990s planet Earth. The scenes set in West Africa stand out for their rawness, and are impressive in showing just how comfortable our 'safe European home' really is. However, the film suffers from an identity crisis since it doesn't seem to be able to decide on what it wants to be.

Lord of War has elements of an action thriller, relationship drama, a few jokes thrown in for good measure, and a lot in between. Unfortunately, it doesn't manage to do any of them particularly well, even though it is by no means a bad movie. *Pulp's* main gripe was *Lord of War's* failure to delve into the psychology of Uri Orlov's mind despite its attempts to be more of a 'thinking man's' popcorn flick. It's worth watching but fails to stamp its initials on your forehead.

Romain Chenet



Rock School

Dir. Don Argott

At first glance, *Rock School* has it all: rock music for the boys, cute kiddies for the girls and a documentary to satisfy the art-house film lover.

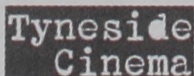
However, after the first pangs of broodiness watching the loveable Tucker twins and the open-mouthed awe generated by CJ's guitar solos, the film begins to sour.

It is the methods of Paul Green, *Rock School's* founder and teacher, that makes the film both painful and fascinating to watch. With juicy quotes along the lines of 'If you don't get this chord, I will kill your parents and bathe in their blood', and 'Can't you just tell she's a future heroin addict?', America's fundamentalist right must have had a field day after this one came out.

Whilst it's easy to be appalled by Green's style of teaching which involves taunting, mocking and reducing them to tears, the children and teenagers all seem to have genuine respect and admiration; something which seems to have nearly disappeared from the education system today. The star of the film is undoubtedly Will O'Connor, a suicidal teenager plagued by physical and mental problems. Even the most indifferent will feel their heart strings flutter in sympathy as he is yet again chastised by Green, labelled the 'Eeyore' of the group and eventually thrown out of *Rock School*.

Rock School is a film that makes you think, smile and cringe in equal measure, but *Pulp* walked away from the cinema feeling slightly disconcerted and perplexed.

Eloise Thomas



The Sun

Dir. Aleksandr Sokurov

In this film about the last days of Japanese resistance in the Second World War, director Aleksandr Sokurov details the life of seclusion and denial of Emperor Shouwa-Tennou Hirohito, played wonderfully by Issei Ogata.

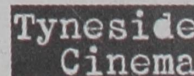
This character study moves slowly, focusing on the mundane tasks of everyday life. However, when juxtaposed with the destruction - depicted in a fantastic, surrealistic nightmare of a vision - going on outside the secluded imperial palace, these tasks betray a half-man, half-god (so the Japanese believe) beginning to accept the fate that is rapidly approaching his beloved shores, in the form of the United States military and their conquering hero, General Douglas MacArthur.

The film's focus rarely moves beyond the

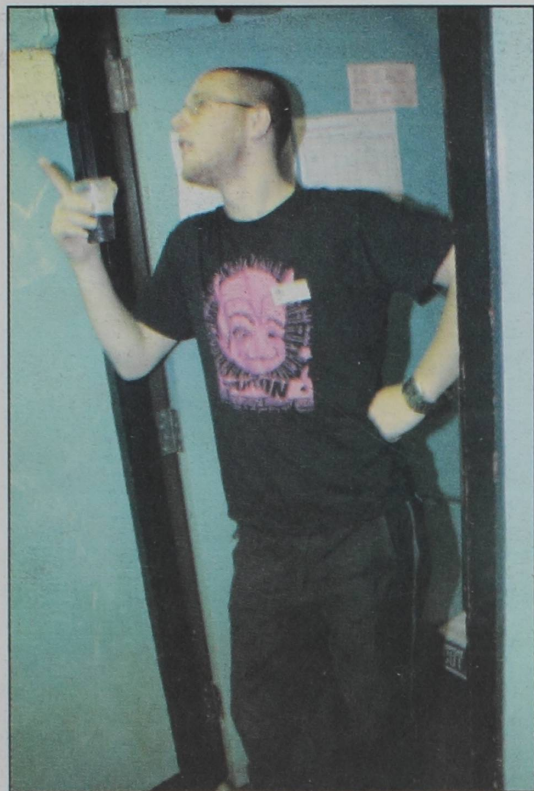
walls of the palace. When it does move outside we see a transformed man, diminutive and mocked by the U.S. soldiers who do not understand or care about his position. These moments outside show a man eager to experience a different life, as revealed in a quietly stirring scene where Hirohito and MacArthur share a cigar, and when he briefly dances to music while he thinks no one is watching.

Whilst *Pulp* admits this cannot be described as an 'exciting' film, it certainly will please anyone interested in dark, challenging historical works. And who among us is not interested in that? Hardly an apology for Hirohito, *The Sun* shows a man at the end of his glory, reluctantly realising that he brought defeat upon himself and his country.

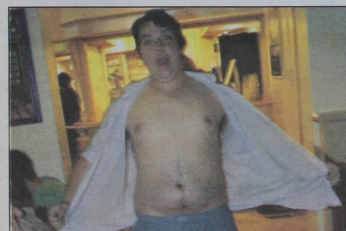
Jeremy Fisher



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Pulp.Film

Domino

Dir. Tony Scott

Bounty-hunters Ed (Rourke), Choco (Ramirez) and Domino (Knightley) are at the top of their game, with a promising TV reality show in the works and a reputation for taking care of business.

However, they are conned into doing an inside job and are catapulted to the centre of a confusing disarray of FBI investigations, mob revenge plots and family dilemmas.

Fast-paced and chaotic from the onset, a greater understanding fails to evolve as

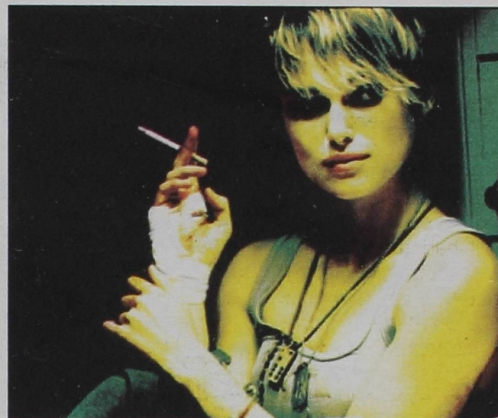
Domino progresses. Fancy camera-work and an exhaustive array of colour filtrations provide the film with the very definite Tony Scott feel. However, in this case he seems to have got a bit carried away. The plot becomes needlessly complicated, with abrupt and fleeting flashbacks melding into the gruesome mutilations and pointless violence of the present-day bounty-hunting debacle.

Knightley does her best to transform into a tough, hard-hitting, gun-toting kinda gal and for the most part she is fairly believable. When placed alongside Rourke, Walken and Ramirez, she doesn't always quite fit the bill, but all praise to her for trying a role other than the sweet, syrupy and often corseted

romantic leads she usually plays.

In short, *Domino* is an action film that doesn't follow the typical formula; religious guidance comes from a somewhat stoned-out Tom Waits, childhood memories are of goldfish and punch-ups on the catwalk, and the amusing one-liners scattered throughout mean you won't get what you expected when walking in. The odds are you will either love or hate this film.

Jenny Carrick



dvdreviews

Jim Jarmusch Box Set: Night on Earth / Down by Law

Out Now - RRP £24.99

A wonderful double bill, featuring two of Jarmusch's finest works.

Down By Law stars Tom Waits as an out-of-luck DJ who ends up in prison with a small-time pimp (John Lurie) and an Italian tourist (Roberto Benigni). The film is the alternative *Great Escape*, highly entertaining and as cool as your freezer.

Night on Earth is an eclectic collection of five stories in five cabs around the world. Featuring Gena Rowlands and Winona Ryder, the show is stolen yet again by Benigni as the taxi driver with a few sinister secrets.

These are two wonderfully hilarious films. Sadly there are no extras, but if you're a fan of films such as *Dead Man* and *Coffee & Cigarettes*, check this out.

Philip Walker

Films: ★★★★★
Extras: ★★★★★

Pulp Film takes a look at some of the latest discs to hit the shelves

CSI: Grave Danger

Out Now - RRP £15.99

This two part special of CSI, written and directed by Quentin Tarantino, is a real eye opener, and yet, ironically, also quite a yawn-fest.

Fuelled by the usual CSI tricks of the trade - graphic shots and 'clever' storylines - *Grave Danger* is an innovative episode, but fundamentally unoriginal.

In reflection, there are a few too many Tarantino trademarks. We see that it is particularly easy for any fan to identify Tarantino's work, with the reappearance of the coffin idea being very similar to that of his previous work - *Kill Bill Vol.2*, anyone?

Despite Tarantino's repetitive directing skills, *Grave Danger* is a commendable fifth season finale, culminating with an ending that screams oohs and 'aahs'. With exciting sequences, nail-biting and teeth-clenching scenes, CSI fans are given a satisfying climax. We await the next series!

Jenny Butler

Film: ★★★★★
Extras: ★★★★★

Escape from New York: SE

Out Now - RRP £19.99

The cheese-lords have deemed this cult classic worthy of a special edition release, perfect for those who can't get enough of eye-patched Kurt Russell blowing up random baddies and causing general havoc in the industrial wasteland that is supposed to be New York.

While we've always known that this movie is not really all that good, considering some of the gloom that gets passed off as cinema

nowadays, this might be the time to rev up the Cadillac and bask in some camp Yankee vibes. That is, if you subscribe to the whole 'so bad it's funny' ethos. However, that said, who can resist seeing Isaac Hayes as a gun-toting black warlord with a seemingly incurable sweat disorder? Rent it if you're planning to drink that night, but don't bother buying it unless your income and IQ don't match.

Romain Chenet

Film: ★★★★★
Extras: ★★★★★

Alone in the Dark

Out Now - RRP £15.99

With an Uwe Boll film the question you should ask yourself - isn't 'is this a good movie' but 'is this movie so mind bogglingly atrocious that I can laugh at it with my mates whilst drunk?'

Alone in the Dark isn't, but it nearly gets there. For a start it features some of the most appalling dialogue *Pulp* has ever heard, especially the techno-babble, 'photon-accelerated-luminescent paint bullet' being a standout. The acting would be considered amateurish in a high-school play, especially Jara Reid who manages to make even normal

phrases sound bafflingly stupid.

But mostly it's just boring and confusing, very confusing, nothing in this film makes any sense; experimental surrealist cinema has more coherent plots. The extras offer yet more hilarity, an incredibly smug making of feature - someone describes the film as scary, the scariest thing about this trash is the realisation that someone paid Uwe Boll to make it - and a few heavy metal videos. *Pulp's* recommendation, avoid at all costs.

Adam Halls

Film: ★★★★★
Extras: ★★★★★

Stunning Cult Transformers: The Movie (1986)

The world is divided into those who have seen *Transformers: The Movie* and those who are going to see it.

Actually, if you're reading this and haven't seen it, then why not? It's been out for nearly twenty years. Don't panic, however: stop, hunt down a copy, watch it and then come back. Done? Good. Now you should understand why it's gathered the cult following it has, as well everyone being unable to stop humming along to all its kick-ass tunes.

From the beginning you know it's going to be good. In the first half-hour alone we

the god-like Unicron in his final screen outing. Then there's the characters themselves, each one with all their own irresistible charms; Hotrod, Starscream, Ultra Magnus, the list just goes on and on. In fact, one way to kick off an unending argument with any fan is to ask which Transformer is the best? But then again, we all know what the answer is to that: 'Me Grimlock, kick butt!'

There's just too many memorable moments to forget, ranging from Spike's unexpected expletive, the Dinobots' literal butt-kicking of Unicron, and the undeniably useful universal greeting 'Bah weep granah weep ninni bong'. And, to top it all off, there's the aforementioned soundtrack with enough old-school rock sounds to have you reaching for your air-guitar and singing along to such awesome songs as The Touch and the all improved, rock-spruced, riff-extended Transformers theme tune.

But what truly sets *Transformers: The Movie* aside as a cult classic is that, unlike a lot of other fondly-remembered childhood favourites, it actually stands the test of time. It is as good now as you tenderly remember it was, if not better. Even with the new live-action adaptation slated for a 2007 release, and with rumours of Spielberg behind the wheel, the original *Transformers: The Movie* will always have a place in the hearts of its fans.

