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THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF NEWCASTLE STUDENTS

free



Activists cause chaos at Union

Fran Infante
News Editor

A MEETING of the Stop the War Coalition narrowly avoided ending in uproar last Thursday night as two hecklers turned violent and had to be dragged from the Union in handcuffs by police.

Allegedly the two men, both appearing to be in their fifties, are notorious hecklers that turn up at meetings and assemblies of the controversial movement with the unequivocal aim of disrupting them and diverting as much attention as possible from the real issues of debate. That night the focus of attention was on guest speaker, Moazzam Begg, a former Guantanamo Bay detainee and was geared toward intelligent debate of issues surrounding the war in Iraq, and perceived attacks on civil liberties in Palestine.

The two men - who were described by first year Politics student, Alex Aldhous, as "visibly drunk" - repeatedly interrupted the speaker claiming they wanted to ask a question. Each time they were repeatedly told that there would be an opportunity for questions at the end of the talk, but this did little to pacify them and their comments continued until they were asked to leave by one of the three plain clothes police officers who were in the audience. As they were escorted from the stunned room of students, parents and children, their agitation escalated in the area outside the meeting hall on the top floor of the Union.

In the scuffle that ensued one of the men threatened the Union door staff who had been called to help. When warned by the police woman not to make things worse for himself he, as one eyewitness recalled, "went wild", punching one of the Union security staff, Leana Faulder, and assaulting the aforementioned police officer, before the team of six door staff and three police officer managed to pin them against the wall. A tense ten minutes followed as it emerged that none of the plain clothes police officers had handcuffs, the team had to then hold the men to the floor until a back up police van could arrive and the men could be cuffed and taken loudly away.

CONT. ON PAGE 2

BANNED

Union says 'no more' to t-shirt pub crawls

Fran Infante
News Editor

THE SALE and promotion of all t-shirted bar crawls has been permanently banned from the Union and University campus after a Union Council meeting last week.

The controversial motion was passed by the Union Council on Thursday night and will mean that the proliferation of pub crawl organisations that have sprung up over the last year will no longer be allowed to advertise around the building or, as has become traditional, sell their t-shirts outside it.

The bar crawl phenomenon arguably started with Last Man Standing in 2005 and for a while it remained a fairly unique entity. Since September though there has been a rapid increase in the frequency of such events with 11 having taken place this academic year already and another planned before the end of term.

Organisations such as Duck'd, Goos'd and Carnage have moved in on the act and now compete ferociously for the title of Newcastle's most popular student bar crawl. Despite the appeal of these bar crawls amongst students it does appear that a point of overkill has been reached - an attitude reflected in the falling levels of uptake. Second year engineering student, Katie Morris, told *The Courier*, "I used to love the bar crawls, they used to be a big highlight of the term and everyone built up and looked forward to them. Now they have become too common to have any significance and

just really seem like another night out. The only reason I went to the last one was because it happened to be on my friend's birthday. No one seems that interested anymore."

A further consequence of the move will mean that the Union stands to lose around £9,000 in marketing for the bar crawls and around £11,000 in lost bar revenue; a staggering total of £20,000. Advocates of the move which was put forward by the officer team maintain that the Union finances are not, at the end of this year, looking as bad as they have in previous years or as is commonly perceived. They believe that it is entirely possible for these losses to be clawed back from other areas of revenue.

The motion passed by the Council will include any bar crawl that mentions t-shirts or "includes any item of identification which would associate the wearer with a bar crawl".

Although all create some revenue for the Union as well as some donations to charity, the primary aim that they all share is to make money for the organisers and the big name bars which form the drinking route through the city.

Despite the obvious financial considerations, the overriding issue behind the ban has been the concern for student safety. Northumbria University already blocks the promotion and selling of bar crawl t-shirts on their property out of concern for the well being of students as a result of participating in such events.

At the meeting on Thursday it was noted that the publicity of such bar crawls outside the Union seemed to

go against the Union stance on alcohol and their Sensible Drinking Policy as well as the danger it posed to alienating elements of the student population.

In a similar situation last year, York University Union clashed with organisers of Carnage, discouraging student to attend their events as they felt they negated the interests both of student and public safety.

The decision has been met with considerable, and inevitable, opposition. Some have branded the Union hypocritical as the new legislation is unlikely to affect events that take place as part of Freshers' and RAG weeks which arguably fall into the same category. Firm rebuttals from the Union officers however, have maintained that in these circumstances the presence of crew and organisers safeguards the students taking part and act as a safety net to ensure that they get home safely and receive medical attention should they require it. They also do not have the aim of generating commercial revenue.

This is not the case in commercial bar crawls and is why they alone have been targeted.

Much of this action has been prompted by the case of Gavin Britton, an 18 year old student from Exeter University, who, in November 2006 was found dead in the street after taking part in a three hour bar crawl in his first month of University. He died as a result of the massive amount of alcohol in his system; the peer pressured speed drinking that he took part in as part of a Golf Society initiation has been held responsible. As a result of

the inquest into his death which was held last week, Exeter University has banned all student society initiations and it is therefore no coincidence that at Newcastle's Union Council last Thursday, the bid to ban bar crawls was accompanied by a motion from AU President Lydia Oxenham to aid the enforcement of stricter penalties for clubs and societies who are found to be carrying out any form of Fresher initiations.