So, until all are one, remember; you got the touch!
Simon Cavanagh

Transformers: The Movie is available to rent or buy for £15.99



witness the destruction - or should that be mastication? - of an entire planet, the death of Optimus Prime, and the rebirth of Megatron as Galvatron. And even after that it continues to get better, simply because there are just countless great things about it.

For a start there's the amazing, and notably surprising, cast, featuring the likes of Leonard Nimoy as the megalomaniacal Galvatron, Eric Idle as the high-indecipherable Wreck-Gar, and film legend Orson Welles fittingly voicing

Win Buffy and Angel box sets!

Pulp has a set of *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* and *Angel* Series 1 and 2 to give away! To win answer this question to courierfilms@yahoo.co.uk, giving your name and mobile number.

Q: Which series of *Buffy* did *Angel* leave

Sunnydale to star in his own show?

Buffy The Vampire Slayer and *Angel* Seasons 1 and 2 are available to buy now at the new price of £34.99 each from 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment.



Hello hello,

Well, what a week!

Not content in telling everybody I know, I have to announce to the entire pulp readership that I had the pleasure of meeting Harley Lawson, sorry I mean Jamie Davis (slip of the tongue there!) and I have to say it has probably made my year. Just look on the page opposite and you'll see why!

If you need cheering up this week we've got a preview of a v.special comedy gig on Nov 1, so get yourself there. Plus 30 seconds of laughter is the equivalent to a gym work out - apparently. So, what more reason do you need?! Have fun!

Kirsty xxx
P.S Any extra ideas?
email:
pulp.ents@ncl.ac.uk

Daytime Activity: Bowling

Need an activity for those rainy days? Well this week JOE WILLIAMS visited the AMF Bowling Centre for a spot of ten-pin bowling. Read on to see how it scored...



THE world is a confusing place, and your life seemingly an articulation of that confusion on a microcosmic level. Bowling is the only certainty left in the 21st century student life.

Often dismissed as the alternative activity to drinking cider in the parks for 14-year-olds, there is an honesty in bowling absent in the phoney chic of trendy bars and clubs in the city centre.

So rediscover a small part of your inner self by trekking up the Brighton Grove - where you can stop off at all the 40 houses you know people in - and chucking heavy synthetic-based spheres at hapless and marginally comically-shaped sticks of wood.

Talking about bowling in such

a meaningful way is of course pointless (along with being a load of rubbish), but it is my way of trying to tell the reader something new about the age-old leisure pursuit.

Though I can tell you that AMF is great value (offering a fantastic 3 games for £5 inc. shoe hire with your student card), has friendly staff, even when unjamming your lane for the fourth time in one game, and plays every classic cheese-pop song your indie friends don't like. In a nutshell - drink less, bowl more.

The 3 games for a fiver offer is available Mon-Fri before 5pm and Sun-Tues after 9pm.

Visit www.amfbowling.co.uk

It's comedy time

Claire Wilson previews BBC-acclaimed comedy duo, *Belly Rub*, and decides they're guaranteed to make you giggle

IT seems to be the season for new venues, and another has popped up in the form of the club 'Establishment'. Here we are to find some of Newcastle's very own, home grown talent with a comedy group known as *Belly Rub*.

It's difficult to gauge whether a comedy night is likely to be decent or not, but if their C.V is anything to go by then we're in for a good night - *Belly Rub* are a stand-up and character-based group who are to

appear on TV on the 3rd of November, after gaining commendations from various BBC competitions, and have already had sketches featured on ITV's 'Shoot the Writers'.

On a more local level, they've already packed out the Bridge Hotel and featured in the Toon's own Comedy Festival. Still need convincing? The folks at

'Establishment' have

decided to combine comedy and music, with up and coming band Guessmen - who won the prestigious Diesel Music Award - featuring alongside *Belly Rub*.

So go on, support your friendly neighbourhood comedians...November 1st, Establishment (upstairs in @Home) doors open 8.30pm, £4/£3 (NUS)



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Jamie Davis Interview...

Jamie Davis, who most of us know as Harley from the sexy TV series *Footballer's Wives*, is on a whirlwind tour to promote his new series, *HEX*. I just happened to bump into him and his supernatural co-star Jemima Roper, and as you can probably tell, they were slightly the worse for wear!

P: So what brings you to the North-East, Jamie?

JD: We're telling people about our new show that is out on Sky1. It's called *Hex* and it's every Sunday at 9 o'clock. PS student papers are the finest!

P: In *FB* we see a lot of men's bums; did you have a bum double?

JD: My bum double was Jennifer Lopez. She gets paid nearly as much as I do! No, I didn't have an arse double, but we did have trouble with the shower scenes. If you use hot water and real steam it blots the camera. So we had to use cold water and fake steam. So cold water, early mornings; there was a lot of sideways glances going on (makes shocked face) but not at me obviously! (Big smile).

JR: Hung like a donkey is our Jamie Davis!

P: Did you do any special bum exercises?

JD: Yeah, there's a video called 'Bums of Steel' which they give you when you do the audition. They say, do

this video for a week and come back and show us what you've got. There's just a load of men with their arses out.

P: Are you taking the piss?

JD: Yeah, then they wax your arse, cover it in fake tan and you have to wear a cling film wrap for six weeks. None of that's true.

P: You used to be a semi-pro footballer, so was *Footballer's Wives* (FW) like two jobs in one?

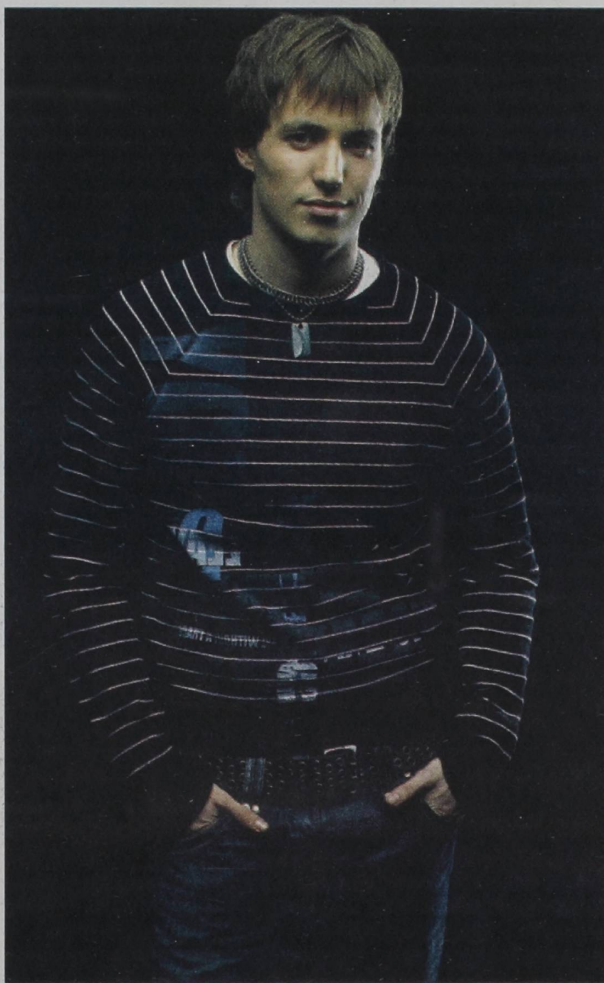
JD: FW is as much about football as *Dallas* was about oil! It's just an excuse to put young, ill-educated people together. I must have spent 1% of my time of that show on a football pitch.

P: So is that one done now?

JD: Yeah, people keep telling me they can't believe I've left and in fairness it's not exactly like Lennon leaving the fucking Beatles is it?!

P: Do you support a football team?

JD: My dad made a schoolboy error and took me to see Liverpool vs Leeds and Liverpool hammered



Leeds. So I went out and bought a Liverpool shirt. In the 80's when I was growing up they were the team, but little did I know in the 90's they'd become shite!

If Michael is reading this; you're a traitor! Never darken my door again.

P: Where did you grow up?

JD: I grew up in a mining town called Pontefract in West Yorkshire. It's a great little town but it is a little town and has all the pros and cons that go with it. Everybody knows everybody and everybody's shagged everybody and everybody knows who's shagged everybody.

P: What did you do before you did *Footballer's Wives*?

JD: I did porn when I was 19 (cheeky smile). No, I used to play schoolboy football for Leeds. Then I worked at a performing arts college in Barnsley and was in a play called *Kes*.

P: I did that at school! *Kes*. It's about pigeons.

JD: No it's about a Kestrel that's why it's called *Kes* (sounds slightly

exasperated). Otherwise it'd be called *Pidge*, no what I mean, hasn't got the same ring to it.

P: Oh yeah (giggling)

JD: Then I moved to London when I was 17.

P: 17, that's brave.

JD: I know, all by myself, National Express bus down like *Billy Elliot*, I tell ya.

P: Your latest role is in *HEX*, what's that all about?

JD: It's a supernatural show that's about lust and love and fallen angels and violence. It's set around a public school and my character's called Leon who is basically a bit of a twat.

There's lesbian ghosts and fallen angels. It's a really kinky offbeat show and there's nothing else on T.V like it.

Well that sounds good to me! I haven't stopped laughing for the past half-hour and Jamie Davis really is a very likeable and normal northern lad. And, yes, that smile of his really is just as good in real life!

Review: Radio Soulwax presents Soulwax Niteversions (live), 2ManyDJs plus Vitalic & Headman/Manhead

Pulp reporter ROMAIN CHENET gives his verdict on the night...

This sweaty mess that is any night headlined by 2ManyDJs was once again in evidence at our beloved Union Basement last Wednesday for the latest visit of the DJ duo.

As the night commenced, there was the usual assortment of scruffy stragglers decked out in combat caps, poncy pill-heads with a few too many chemicals in their systems, and confused staff trying to cope with the massive free-for-all unfolding at the pitifully inadequate bar. Even water was in short

supply as the need for drink skyrocketed to deal with the uninspiring sounds on offer.

That is, until Niteversions took the stage and brought it all under control with their wonderful melodic dance set. Showing the appreciative crowd that techno doesn't have to be loud and boring, the lads stormed through a brilliant set that looked like a jam session, but sounded like an unpretentious gem of a dance compilation.

When 2ManyDJs finally took over the beatsmithery, the drenched audience

couldn't be readier.

But for your woeful reviewer, it was a stark letdown from the hype usually given to the DJ team. Despite their brilliant technical skills, the song selection rang hollow, with token rock tracks thrown in to pass off as creativity, but coming off as nothing more than a gimmick. It didn't ruin the night, but did keep it from zooming into the stratosphere, and that's what I want. Difficult, I know.

Lunchtime Hotspot

This week JOHN COOK visited Pacific (12-22 Northumberland Road) to sample their culinary delights...

Pacific Café is one of those rarities in terms of its diversity not only in the menu but also in patronage, being popular amongst students, locals and professionals alike.

This all adds to the atmosphere already provided by the welcoming and friendly surroundings and attentive staff.

The menu offers so much choice you may well spend most of your time deciding what to order. The food available ranges from burgers and fries through to a daily specials menu, with such variety in between it can only

really be appreciated by flicking through the menu yourself.

The food itself is hard to fault. It may not be the most ideal place as far as the student wallet is concerned, but careful choices can sort this out.

It may not be a place to visit every day but you'll certainly go back, probably because there were so many things to choose from that you were disappointed at having to choose one.

Pacific is definitely one of Newcastle's best city-centre lunch venues.

A Revelation of Art in the Toon

BP PORTRAIT AWARD
SUNDERLAND MUSEUM & WINTER GARDENS
 16th September - 12th November, Free

I have to confess a lack of enthusiasm when I woke up early one hungover morning last weekend to begin the trek to Sunderland for a small portrait exhibition.

Images of sullen-looking royals were drifting through my head on the train as I tried - and failed - to recall

any portraits that had really made me think beyond the images themselves and about something the artist is trying to say about their world or about their subject.

The BP Portrait Award exhibition completely upended my perhaps unjustified assumptions about portrait in a small show that contained both technical brilliance and a modernity of thought throughout, stemming from the emphasis on young

artists. Suddenly I could relate to these portraits because of what many of them say about young people today and suddenly I had a fresh appreciation of the value of portrait as an art in itself.

The exhibition, which is at Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens, is definitely worth seeing if you are prepared to make the journey. It runs until November 27th.
 Chris McKenzie

REVELATION
LAING ART GALLERY
 8th October - 8th January, Free

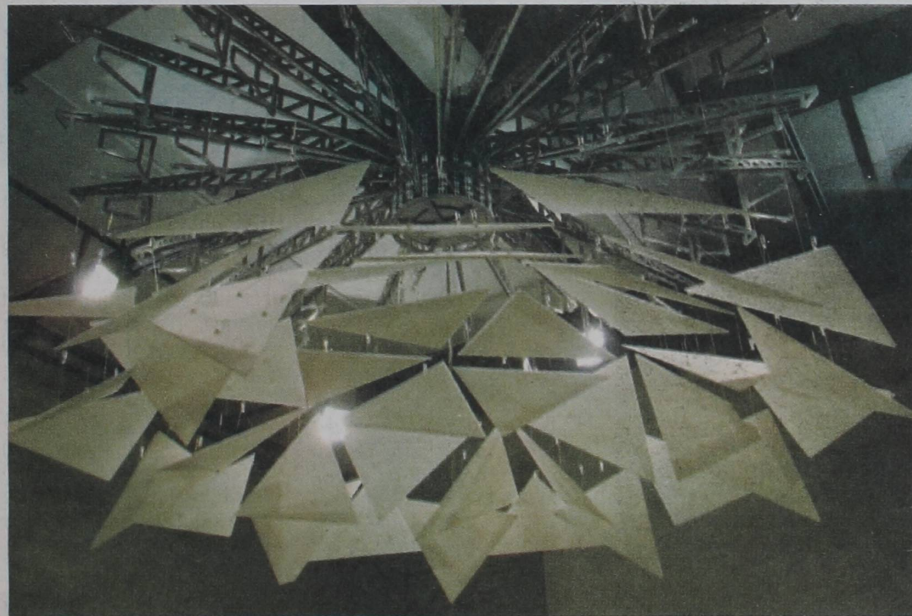
THE Laing Gallery are currently leading the wave in British art, with the quirky genius that is Revelation. Take it from me; this exhibition is a breath of fresh air in artistic form.

Upon first entering, you can't help but gawk at the simultaneously brilliant and

grotesque centrepiece by Damien Hurst, 'He Tried to Internalise Everything'. The gigantic psychological statement of this work is a fair indication of the rest of the shenanigans, including a nifty juxtaposition of avant-garde and traditional pottery, random ancient Japanese weaponry and a brilliant collection of morbid mobiles (the child's toy, not the phone) that leaves strollers dumbstruck.

Canine dentures amidst 18th century paintings? Everything is possible at Revelation. There is some bizarre and wonderful creativity at work right now in the Laing, and all you arty bohemians out there are compelled by the legacy of the Merry Pranksters to go see it.

Romain Chenet



James Carrigan's 'Machine #1.4' - A bit JCBish for our liking

WHEN I LIVED IN MODERN TIMES
THE NORTHERN GALLERY FOR CONTEMPORARY ART, SUNDERLAND
 16th September - 12th November, Free

The theme: 8 artists, recreating archival material to capture the past in the present, using film, painting, photography and architecture.

Thoughts beforehand: this could either be a concept-laden, self-consciously meaningful collection or

something genuinely deep. Luckily only 2 of the 8 artists supported my doubts. James Carrigan's 'Machine # 1.4' - some triangles that recreate Buckminster Fuller's dome - was about as fascinating as a JCB. Hideko Inoue's paintings were based on that worn, old concept - the understanding of cross-cultural history. In turn, for me, they failed in their desired decentring impact.

But the others, particularly Melanie Stidolph's nature photographs and Samuel

Herbert's deeply thought-provoking paintings, redeemed the show entirely.

Laura Lancaster's dinky paintings - all ruffled softness and watery strokes - were the highlight. Being a sentimental wet, my favourite one was of a bride and groom, kissing. It was very Cecily Brown (but not so rude!) in its tremulous fusion of colours, calling up the vague tingling of lost kisses, remembered.

Lauren Mulvee

Coming Soon....

THE ISLAND
LIVE THEATRE
 19th - 23rd October
 £8-14

In an interview with the New York Times, Athol Fugard asserted the most politically powerful play of all time to be Sophocles' 'Antigone'.

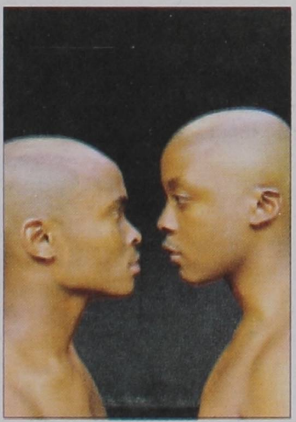
'Antigone' deals with relentless oppression and the human struggle against it. Fitting then that Fugard, Kani, and Ntshona should set their play within the confines of the infamous apartheid-era Robben Island Prison in South Africa.

'The Island' deals with two political prisoners, Winston and John, who work in bondage at a marble quarry by day, but at night rehearse a presentation of Sophocles' 'Antigone', which is an unflinching protest at oppression, as relevant in the 21st century as it was when conceived in the 5th century B.C. It has been performed not only by Mandela during his

imprisonment in Robben Island, but also by the French playwright Anouilh to a French and Nazi audience in occupied France.

'The Island' comes from the world famous Market theatre in Johannesburg and looks set to be one of the most relevant performances you could see this year.

James Goodyear



RIOT: SOUTH SHIELDS 1930
THE CUSTOMS HOUSE, SOUTH SHIELDS
 24th - 28th October
 £7-9

Years ago, the troubled Yemeni seamen of South Shields rioted.

Bones were broken, a police officer was stabbed and in the aftermath 20 Yemenis were deported.

This labour of love opens on the 24th October, just yards from where the violence took place all those years ago.

Told as a classic tale of love against all odds, this will be educational as well as enlightening.

The Customs House is offering free tickets for groups of 10 or more students, so get together and watch a little piece of history.

Contact Joanne Weightman on 0191 4278183.

Joss Rankin

Tracey Emin, *The Simple Truth* © the artist
 Courtesy Jay Jopling/White Cube

Revelation

Reflecting British Art in the Arts Council Collection including Damien Hirst, Sarah Lucas, Chris Ofili, Bridget Riley and Grayson Perry
 8 October - 8 January 2006

Laing Art Gallery
 New Bridge Street
 Newcastle upon Tyne
 Tel: (0191) 232 7734
www.twmuseums.org.uk/laing

Free entry

LAING ART GALLERY

Arts Council Collection, Hayward Gallery, South Bank Centre, London.

RENAISSANCE NORTH EAST museums for bringing life

Arts Council

TYNE & WEAR MUSEUMS

Pulp.Arts

Go NUTS for the G&S Society

EVER considered yourself a budding Oscar-winner? Have you always wanted to light up the stage, literally? Or would you prefer getting your hands dirty by creating and putting together stage sets and scenery? Well then this society could be for you.

The Gilbert and Sullivan society is proud to call itself Newcastle's oldest and, according to its president, Emma Shephard-Walwyn, one of the most fun around. There seems to be a real emphasis on having a good time with this society, and it welcomes with open

arms anyone who wants to join in!

The auditions for productions are mid-way through term, so that pretty much everyone in the group can start to get to know each other and become friends before any serious stuff goes on.

You don't have to have done any acting or singing before, but it helps if you're enthusiastic. Emma also says she is keen to find a pianist and some people to help with all the technical side of things too... all the people who make the magic happen! If this sounds like your cup of tea then you

should pop along to the meetings on a Tuesday evening at 7.30 PM in the training room (next to the job shop in the union), where everyone just has a good time, sings a few songs and then heads out into town for a night out.

The people at the Gilbert and Sullivan Society are, above all, a friendly bunch, who will welcome new members with open arms. If you think you want to get involved or you want any more information just pop along to a meeting or email Emma on gs.society@ncl.ac.uk. Alternatively their

website gives more information (<http://www.societies.ncl.ac.uk/nugss>).

The Gilbert and Sullivan Society I think are one of the best ways to get involved on stage as well as off. If you love theatre and you think (like I do) that it's all about having a great time then here is the place for you. Now where do I sign up...?

Rosie Cole



HAVING been told of the Northern Stage's formidable reputation for creating brilliantly relevant and challenging theatre it was with trepidation that I stepped out to view their latest production, Dickens' masterpiece 'Great Expectations', since I had no prior experience other than a hurriedly read summary of the 59 chapter colossus of the English canon.

The weather played along brilliantly with my plans and created a grandiose pathetic fallacy soaking me to the skin and raising the hairs on the back of my neck in preparation for the bleak tragic tale I was about to experience.

'Great Expectations' for those in the dark, as I was, is the austere, retrospective tale of our hero Pip, who having been orphaned at a young age we find by his mother's tombstone. After being attacked by "escaped convict and general varmint" Magwitch, Pip is lead on a journey which will take him from humble beginnings to being a gentleman and back, thanks to the kindness of his mysterious benefactor working through the almost android lawyer Jaggers.

Along the way Pip encounters some of the most memorable characters in English literature; the morbidly fascinating Miss Havisham, the warm and caring if slightly backward Joe and of course the cruel and enchanting Estella.

Aristotle himself would have been proud of the production's cathartic opening. Pity and fear were created in equal measure through a projection of a young boy being chased across mist covered marshes by the titan Magwitch. Screams were heard in the audience and I'll not deny I was filling my pants with horror watching the lumbering monster gallop across the sand. The gripping atmosphere was to continue throughout.

As well as stellar acting, film montages and animated projection in some scenes created a surreal and dystopian reality more reminiscent of a psychotropic trip than a trip to the theatre. The mise en scene wonderfully captured the sinister undertones of the narrative with props such as an opulent yet derelict chandelier which in its descent resembled a grotesque spider's nest,

saying more than a thing or two about Miss Havisham's arachnid tendencies. All this, together with a haunting score compiled by the production's Neil Murray, made for a powerful performance.

Through the parallels of Pip and Estella's lives along with the other characters we see their dissatisfaction and the resolute injustice of their existence. Dickens has created an intricate web of characters, each harrowing in their own way; a damning indictment of Victorian life. Overall, although parts are omitted and characters lost, this production has undeniably succeeded in the gargantuan task of adapting the novel into an entertaining and thought-provoking piece of theatre.

"Be grateful" we are instructed by Mrs. Joe, and I am grateful; grateful to the Northern Stage for a superb production and grateful to Dickens for this majestic work, which after seeing this performance I will most certainly endeavour to read.

James Goodyear

Dance Mr Morris, Dance!

Mark Morris Dance Group - 25th Anniversary Tour
Theatre Royal
Monday 10th October

IT was all about the dance; no scenery, minimal props and simplistic costumes. All admiring eyes were on the movements of the Mark Morris Dance Group.

The performance consisted of 5 separate scenes in which various influences such as folk, salsa, ballet, contemporary, oriental and even the quirky were explored and expressed through dance, whilst also portraying various themes: romance, tragedy, comedy drama and thriller. Frequent changes in tempo and mood highlighted the pure skill and talent of the dancers as they

switched from spinning to lifting to gliding with ease, flexing muscles I didn't know existed.

Accompanying the dance was live music and singers both of which added to the simple yet powerful atmosphere and vibe of the whole show. With the exception of the last dance 'Grand Duo' (my favourite) I did not once hear a foot touch the floor. The dancers elegantly glided with flawless precision in a truly enjoyable world class performance.

(On tour until 19th November, see www.danceumbrella.co.uk)

Helen Wells



Arthur Wotsit?

'We Love You, Arthur'
Gala Theatre, Durham
Saturday 15th October

'WE love you, Arthur' is the story of two 14 year old friends growing-up in a Durham village being torn apart by the miners' strikes.

Desperate to meet their bizarre love object, Arthur Scargill, the girls devise 'Operation Comby-Over'. Although set in a bleak time the script and warmth of the performances made the play funny and engaging throughout.

It could have seemed episodic had it not been for the terrific soundtrack

of eighties music used to cover scene changes. By focusing on only a few characters the effect of the strikes was made very poignant and while the play's bias was towards those on strike it also evoked my sympathy for families on the other side of the picket line.

The more complex issues were never skirted and even in its saddest moments it could still make me laugh.

Cat Bailey

Joss' Juice

Joss Rankin, Arts Editor, dips into the local arts scene

I never was one for introductions but seeing as I left you all out in the cold like fragile, abandoned children last week, I thought I'd better introduce myself. I am Joss. Your new Arts Editor.

I do not, and never have, claimed to know jack-shit about art, but I like it. That should be enough for you. It does for me.

I thought I'd take this opportunity to let you know of a fabulous offer the Theatre Royal are doing from 14th November. The little fairies are offering anyone aged 16-25 £5 tickets for RSC performances from 10am on the day of each performance. All you have to do is register at 16-25newcastle@rsc.org.uk. How nice of them.

I'd really like to hear from people who have a passion about art. Whether it's graffiti, sculpture, contemporary or just plain weird, let us know on pulp.arts@ncl.ac.uk

Safe.

This Weeks Competition

For this weeks beautiful competition I am offering you the chance to win two delightful little books in the theme of 'Daft' from the lovely people at Summersdale Publishers Ltd. To be in

for the chance of winning all you have to do is send the daftest thing you have ever done in the form of Prose. Stick Competition in the title and send it to pulp.arts@ncl.ac.uk before 31st October.

Not only will you win the books but the chance to have your own fantastic idiosies published in the bootylicious Pulp! It's time to get radical....

Fabulous Fashion Finds

Bored of your wardrobe? **SAMANTHA PATTERSON** discovers the unique and vintage shops of Newcastle

LOOK deep in the heart of Newcastle and you will find some hidden treasures.

Fear not those who are in search of a more individual look. If you wander just a little from the High Street, you will find more than a handful of independent stores that offer a more pleasant shopping experience and satisfy all your shopping needs.

Whether you're looking for a 1920's ball gown, cutting edge Japanese sportswear or handmade jewellery, if you spend some time in the following stores, you'll be sure to find just what you're looking for. Read on to discover where these places are hidden and what fabulous delights they have to offer.

**Royal Vintage -
Worswick
Street**

Royal Vintage, which recently celebrated its first birthday, is the brainchild of Chris and Drew. Filling the space between period and retro, this is a truly vintage shop. It boasts treasures of the 1980s, a huge supply of Levi jeans and guarantees one-off pieces at reasonable prices. The best buys come in leather; ladies boots and wide belts are best sellers, but it is the leather bomber jackets that really catch the eye. They come in a range of colours, but tan gets my vote. Don't miss the cute customized denim and cotton skirts that are recycled from vintage pieces.

**Mint - Old George Yard
(www.mint-boutique.com)**

Mint is a gift shop of a curious kind. Rather than the usual tacky postcards, twee ornaments and gaudy t-shirts, here you'll find handmade cards, chic home-accessories and charming jewellery. The aim of Mint is to provide unusual items that are as exclusive as possible. Objects come from across the globe; from Paris to Brazil - there

are even contributions from the glorious Toon!

Amongst the multi-coloured scatter cushions and quirky clocks lies a beautiful jewellery collection by **Servanne Gaxotte**. Definitely the highlight of the shop, these Parisian pieces are a little expensive, but worth every penny. Save up some of your student loan and exchange it for a polka dot lace ruffle necklace. Ooh la la!

**Attica - Old
George Yard**

Attica recently celebrated its 22nd birthday and can probably boast to be the oldest, and many would argue the best, vintage store in Newcastle. The emphasis on vintage rather than retro is what sets Attica apart. The huge variety of stock ranges over a 100 year period. Here you can find Victorian military jackets, 1950's tea dresses and 1940's men's suits. Accessories range from costume jewellery to leather evening gloves and, for men, the chance to look like Cary Grant in trilbies and brogues. It is easy to spend hours browsing the many wonders in the shop. Apart from clothing Attica, also keeps household items such as clocks, ashtrays and lamps. The appearance of so many brightly coloured knick-knacks cluttering up the floor and table tops is what makes the atmosphere in Attica so special. When you walk in you really feel like you're stepping back in time.

Skirt - High Bridge Street

The clothes you can buy from Skirt are not vintage, but have a romantic feeling to them all the same. Nanso, a Finish company, use memories of holidays, pictures of family members and the importance of happiness as inspiration for their designs. This makes the clothes feel as if they have

a history, despite being brand new. There are also many products stocked in Skirt which are made by local designers, including colourful jewellery from Corbridge, Northumberland, and hand-made bags by Little Women. Skirt hopes to provide a unique alternative to high street fashion, not only through design, but also in how the clothes make you feel. Each item seems to have been made with love and care, making every piece more special. Skirt endeavours to make its customers smile. The hope is that, no matter what you buy, you will feel extraordinary when you put it on.

"you will find more than a handful of independent stores that satisfy all your shopping needs"

Period Clothing - High Bridge Street

Period Clothing has been open for almost 13 years, but has recently moved premises to their lovely new shop on High Bridge Street. Period Clothing has a combination of vintage and retro-inspired items. The men's range consists of cord flares in a range of colours, mod-style polo T-shirts and 1970's inspired printed T's. There is also a big range of parka and Harrington style jackets. The best selling range is by Pop, a company which re-creates popular clothing of the 70's. The ladies range has some unusual knitwear as well as chunky beads and striking brooches. There are unisex accessories too, including

the very popular Northern Soul bags, which come in a range of colours. Perhaps the best thing about Period Clothing is its bargainous prices! You can easily pick up a brightly coloured, sparkly-detailed jumper for less than a tenner. Period Clothing is definitely retro-chic at its cheapest.

So & So - High Bridge Street

The aim of So & So when it opened was to bring independent labels to Newcastle. After studying in Leeds, Charlotte, the brains behind the venture, realised Newcastle needed a more varied shopping landscape. Designs are imported from across the world, including brightly coloured, handmade ra-ra skirts from New York. Alongside revamped vintage tops hang turquoise wool boleros and kitsch homemade jewellery. There is a distinctly cosy feeling in So & So. Many items are made by Charlotte (who runs a knitting circle at The Forth on a Tuesday night, just pop along) including cute knitted bags and woollen corsages. At the back of the shop is a newly opened section containing a range of glassware and ceramics.

Flip - Westgate Road

Flip has a long history in Newcastle, having been around in one place or another since the 70's. Following a trip to America, John, the owner, noticed how many people were interested in the clothes he had bought for himself in the States. The rest, as they say, is history. Flip opened in the 1970's and

has been going strong ever since. The shop stocks a range of "All American" clothing, including Western shirts, printed T-shirts as well as work shirts and Levi's for the emo boys and Springsteen fans amongst you. In amongst the railings lie true vintage beauties that are too good to miss; a 1930's horsehide jacket, 1950's loop shirts and true vintage Levi's. There is also a smaller range of ladies clothing, with the general focus on 1950's inspired tea dresses and mohair jumpers. Flip harks back to a golden era when cigarettes were good for you, Saturday night was spent at the drive-in and rock and roll had just begun.

**End Clothing
www.endclothing.co.uk**

End Clothing, having been open only 5 months, has established itself as, probably, the coolest menswear shop in Newcastle. John and Christian have an eye for uber-trendy men's sportswear and have used this skill to their advantage. They stock well-known brands such as Nike, Adidas and Fred Perry, but not the usual items. Here you will not find a garishly coloured Adidas tracksuit, but you will find mod-style Fred Perry jackets, a range of colours in polo T-shirts and some quirky zip tops. End also stocks more obscure items such as design books, bags made from truck tarpaulin, Japanese toys and lesser known, but equally popular brands such as Maharishi. If you want to treat yourself to something super-individual then this is the place to go. End? This is just the beginning.



WEEKLY FEATURE!

How to... Stay healthy at uni!

Don't you all just love this time of year when the leaves start to fall, the winter clothes are pulled from hibernation and the season of colds, coughs and god knows what else is upon us.

Watch out, Newcastle winters are killers - not literally, but you can't be too careful - so we thought we'd give you some tips about how to beat the freeze!

Mix your drinks accordingly

Being students, we are all guilty of having possibly the most unhealthy lifestyles ever. So whilst swigging back the diesel/vodka/vino, do yourselves a favour and stock up on what's good for you. Have vodka and orange/cranberry for added vitamins, red wine is supposed to be good for the heart, and hot toddies before bed can often do the trick...

Winter essentials

Whilst the above ideas can be taken in jest and you know that no matter how much you protest about going

to happy hour you will end up going, your best bet is to head down to Boots and get sorted in the vitamin section. Get a one-a-day pack, vitamin C, Berocca (damn good hangover cure), homeopathic stuff, a hot water bottle, whatever floats your boat really!

Be prepared

The chances of getting ill are pretty high, especially as we're always surrounded by other students silently passing on their lurgi. So make sure when you come down with imminent freshers flu (silly name seeing as we got it in 2nd, 3rd and 4th year, still struggling...) you have everything around you.

Play your cards right and try and get sympathy off housemates, and get them to make you tea and hot Ribena throughout the day, as well as sending them off to the video store to top up the essential cheesy film selection. Not to mention getting important numbers off the token class geek to catch up on any work...and don't forget to inform

your parents that you are close to death's door - you may receive a fantastic parcel sent out of sympathy to help you continue in your state of self-pity.

Take a risk!

Although not feeling your best, a night out can often really help! Speaking from experience and following a friend's wise words, a few glasses of wine, swiftly followed by some triples and a boogie round the Lounge gets everything out of your system.

Don't quote us on this one as if your night goes better than you had planned and you end up with company the following morning, it could end in tears when your new friend ends up feeling shitter than you and never calling again.

Oh, watch out for the king of illnesses here, good old glandular fever could raise its nasty head at any moment...hopefully we've all grown out of that old chestnut!

Take advantage!

Hurrah for colds and flu! They are meant to be fed so ensure that you are kitted out with soup, bread, chocolate, fruit, Ribena, orange juice etc and make the most of it! Sleep and rest are vital so don't even think about exercising and trying to sweat it out that way, you will only lower your immune system! Hibernation is without



Photo: Dave Knowle - Canon Eos 300D

WINTRY...The Quadrangle in a typical Newcastle summer

question your best bet so get on that sofa now! Now that's the best excuse not to do any exercise we've heard in a long time!

And of course, you can't forget the copious amounts of hot chocolate that must be drunk - calories don't count when you're under the weather. Honest.

Dress properly

Taking the liberty of sounding like nagging mothers, you can't go out

dressed like that! Gone is the season of flip-flops and bare legs for the days, as much as it pains us to say it. And as for nights out in the Toon, it is not sad if you wear hats, coat, gloves - the whole caboodle. Don't try and match the locals who wear next to nothing when the snow is 3 inches thick on the ground. Sheer madness! Well, that's it from us for this week, see you next time!



With Annabelle Morrow & Alex Debarge



Letters to the Editor

Got something to say? Drop me a line at editor.union@ncl.ac.uk

Dan & the Organ

Dear Editor,

I write to commend you on your weighty organ, the addition of words and sentences this year makes for an excellent read. However, there is a bone of contention I should like to raise.

During his 'agony' column, 'Dear Dan' suggested that a jigsaw of our former blessed leaderene [Thatcher] would act as effectively as bromide to abate unfortunate urges. I should like to point out that 'Dear Dan' holds the regional franchise of Thatcher-belia, and his recommendations are a form of product placement as gratuitous as Kate Moss in a flour advertisement.

Now then, keep it up, despite Dan's advice.

Yours stiffly,

Strangely-Moist (Colonel) (Retd) (Mrs)

Dear Strangely-Moist,
Colonel Strangely-Moist, thank you

very much for your kind praise of the organ. It took me a while to get it as big as it currently is, at great expense. However, now the swelling seems to have gone down, I hope the new weightier organ is pleasing to all. However, if any aspect of the organ needs improvement, I encourage all readers to write in and tell me! After all, it's your student newspaper!

If we turn our attention to the 'Dear Dan' that graces this very double page, I cannot deny that he is a raving Tory who has aspirations to not only the regional, but also national echelons of the multi-million pound Thatcher merchandise business.

Although *The Courier* would not normally lower itself to such shameless promotion, in this case it seems appropriate. Perhaps 'Dear Dan' would consider introducing a new range of Thatcher-based erection avoidance products?

In a quick letter to myself, big up to all at the Sports Centre for providing their services free of charge during the AU Fair, which wasn't mentioned in the article last week. Cheers guys!

jobshop jobwatch

In association with... Deloitte.

The latest goings-on from the Union's Job Shop...

Opening Times:
Mon/Tue/Thurs/Fri 11am-3pm
Wednesday 2pm-6pm in
Education Unit

If you're interested in any the vacancies, call into the Job Shop any time during opening hours to speak to an advisor or pick up an application form.

Vacancy 4190
Customer Service Assistants

Job Description: You will work on a Customer Services desk, in direct contact with the general public. You will deal with a wide range of enquiries, including requests for local and retail information.
Person Specification: You will be required to work as part of a team and have excellent communication skills. Previous experience of working in a customer services environment would be an advantage and cash-handling experience is a necessity.
Pay: £6.25 per/hr
Hours: Saturday 13.00 - 18.00 & Sunday 12.00 - 17.00

Contract: October 2005 until December 2005
Location: Gateshead
Come into the Job Shop to find out how to apply!

Vacancy 4188
Job Description: Summer 2006 placement work in all areas of the UK. This is an opportunity to join a high-profile programme, work on an interesting project with a small to medium-size business, develop your skills and enhance your CV.
Person Specification: Applicants must be UK undergraduates from any discipline in their second or penultimate year of study. Students from the European Union may apply if they are undertaking a full-time course in the UK.
Hours: 8 weeks full-time in July and August
Pay: £180.00 per week - tax and N.I. free
Length of contract: 8 weeks
Start date: late June/early July
Come into the Job Shop to find out how to apply!

Vacancy 418
Job Description: Market Research Interviewers wanted for telephone-based work. You will be working from a prepared script.
Person Specification: You must have an excellent level of spoken English, a clear and confident telephone manner, good handwriting and basic keyboard skills.
You must be available over the academic year (breaks allowed for reasonable holidays). There are also incentives in addition to basic pay.
Hours: usually evening shifts and some Saturdays
Pay: £5.10 training increasing to £5.50 after training. Saturday pay is £5.50 during training and £6.50 after
Contract: Ongoing
Check back next week for more vacancies from the Union Society Job Shop! Also, check out the Job Shop website at www.unionsociety.co.uk/main/a/dvice/studentjobshop.

All-new, wholesome fun...

Dan's Photo Casebook

This week...Lecturer Lovin'



Alan's got the hots for his Owl Conservation lecturer. He gazes upon her lovingly during a particularly enthralling session on the top ten owl sanctuaries in the Norfolk area...



Alan continues the chase after the lecture. When the room's deserted, he moves in for the kill with some pathetic 'academic questions'. Apparently, owl conservation really is that interesting.



Alan's geeky patter seems to impress his lecturer, and she invites him back to her office for some more academic chat. Seizing the moment, Adam suggests a chat over a drink...and she agrees! Cashback!

More next week...



courier.letters@ncl.ac.uk

Dear Dan

The ONLY candidate for the Tory Leadership

Just lovin' The Boat

Dear Dan,

I can't stop going to the Boat. Its delicious interior and jerky dance floor just mesmerise me. After a few drinks with my Castle Leazes mates, my wallet just seems to empty. In fact I'm spending Daddy's money like it's going out of fashion - no wonder I don't seem to have any problems with the ladies! In fact, I'm already into quadruple figures. The Osborne Road scene just seems so old hat next to the glory of The Boat. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday...it doesn't matter. I feel nervous if I even think about going somewhere else, I can't even bear to think about being enticed by Baja, Sea etc. What can I do, Dan?

Yours,
'Farquar the Fresher'

Dan says:

The Boat. Delicious it is not. Whilst it's been a while since my Boat-ing days, I seem to remember it being not quite horizontal and the not-so-faint smell of vomit. The abundance of saccharin budget alcopops was also rather unimpressive. The revolving dancefloor was its only redeeming feature. I never used to dance on it, you understand. I used to watch pissed-up rahs like you, who, having spent too much of daddy's money on themselves and ladies called Tara that looked like something off the cover of *Horse and Hounds*, used to throw up down the wall having stumbled off the aforementioned revolving dance floor when it jerked a little too violently. You may be able to tell that I do not foster too much love for The Boat. That it is the only such

boat in Newcastle is a blessing.

Should you ever fancy dragging yourself off the Freshers' trawl, you might actually find some more interesting evening entertainment - Cuba Cuba, Stage Door, the Sage, World Headquarters, Tyneside Cinema. Newcastle has to much more to offer than Bacardi Breezers and chunder on your shoes, and all at a reasonable price. Also worth bearing in mind that no lady would turn you down for a night at the theatre and a couple of drinks somewhere remotely sophisticated afterwards, would they? So, before you throw yourself down the Quayside next time with the rest of the flock of bleating Freshers - think. Liverpool won the City of Culture 2008 award because it needs some culture. We already have it. Use it. Then get pissed.

Dear Dan,

Since I can remember I have been incredibly hairy. The hair seems to grow back faster than I can shave it off! I have tried all the products on the market; razors, bleaching, hair removal cream and waxing. I have even tried to use an epilator on my back hair! I'm so self-conscious that I always wear a jumpsuit and balaclava, because of this I have never had a proper relationship - I've only ever kissed my mum. Dan, have you got any ideas to cure me of my hirsutism (excess hair)?

Yours,
'Folically challenged'

I'm going ape...

could run in carpets! I'm intrigued to know too how you managed to use an epilator on your back hair. Unless you've been to yoga for depilation classes, I'm not sure how you managed to contort yourself to get into those hard-to-reach places. Hair removal is a tricky business. I had a friend who used Immac on his balls once. He got chemical burns and his scrotum was all sticky for days. He recovered - a lot of pain, talcum powder and ibuprofen later. So, what are we going to do for you? You seem to have tried everything. But you did miss out the most expensive method - laser hair

removal. Here at Dear Dan HQ I've done some research using t'internet, and found that for a few hundred quid you too can be hair-free. These laser devices burn out the hair follicles using an intense light - although the procedure is supposedly painless. So, why not use that student loan to splash out on this most designer and effective of hair removal treatments? After all, it is the only option available to you. No-one wants to shag a gorilla, do they?

Dan says:
Calm down dear. It's only a bit of fur. Just think of the sideline you

Hi! We hope that, whether you're a new or returning student, you're finding everything OK up here in Newcastle.

However, problems can and sometimes do crop up throughout students' time at University. This is where the student service Nightline can help you out.

Nightline is a recognised student listening and information service, operating at Newcastle University but also at many others across the country.

You can call up for any reason, whether it be to ask for a taxi number when you're stuck in the

middle of Newcastle at 2am, or if you need some information from the Union and you're not sure where to find it.

Nightline operates from 8pm until 8am every night during term time to help you. If you need to chat to someone if you are a bit lonely or unsure about something at uni, then call us up. If you're a fresher, you might not want to tell your new friends about things that might be worrying you, as it's likely that they will be worrying about the same things. But who do you talk to about those things that you just don't feel comfortable telling other people? This applies to second

On a serious note...

Focus on...Nightline

and third-years as well! However large or small your reason for calling is, the volunteers are happy to listen. We are here as a confidential listening and Information Service, and we value the calls that are made. Nightline listeners are not there to judge. We also need those of you who are willing to put in the time to volunteer for the phone service. It's a great way to contribute your time and effort for other students, and it's definitely a great way to

meet new and lifelong friends. At the moment there are around 40 of us who are part of the Nightline listening and information service - you get a lot out of Nightline and the friends you make are second to none. If you are interested contact us at nightline@ncl.ac.uk or call the Nightline number - 0191 2612905. You will receive full training.

The numbers' also on the back of your Smartcard and remember, nothing's too much trouble!

Dear Dan,

How are you faring in the Tory Leadership election? You said last week to watch the headlines but I haven't seen anything. Just wondering...

'Stalwart Supporter'

Dan says:

Darling - I saw the way that the media were abusing that poor David Cameron and his Cameroons, and decided to stop using them.

Just imagine what they'd do if they ever found out I spent 3 days a week in Selfridges buying fabulous things with Party funds and occasionally had 'relations' with an associate of Glynis Kinnock.

So dear, I managed to glean a House of Commons pass from a close personal friend of mine and invade the tearoom to gather support amongst the Parliamentary Party. Unfortunately, I didn't make it through the first ballot. I did better than Ken though, but Michael thought it best to keep me a secret for the future. He says I have the potential to become a 'big beast' myself one day! Oh, the praise! (swoon)

Next week...

More pearls of wisdom from Dan! PLUS the dramatic conclusion of Dan's photo casebook!

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the courier sport

IN COURIER
SPORT THIS
WEEK...

- BASEBALL'S WORLD SERIES
- A DAY @ GOSFORTH RACES
- THE TICKET PRICE SCANDAL
- BUSA KICKS OFF!

Price Wars

INVESTIGATION
By ROSS FOX

FOOTBALL is revered in England and its artists achieve a degree of status lying somewhere between celebrity and Jesus.

Unfortunately, most football clubs are charging ridiculously extortionate prices for us to see these sporting celebrities at work. Everything is not quite so rosy however, in the gardens of football's rich elite, and it would appear the sport's inflated bubble may be set to burst.

Attendances have now fallen drastically enough to warrant a Premier League commission to meet later this month. Even the Government are correctly gauging public opinion and the consensus is not happy.

Sports Minister Richard Caborn is keen for the commission to "...have a look at whether clubs are pricing fans out," and also highlights the growing number of fans attending cricket and both codes of rugby as a possible reason for smaller crowds. Herein lies the problem for football.

Can football at present match rugby and cricket in terms of overall entertainment?

Arsene Wenger last month publicly blamed boring tactics and unattractive football for the fall in attendances. His stature in the game demands we listen. Less exciting football and ever increasing ticket prices are not a conducive cocktail.

The problem for the FA is that if Wenger's claims are true and football fans

do switch to the oval ball for affordable entertainment, they are in for a spectacle.

Players who are prepared to put their bodies on the line, and a ferocious intensity awaits any future spectator. They would witness a sport where the referee's whistle is treated with respect, and whose players don't deliberately feign injury to gain undeserved possession. Rugby is equally as exciting as its camp showbiz brother football.

As students in Newcastle we are privileged to be so near as strong a rugby union side as the Newcastle Falcons; with the excitement generated at Kingston Park matching that from St James Park for a fraction of the price.

The club is offering students a full or half-season ticket, which reduces the price of each home game to a mere £9.

The Falcons are refreshingly accommodating to students in Newcastle; something the city's football club could be accused of neglecting. If you miss out on the Family Enclosure, a seat at St. James' could set you back £36.

Newcastle's nearest cricket team, Durham also offer an excellent student package. £55 for a season ticket gains free access to all home County Championship and National Cricket League fixtures and various other perks.

Considering the mass-exposure English football receives, cricket and both codes of rugby are hugely under-valued in terms of entertainment and are remarkably cheaper to follow.

The Newcastle Eagles also provide the city with a basketball team, who are currently leading the way in the National BBL League, and yet charge only £15 for a prime seat at courtside.

The Metro Arena is not only host to the Eagles, but also Newcastle's ice hockey team, who also compete in the national premier league and charge fans just £11 a seat.

With tickets at Stamford Bridge being sold for upwards of £60 and no adult ticket at Highbury available for less than £31, the time has come for clubs to justify themselves.

Club representatives argue that without these price structures the league would suffer to attract foreign talent.

Whether the Premiership is flourishing or suffering is up for debate. The online betting firm Paddy Power have already paid out Chelsea to win the league, thereby declaring the title race over after just six weeks.

We urge you to observe our country's Rugby Union Premiership and the National Cricket Leagues. The clubs that compete in these leagues structure their pricing systems sensibly and do not have as their aim to rip off the bread and butter of the games: the fans.

May we also remind you that this summer we kicked the Aussies' ass to regain the Ashes and are also the reigning Rugby Union World Champions. Think about it.

Toon Watch



The weekly round-up of Newcastle's sporting highs and lows

By NEIL BRADSHAW

Hit or Miss?

Questions are again being asked about using video technology to make key decisions, though oddly this time it's about rugby union, which already uses it frequently. The issue comes up after the Newcastle Falcons drew with Leicester Tigers, in which a conversion by Leicester's fly-half Andy Goode completely missed the target yet the officials decided to award the points anyway. Quite why replays could be used for checking the legality of earlier tries, but not any other scoring situation is anybody's guess.

Leaving the Country

Newcastle United right-back Stephen Carr has announced his retirement from the Republic of Ireland national side, despite being only 29 and still one of the first names on the team-sheet. His statement came soon after that of Roy Keane's, both strangely coming within days of Ireland's failure to qualify for the World Cup, coming with a clear warning against sacking manager Brian Kerr. Not that anyone took any notice, as Kerr was promptly asked to leave his post a day later.

At the same time, midfielder Scott Parker is trying to do the exact opposite, hoping for a recall to the England squad now he's no longer bench warming for Chelsea. While Parker has certainly shown the form for another call-up, Eriksson's insistence on using only Lampard, Gerrard, Beckham or King (a defender) in the two central midfield roles makes it likely he's going to be overlooked once again.

Blame Everything

Following on from last week's Toon Watch, Jonny Wilkinson did indeed make a full return to the Falcons' line-up, and managed to make it through the full 80 minutes in one piece despite being "targeted". The same can't be said for Michael Owen, however, who managed to pick up a hamstring injury in a practice match last week, possibly giving Shola Ameobi a chance to terrify defences throughout the nation.

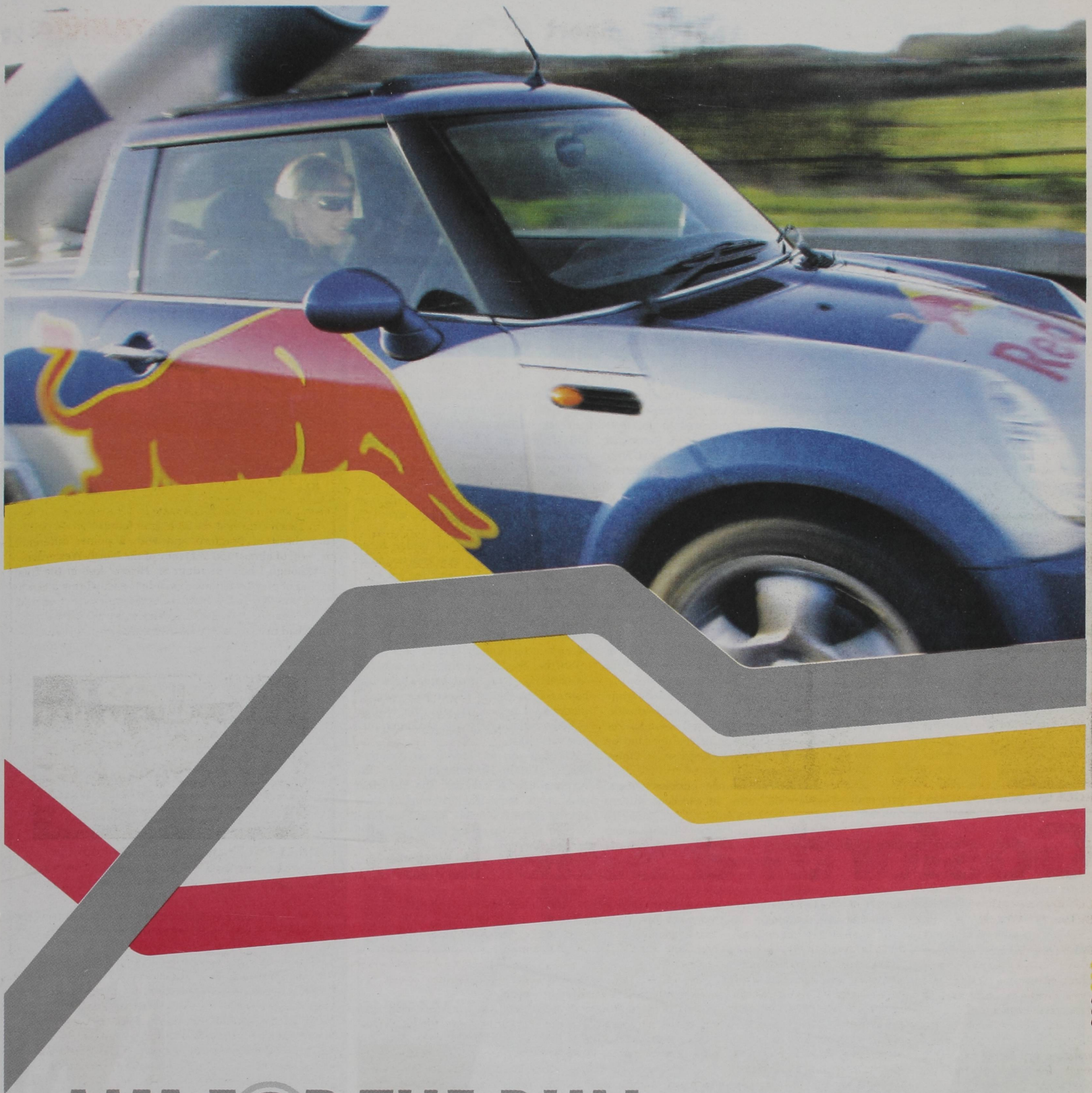


JINXED JONNY...How long before we see this image again?

Owen's injury is the latest in a long list for United, so naturally officials at the club have blamed the training pitches, which are now closed until "modifications" can be made. However, buying injury-prone players quite clearly has nothing to do with it.

Also taking some of the blame for Newcastle's problems was a seemingly innocent tray of sandwiches, left on both the wall and floor of a changing room at the JJB Stadium in Wigan following Newcastle's visit.





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Rocket Power!

BASEBALL
By TOM MARLING

WHEN Roger Clemens took the mound on Saturday night it had been 21 long years since he made his major-league debut, but at 43 years-old, 'the rocket' is still very much firing on all cylinders. Clemens, along with Andy Pettitte and Roy Oswalt have combined to make the 2005 Houston Astros the best pitching team in baseball since, well the 2005 White-Sox actually...

Saturday night's opening game was the culmination of the epic 170-game baseball season, yet neither team could

afford to rest on their laurels, with both clubs looking to end long streaks of baseball mediocrity. While the White-Sox haven't won a World Series since 1918, the Astros have never won one in their 44-year history.

This season however, the past 80-years have been forgotten by White-Sox fans, replaced by a wave of optimism surrounding Chicago's second team. Ever since their long-entrenched power-based strategy was controversially replaced with speed and pitching after last season, the 'Sox' have been transformed. However, after racing out to

baseball's best record over the first-half of the season they cooled-off significantly, and many favoured them to lose to the defending-champion Red-Sox in the first round. But following 7 wins in their 8 postseason games, the White-Sox look like the team of old, and are poised to continue winning.

Houston, much like Chicago, saw little reason for optimism entering the season, despite a dominating pitching-staff. The main reason was Carlos Beltran; the hero of last year's post-season run had gone on to greener pastures (\$120 million greener) with the Mets, and the Astros suddenly looked a much less potent offensive team. But Houston turned around a terrible start to make the postseason on the back of incredible seasons from their three pitching aces, especially Clemens, who was possibly the best pitcher in baseball in what could be his final season.

With both teams looking to play the same brand of high-excitement baseball, expect to see a lot of stolen-bases on both sides. Two new acquisitions to the teams should lead this speed attack, rookie Willy Tavares for Houston and Scott Podsednik for Chicago will look to get on base and cause havoc for pitchers trying to keep them in check.

With so many of the games likely to go down to the wire, the closer role will be all important. The pitcher brought in to get the "toughest three outs in baseball" in the ninth inning needs nerves of steel and intimidating pitches. Houston's Brad Lidge has been outstanding in this role for years, whereas Chicago is taking a risk by trusting rookie Bobbie Jenks in such a pressure-packed position.

This really is a World Series that is too close to predict, both teams are essentially mirror images of one another, which should make for consistently exciting games and close finishes. Whoever comes out on top, the success of both teams without reliance on power and home-runs can only be a good sign for baseball in the post steroids-scandal era.

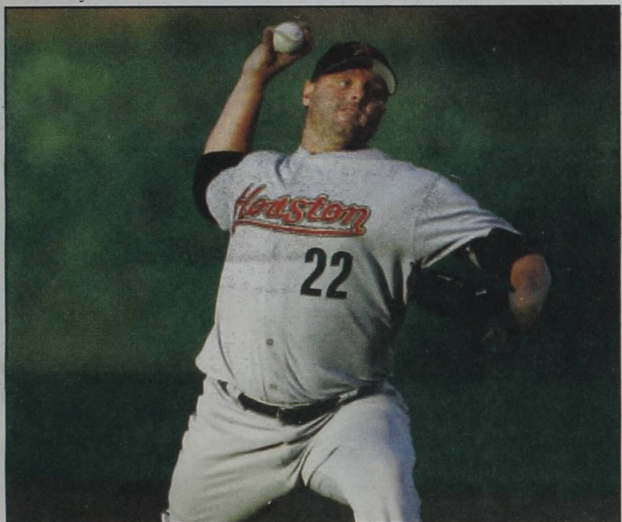
Key Matchup - Pitching, Pitching, Pitching.

Both teams will look to win on the back of their strong pitching, and in both cases an ex-Yankee will be key...

Andy Pettitte - The 'other' ex-Yankee in Houston has been Clemens-esque this season, particularly during the Astros' postseason run.

Jose Contreras - Never made it in New York but has been a pleasant surprise in Chicago where he's been the Sox best pitcher in the second half.

You can catch live World Series action on Channel 5 at 1am on Wednesday 25th October.



ROCKET...Who says baseball players aren't athletes?

BIRD'S EYE VIEW



By Sports Editor
GEMMA DAVIES

LAST weekend Bradford Bulls were crowned this season's Super League champions after defeating local rivals Leeds Rhinos 15-6 in the Grand Final showdown, with the usual tuneful tones of 'Bully Bully' echoing around Old Trafford.

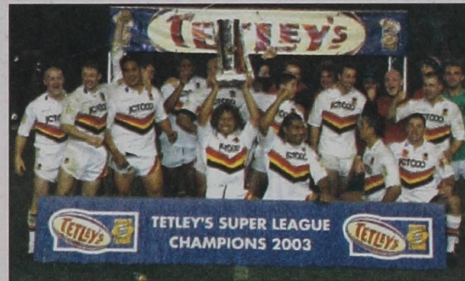
But on the evening that Brian Noble's Bradford heroes equalled the Super League record of number of titles won (becoming level with St. Helens on four), another little record occurred.

The Bulls became the first side to finish the regular season in third place, yet complete the play-offs as champions. Just how legitimate is this system?

St. Helens finished the 28 league fixtures on 47 points, ten ahead of Bradford and with a points difference margin of almost 150 in favour of the North-Westerners.

Although I have to admit St. Helens' loss in the final round of play-off eliminators didn't exactly bring a tear to my eye as Wigan fan, it did make me wonder just what St. Helens gained from a season where, as the table conveys, they had undisputedly been the most consistent side.

The play-off debate has long been an issue in many a sport, at many a level.



BULLY BULLY...Bradford finished third in Super League 2005, yet in the record books will be named as Champions for the fourth time

Here at the University, the third XV rugby union side finished their regular season top of their division, with the nearest competitor nowhere in sight.

However, to win promotion they had to participate in end of season play-offs. This of course, they achieved, but what would have been the feelings amongst the players had the season not finished with promotion?

The hard work and graft that had been evident week in, week out throughout the season would have counted for nothing; all thrown away in a one-off eighty minutes.

The question is do the play-offs really reward the sides who deserve praise and recognition for their performances? Not in my opinion.

The old saying goes that fortune favours the brave, with the play-offs providing the ultimate example of that infamous cliché.

Bradford were the form team in September and October; St. Helens were from March to mid-September, injuries thwarting their season right at the death, yet Bradford will go down in the history books as Super League Champions 2005. Who can argue with that?

This old argument will forever be an issue regardless of the sport or teams involved. There will inevitably be a heartbroken side and the glory boys who make the most of the system. Bradford may be the play-offs' biggest backers for this year, but will they be quite so enthusiastic come next October if the roles been reversed?



Gosforth a safe bet

OUT AND ABOUT
By DAVID BROACH

FRUSTRATED with the Toon army? Bored of Jonny? Still in need of your sporting fix? Then Gosforth racecourse is definitely worth a look!

Armed with a copy of the Racing Post and a fattened wallet, a trip to the races is a must for any student in Newcastle.

Only a short bus or taxi ride away, Gosforth Park racecourse is an easy to get to, but often neglected student venue. Set in attractive countryside, with a great view of town, it makes a pleasant change for the hustle and bustle of the inner city.

A trip to Gosforth Park is a fine mix of the pomp and ceremony of Ladies Day at Ascot, combined with a shady night at the dogs.

The punters range from all walks of life. From the champagne swilling businessmen entertaining clients in the Premier Enclosure to flat-capped pensioners with

bundles of twenty-pound notes huddled around the totes.

The Undercover Grandstand provides a great view of the action, with live commentary screaming out from the loud speakers above, and a variety of bars and cafes in the concourse.

Whatever your knowledge of horseracing, there is plenty of atmosphere and opportunity for excitement, with the opportunity to have close contact with both the horses and the jockeys.

A visit to the races is of course made that bit more exciting by having a small flutter. Beware of over confidence, however.

As the beer and bets start flowing it is quite easy to get carried away; thinking you are the world's utmost authority on equine athletics.

Just because you possess a copy of the Racing Post, watched the Grand National last year and voted John McCririck out of the Big Brother house does not make you an expert.

Study the form of each horse

on the race-card, but don't read too much into it as most of it might as well be written in Mandarin for all the sense it makes.

The tipsters' comments underneath each race will give you some ideas of what to go on but if in doubt, get the missus to pick the one with the nice name or fancy colours. Stick to same bets (the minimum is £2), as this will keep up the excitement, whilst avoiding the need to extend the overdraft.

As student events go, a trip to

Gosforth Races is unfortunately slightly expensive. Pints are £2.70 upwards and the food is of the usual standard and prices you get at stadiums across the country.

If you add to this any transport costs, the £2.50 race-card, the £11 entry and any 'investments' made during the day it all adds up. Despite this however, a visit to the races does not happen every week and could easily replace yet another booze-filled meat market at the Boat.



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Intra-Mural Football...

Hendo walk it

Henderson B 9 Fenham Bache 1
After last week's frustrating draw against the Hurricanes, Henderson B got back to winning ways in style, beating Fenham Bache 9-1.

This tally could have been considerably higher, were it not for Fenham Bache's goalkeeper pulling off a string of good saves. Top goalscorer Jonny Andrews set Henderson B on their way with two neatly-taken strikes taking his tally to 6 for the season.

Richard Plank and Tom Hartley made it four before half-time with two cheeky lobbs. After the break Fenham Bache got a goal back and went in search of a further goal which would have put them back in the game. However, Henderson B's pace up front proved fatal on the counter-attack, with Plank and Hartley adding to their earlier contributions and two strikes from Kev Clark putting the game well out of reach. A fine Henderson display was rounded off with an excellent strike from Garry Hildersley.

Crayola comeback

Hurricanes 3 Crayola 4

The first half was a half of two halves!

For the first 20 minutes it seemed that Crayola hadn't shown up. The Hurricanes quickly took a three-goal lead, one of which was a particularly special 30 yard free-kick from Paul Coleman.

Crayola were soon back in it when a penalty was awarded for a 'deliberate' handball. 10 minutes of playground defending later, the scores were level at 3-3.

It was only after Crayola scored their 4th, early after the restart - another defensive howler - that the Hurricanes woke up. However possession and pressure were not converted into anything meaningful and the Hurricanes' attacking forays were frustrated by a combination of an organised Crayola defence and poor finishing.

Plato outfoxed

P.E Panthers 3 River Plato 0

THE PANTHERS again performed well, and won against the philosophers of River Plato last Wednesday.

Star striker Christie began the proceedings by scoring Panthers' first goal within five minutes of the match starting. This was then followed by a barrage of shots from Rob 'XP' Morgne.

Dino went on to score the second goal of the match in the 30th minute, and after a short break for half time, managed to score the third and final goal for the Panthers - not being put off by Plato's number 9 trying to score from the half way line.

To sum up, the Panthers dominated most of the game, and but for a side who gained 8 corners the score seemed disappointingly low. Overall, though, a good performance.



IM DIARY - RUGBY UNION

YOU KNOW those days when, no matter what you try, *Jonah Lomu Rugby* is proving too much. No combination of X and O will unlock the Classic Australian side of 1987, as Bill McLaren bewails your lack of cohesion?

Your thumbs are bleeding from the effort. This, in real terms, sums up the Larrikins performance last Wednesday, except the blood was emanating from the jaw of Alex Gold - broken in two places - and Mike Roberts' torn ear, and Engines are no Classic Australian side.

In a game low on entertainment but high on injury, Engines dominated on front, playing to their strengths in employing their rapid number 11, who scored the majority of their points. Larrikins scored two fine tries through Blunt and Cover, and had moments of promise, most

notably involving the high-octane Blunt, who was at the centre of everything that was good about Larrikins, and Geddes and Pudge, but these were snuffed out by desperate Engine defending. At the final whistle, Engines were ecstatic, Larrikins in no mood to reflect their name.

Titans sensationally defeated Armstrong 5 points to 3, Titans scoring through McArthur in what was, apparently, a fractious encounter. Neil Barrett was sent off for the Titans, but that will not stem the tide of jubilation that will ensue following this victory. Davey, the Titans full back, was at the heart of the Titans offensive, quashing Armstrong endeavour and raiding forward to pound the defence of the league champions. The Ladies in blue marched on, just getting up over Agrics I in a game that was permanently balanced on the edge of violence. The talismanic veteran of three

Cheeky campaigns, Will Littlejohns, scored in what was his first victory over Agrics I. Ian Ross was another to register five points with a solo effort down the left flank.

In other fixtures, Crayola beat Agrics II 41 points to 7, with Foster accruing points with some accurate kicking for a front-row forward, while Medics administered a painful injection to Southern Fairies, taking the spoils by three points. Elsewhere, Gorilla Tactics got back on track by barging Law Blacks out of the way 19-12.

And so, to misquote Damien Rice, not quite like you said it would be. Armstrong have stumbled early and this leaves the Ladies, Titans and Medics to enjoy the rarefied atmosphere of the top of the table. But for how long?

Thanks go to Haakon Blakstad and Livvy Jacobson for their photographic work.

The Wilson Fluff it up

**Fluffy Wilson 3
Jesmond GlobeTrotters 4**

FLUFFY WILSON, clean off the back of last week's 6-1 victory, finished unlucky losers in this closely-contested Division 4 clash.

In the opening stages, Fluffy were clearly winning the midfield battle but failed to create any clear cut chances, and were punished in the eleventh minute when a defensive error led to the GlobeTrotter's first goal.

The Fluffy defence was breached again before half time and they went

in at the break undeservedly 2-0 down, after equally insipid performances from both teams.

An 'inspirational' half time team talk from Fluffy's player-manager, Bryden Thompson, ensured that they came out from the break a different side.

Early pressure forced a corner and a good delivery was converted at the back post through a Margetts volley; but just moments later a lapse in concentration enabled the GlobeTrotters to regain their two-goal advantage.

Despite being 3-1 down, Fluffy heads

didn't drop and they created several good chances in the following minutes, before dubious refereeing gifted them a close range free-kick. The set-piece was driven into the wall but Carrick was on hand to drill home the rebound, and fifteen minutes from time a well-worked move resulted in a Fluffy equaliser, coolly executed by Emmott.

However, there was a final twist in the plot as a late Fluffy own goal, expertly finished by super-sub Deano, fuelled allegations of match-fixing and ensured the GlobeTrotters all three points.

Intra-Mural Rugby Union...

Gorillas bend the law

Gorillas 17 Law Blacks 10

GOING into this game against the Law Blacks, Gorillas were confident about chalking up their first win.

They dominated the first 20 minutes of the match, however the tough rucking and mauling suggested the Law Blacks forwards would be a strong match for the Gorillas. Relief for the Gorillas came towards the end of the first half in the form of a powerful run from James Bond, resulting in a well-deserved try. However, pressure on the backs from the kick-off forced an error which the Law Blacks capitalised on with only seconds of the half remaining.

In the second half, a Dave Kirk kick found its way to Ben Oswin, and this was followed up by a cheeky try from Gorilla's 'mouthy' scrum-half from inside his own half. After this, though, the Law Blacks came back strongly, and attacked very hard for the last ten with good runs coming from their fly-half and inside-centre. However, Gorillas held a stong defensive line with suprisingly big hits coming from Nick Churm and Lloyd at such a late stage of the game, but it was not enough to stop the Law Blacks Scoring a dubious second try to round off the scoring and see the Gorillas home by a 7-point margin.

Intra-Mural Football...

Untied let it slip

Dyslexic Untied 2 Henderson A 2

DYSLEXIC looked to continue their unbeaten start to the season against last year's champions Henderson A. Finishing just a point behind the leaders, Dyslexic Untied were out for revenge and dominated the first half in every area of the pitch as Henderson took half an hour to get 'out of bed'.

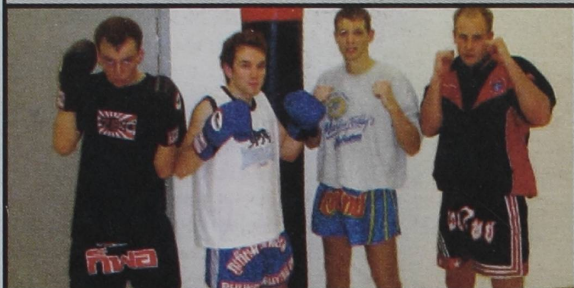
However, with just an own goal to show for their dominance in the first half, Dyslexic still had it all to do in the second, and deservedly doubled their lead midway through the second half as Ross kept his cool to slot confidently past the opposing keeper. Feeling confident of victory the pack was reshuffled, but while the new boys took a while to adjust to the pace of the game, Henderson pressed for a comeback.

Despite a huge offside shout and the limesman flagging, Henderson pulled a goal back with a well-taken finish. Then while Dyslexic seemed stunned, their defence somehow allowed the Henderson striker to turn in the box and finish with ease into the gaping goal, giving Henderson A an undeserved point after Untied should have been home and dry.

Dyslexic eventually woke up but it was too late, missing a chance late on after reasserting their position of dominance on the game. Manager Phil Jenkins was gutted, saying, "it felt like a defeat."

GOT A BUSA OR INTRA-MURAL STORY? E-mail us at courier.sport@ncl.ac.uk

**SPORTING
PROFILES...No. 2**



This week Paddy Paisley talks to the President of Thai Boxing, Michael Stell

What essentially is Thai Boxing?

It's a martial art with origins in the ancient battlefield tactics of the Siamese army. Known as the art of the eight limbs, you can use your elbows, fists, knees or feet to fight. Basically, its stand up fighting.

What is the difference between Thai Boxing and Kick Boxing?

In Thai Boxing, a fighter can use elbows, knees and stand up grappling, whereas kick boxing uses more flamboyant kicks. Thai Boxing generally consists of low kicks while in kick boxing you are not allowed to kick below the waist in competitions.

What do you think makes people take up Thai Boxing?

Thai Boxing is more practical than most other martial arts. I began because I just wanted to do a martial art. It came as a natural progression after boxing. Loads of people though, take it up after their Gap years in Thailand. Boxing in Thailand is the equivalent of football in England.

Is Thai Boxing popular at Newcastle?

Yeah, the club has 250 members. There are more women than men as well.

Why does it appeal to women?

Mainly for fitness, but also for learning some self-defence.

So who is the godfather of Thai boxing at Newcastle?

There's our trainer, Craig Jose, who is a professional Thai Boxer. He has won numerous British titles before and is due to fight in Thailand next month. Also our head coach, Tony Allain, has been a trainer here for six years now.

Other than Craig, who are

the champion Thai boxers? Well, Remy Bonaski is the current K1 champion. Ramon Dekker is probably the all time great. He's fought about 110 fights.

What is K1?

K1 is a tournament that welcomes any form of martial art. So a Thai Boxer could end up fighting a master of Karate. It is massive in Thailand and Japan and has been responsible for bringing Thai boxing to the masses.

Are there any unusual rituals or traditions in Thai boxing?

The Ram Muay is a Buddhist ritual performed before a fight. The fighter offers respect to his teacher through a prayer and a boxing dance. But it's also a way of the two fighters psyching each other out.

What has Thai boxing taught you?

Discipline, controlled aggression and respect. You can punch the living daylights out of each other and still be friends after the fight.

You don't use your fighting skills on the streets of Newcastle then?

No, if you are caught fighting outside training, you are banned from the club. Unless of course it's self-defence.

Finally, what are the best and worst aspects of Thai Boxing?

The worst thing is a dead leg. I'd rather take hits to the head. At least sometimes you can shake off a punch to the head. I'd say the best aspect is the fact that Thai boxing isn't a team game. Its one on one. An all or nothing fight.

If you are interested in becoming a Thai boxer, there are beginners sessions every Monday between 6 and 8.

Durham take the spoils in drab derby



MEN'S FOOTBALL
By NICK MEAKIN
SPORTS EDITOR

Newcastle 0 Durham 2

NEWCASTLE'S flagship football team suffered the ignominy of defeat to local rivals Durham last week as they made a losing start to their BUSA campaign. The Mens' 1st went down 2-0 at Cochrane Park, in a game that did little to suggest that they can improve on last year's mediocre season where they were relegated from the 2nd Division.

Despite the inter-university rivalry, the game was played in a rather muted manner. Both teams struggled to shake of the rustiness of the early season and Newcastle in particular were silent at times and seemed to lack leadership and direction out on the pitch. Newcastle hinted at what they have to offer, but mere hints don't win football matches, as last Wednesday's game proved.

The home side started the brighter, forcing a corner in the first minute but early pressure faded as they too often failed to keep the ball longer than a few passes. There was a distinct lack of movement and options and so all too often the ball was driven wastefully high and long up field much to the frustration of new coach Ian Thompson.

Newcastle were particularly left wanting in midfield and in the first twenty minutes the game seemed to drift past the central pairing of captain Paul Jones and Paddy Creedon. Jones performed industriously but was positioned too deep to link well with Creedon, leaving Durham to overrun midfield.

However, it was the defence who were to blame for Durham's first goal on 18 minutes as an angled ball in from the left caused havoc in the Newcastle box and brought a good save from keeper Chris

Gill, who turned the ball away for a corner. The resulting kick found the head of the unmarked and vertically challenged midfielder Simon Morris who headed past the stationary defence.

The goal stirred the home side and they went on to dominate the rest of the half, with most of the play coming down the left in the form of full back Danny Hall, who had an excellent game throughout. Chances were created but the University were thwarted by a string of smart saves from Durham keeper Ed Campbell who first denied Emerson Hanley when through on goal and then expertly palmed away a low, powerful shot from Simon Thorpe.

Despite this pressure and the half-time words of Thompson, Newcastle and the match were effectively killed off when Durham scored their second goal a minute after the break. Lofty centre back Chris Douglas was at fault when he inexplicably gave striker Christian Foley too much space in the box, allowing the tricky striker to hook the ball past the defender and into the Newcastle net.

Foley was a nuisance throughout the game and the goal gave him the confidence to run at the crumbling University back four. His golden boots dazzled stand-in full back Adam Prickett and he twice nearly added to his tally, firing just over the bar two minutes later and then being denied by an excellent save from Gill late on.

Newcastle tried in vain to get back into the game but couldn't find any rhythm or tempo to their play. Worryingly they lacked inspiration and aside from the trickery of Ross Spaine on the right and the pace of Hanley through the middle the home side looked very short of creativity going forward. The match opened up late on as the University chased the game and both keepers where called upon to make important saves whilst Hall was on hand to block expertly on the line a minute from time.

CONTINUED FROM BACK PAGE

The transition from beach to BUSA is sizeable to say the very least, and I must admit here that I don't understand every rule of the game (apparently you can kick it!) so for this match report I'm taking another approach.

There are a number of University sports I, myself, do not know much about, volleyball is one of them.

My initial thought of each team member either simply keeping the ball up or tapping it over the net were sent askew from the first point. The ferocity at which the ball is struck is frightening. Akin to tennis there are those Andy Roddick-type players whose serve is a real weapon. Others tend to resemble Lleyton Hewitt's style, with strokes and control acting as a very efficient weapon and arcing runs that Thierry Henry would be proud of.

Watching the way the game is played it is difficult not to realise that, like football and rugby, there are formations in play - where there is a 'sweeper' lurking further back and a set of 'wing backs' who control the flanks, set moves being called, dummy switches and fakes. And what is also a pleasure to experience is the teamwork and camaraderie; with each point - won or lost - 'celebrated'.

The game itself, in effect, flashed past me and admittedly the score line was not my main worry, rather the way the game was played. Enjoyable would describe my afternoon, dampened only by the fact that in order to watch the game, rather than sitting in a viewing gallery with a table and coke, I found myself having to sit on the court side floor and so fearing for my life.

That said, volleyball will no longer be a sport I admit to knowing nothing about.



Disappointing start for hockey girls :

WOMEN'S HOCKEY

By KATIE WRIGHT

Newcastle 0 Leeds Met 2

NEWCASTLE'S promotion-chasing Women's Hockey team began the season in disappointing fashion, suffering defeat at the hands of a determined Leeds Met team.

As Newcastle embarked on a second successive year in the second tier, they missed the chance to send out a determined message to their promotion rivals, as they failed to hit the ground running.

Newcastle had made a promising start, having most of the early possession but were unable to create any clear chances.

The loss of a player to injury, however, appeared to destabilise them and the break in play was the catalyst for Leeds to take control.

Their pressure on the ball and persistent tackling dominated proceedings and

allowed Leeds to stamp their authority on the match. Their first real chance came after some neat possession hockey, which ended in the visitors shooting just wide of the far post.

The action continued to focus on the Newcastle goal, with Leeds forcing Newcastle's goalkeeper into a quality save following a solo run and shot, and they would have had more to show for their efforts were it not for their hesitancy in the penalty area.

Leeds' relentless hounding and tackling eventually took its toll towards the end of the half. Leeds pounced on a Newcastle goal kick, and raced into the penalty area, hitting a shot firmly into the back of the net.

The second half began in a similar manner, and after the Newcastle goalkeeper saved the initial penalty corner, the ball ricocheted around the goalmouth, eventually nestling in the back of the net.

Leeds now had a decisive lead and were firmly in the driving seat, looking in no mood to surrender their advantage. They were aided by a Newcastle team habitually surrendering the ball and becoming increasingly ragged.

To halt Leeds' momentum, Newcastle made changes to their attack, giving them the impetus to push forward. Their passing became more incisive and they were unlucky on a number of occasions, failing to make the breakthrough that would have given them a foothold in the match.

As Newcastle pushed forward, they were left vulnerable to Leeds' breaking away, but Leeds passed up their opportunities to kill the game off. So despite improving towards the end of the match, Newcastle had nothing to show for their efforts and they will need to demonstrate enhanced cohesion if they are to realise their promotion dreams.

Dragons on fire

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
By TOM MARLING

Newcastle 91 Leeds Trinity 18

Picture the scene on Wednesday night - not a soul is walking the streets, tumbleweed blows across the barren roads, an eerie silence prevails. You might have been mistaken that the Champions' League was causing this phenomenon, but no, you sir had clearly forgotten that women's basketball had returned to Newcastle.

Newcastle Dragons took on Leeds Trinity, in front of a rapturous sell-out crowd calling for more than holy-water to be spilled.

Whilst the Dragons were impressive in their first BUSA-league game of the year, they will have to prove themselves against much tougher opponents in the future.

Trinity barely deserved to be on the same court, as they failed to show any of Newcastle's hustle or defensive savvy in a game that quickly became a one-sided laugher.

Newcastle did show impressive resiliency, overcoming a potentially devastating ankle injury to star player Kay Protheroe. As Protheroe looked on with her ankle being iced and strapped, she saw a Dragons team in momentary disarray, and only 4 points on the board.

However, her return, combined with Captain Helen Veasey's consistent high-pressure defense buoyed the team to an impressive run of five-straight scoring possessions to finish the first quarter.

The second quarter began in much the same fashion, fast break baskets from the Dragons and structure-less play on both ends of the court by

Trinity saw the scoring-rate continue.

The Dragons also showcased impressive depth, and as both Veasey and Protheroe looked on, Aileen Hill carried the team on her shoulders, finishing with 16 points at the break.

With the score 38-4 at the half way point, it was hard to picture a Trinity comeback, and a ruthless 20-point scoring run to open the half by the Dragons made sure the result was never in doubt.

With the score 58-6, Newcastle refused to concede anything to Leeds, controversially leaving Protheroe in the game until late-on, despite the ankle injury that was clearly hampering her.

With triple-digit scoring ultimately just out of reach Newcastle cruised in for an easy winning score of 91-18. But whilst they looked every bit the Harlem Globetrotters, the Trinity weren't even up to the standard of the Washington Generals and in the future this won't be the case.

Whilst Protheroe was the class player, finishing with an especially impressive 27 points, the night ultimately belonged to the fans, who were seen celebrating long into the night.



Mixed emotions in Badminton openers

BADMINTON
By WILL RICHENS

THE START of the new BUSA badminton season is one that holds much anticipation for both the men's and women's teams.

Focus last Wednesday was upon the women's first team who faced Lancaster, and the men's seconds who had opened against Northumbria.

The men's team are looking to recover from the disappointment of relegation last season. Club President Dan Hufton is confident in achieving promotion, claiming that the Newcastle second team "should win the league this year".

His optimism appears to be well founded, as any problem in lack of quality from last year looks to have been eradicated. The men's team managed a 7-1 thrashing over their local rivals, in what doubles player James Ashdown described as "a nice warm up for the new season".

It was not always as easy as the score suggests however, especially in the singles games. Captain Michael "Rock" Chevasco described one of his opponents, Andy Milne, as a "worthy adversary". Milne was notable as Northumbria's best player, of whom Chevasco regarded as "extremely fit and fast".

Captain of the women's team, Rebecca Rand, was looking to improve further on last year



achievements, in which they managed to finish second in the Northern Conference First Division. However, she did stress that she "doesn't know what the other teams may be like this year" due to "team changes with new freshers".

Newcastle's women did eventually lose to Lancaster; however, the result hinged tantalisingly on the final doubles game. It initially appeared that Newcastle would snatch an overall draw, when Sarah Chattons and Maddy Harison won the first game in their final best-of-three doubles match.

The match came down to the final game, and despite Newcastle's pair recovering from match point down at 14-9 to take the game to a set, they ended up losing the set 3-1, and Lancaster emerged with a 5-3 victory.

The result was however soured over suspicions of foul play on Lancaster's part. Rand commented on the "dodgy tactics" of the visitors, who appeared to have been playing their better players as second-string players. The advantage of this ploy is to tire out the opponents best players for when they play your weaker ones.

Rand's team will nonetheless strive on with their championship bid, and should look forward to next week's fixture at Sheffield Hallam with confidence.

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to open minds.

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Bamburgh Room, Kings Road Centre, Newcastle
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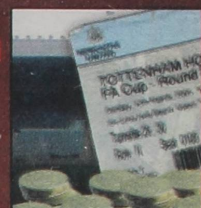
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TICKET WARS:
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BUSA KICKS OFF

PLUS...TOON TROUNCE MANCS

BY RYAN JENNINGS

NEWCASTLE'S Men's Volleyball team stormed to a 2-1 victory over Manchester University at the Claremont Sports Centre last week to set a precedent for the new BUSA season.

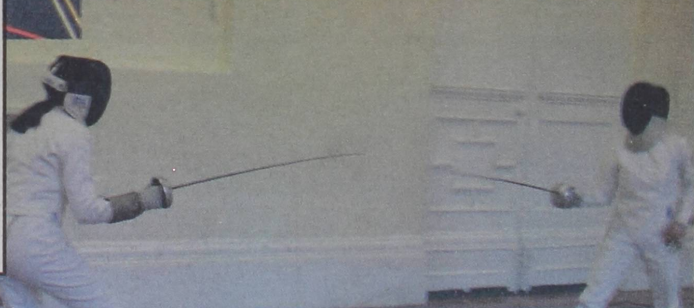
Think volleyball; think

women (or men, depending on your taste) wearing very little on a beach, or a fumble in the sea on holiday in sunny Greece. Afraid not. This is proper volleyball and this is one eye-opener of a sport to watch.

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MEN'S VOLLEYBALL...The Mancs put up a worthy fight



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