Despite this ban it is unlikely that the commercial t-shirt bar crawls will stop their efforts to entice students into excessive drinking. One local bar owner has already confirmed to AU President Oxenham that he will allow the organisations to sell their tickets and t-shirts in his establishment and it is expected that other bars will soon follow suit.

PUB CRAWL DIARY DATES 07/08

October 8th - Fresh Duck'd
October 22nd - Last Man Standing
November 4th - Carnage
November 7th - Team Newcastle Pub Crawl
December 4th - Farewell to the Tuxedo Princess
December 10th - Get Goos'd
December 11th - Roast Duck'd
January 27th - Carnage
February 4th - Last Man Standing (RAG week)

March 2nd - On Your Knees
March 10th - Duck'd Egg

>> On the Web This Week



The Courier website has had another revamp. Go to www.thecouriernewcastle.com to check out all the regular features and more, this time with a brand spanking new design!

www.thecouriernewcastle.com

>> QuickFind

- >> News: Architecture students use 'passed on' exam paper 3
- >> Interview: *The Courier* speaks to Jacqueline Wilson 5
- >> Features: What's in your bag? 9
- >> Pulp Pull-out: Including international cuisine Pulp 5
- >> Puzzles Centre spread: crossword, quiz and more! Pulp 7
- >> Features: How safe is where you live? 16
- >> Stuff: Where are they now looks at retail management 20
- >> Sport: Birmingham end hockey girls' dreams 28

>> Weather Watch

Wet and windy for a time on Monday then turning colder by Tuesday with sunny spells but also some wintry showers.

It could get so cold next week that some northern areas could expect snow and temperatures will be low all week. The wind and rain will be strong and consistent so not a great week on the whole!

Protest Panic

Two protesters thrown out of Union after assaulting female police officer and door staff

Fran Infante
News Editor

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Both men were later arrested, one under a violation of 'Section 5 Public Order and assaulting a police officer' the other for 'obstruction.' Eyewitnesses seemed largely shocked by the level of the men's protestations against their meeting.

One, Linda Carruthers a school teacher likened their behaviour to that of 'school children disrupting a class anyway that they could just to get attention. The fact that 300 people of all ages have come here

tonight for sensible, adult debate reflects the community we live in' she told *The Courier* 'those two were disruptive and abusive to everyone who spoke regardless of who it was.'

It appeared though that much of the couple's abuse was targeted at student Courage Idiagabonya who has escaped deportation to Nigeria a number of times on the basis that if he returns he faces death for his previous political activism.

As third year English student Sophie Robson explained 'they interrupted everyone starting from the first speaker from the NUS and were told to be quite by loads of people. The worst heckling came with Newcastle student Courage - you could hardly hear what he said but he defended himself eloquently in the face of the big-

oted abuse.'

Admittedly the Stop the War movement does promote some controversially left wing views on issues such as civil rights - Marxist literature was distributed at the end of the meeting and so obviously this has the potential to provoke an oppositional reaction from those with an alternate viewpoint. However the purpose of the meeting was purely for education and discussion and this is clearly not what this duo was interested in. 'The only thing they were short of was a swastika on their arms' said one eyewitness, 'I'm all for healthy debate but there's a time and a place - clearly all they wanted was a ruck with someone' said another.

A friend of the speaker Begg, who did not wish to be named, said that he had experienced 'silly comments at events before but nothing like this.' He like many others were glad that the men, who had been persistently disruptive at previous events, get the police response they seem to have long deserved. Everyone concerned was however adamant that the unfortunate behaviour of a minority should not be allowed to detract from the overall objective of the meeting; informed, intelligent and rational debate.

Un-fare deal

Taxi window smashed by thrown rock over unpaid £8 fare

Fran Infante
News Editor

RESIDENTS of West Jesmond were awakened in the early hours of Monday morning last week by the sounds of confrontation and shattered glass.

The incident in which the back window of a taxi was shattered by a stone thrown by individuals believed to be part of a student house on Tavistock Road transpired following an altercation between the driver and his passengers over the fare for the journey from a night club in town - a mere £8.

According to the driver involved, Mr George Arkman, he collected the group consisting of two boys and a girl outside Blu Bambu at around 2.15am. All appeared normal until the requested destination of Tavistock Road was reached at which point it emerged that none of the individuals had the cash to pay the fare. Confusion ensued as the passengers alighted from the vehicle leaving the driver no option but to follow in a bid to obtain his fee.

Eventually a credit card was produced and promptly dropped in the back of the taxi requiring Mr. Arkman to unfold the disabled ramp in order to retrieve it.

In the mean time the taxi's meter had continued to rise causing further outrage from the already rowdy passengers, attempting to cut his losses and move on with his night's work.

Mr. Arkman told *The Courier* that he suggested to the group that they round it down from £8.80 to £8 so they could all go their separate ways. This suggestion however did not go down well and aggression escalated as Mr. Arkman claims that one of the male passengers responded to his requests for payment by throwing his chips and garlic sauce takeaway at the driver.

Finally the driver started the taxi and pulled away leaving his disruptive passengers shouting abuse after him in the perpendicular street to their house, Lonsdale Terrace. Eyewitnesses who live on that street report being woken by the shouts and going to the window to see what was going on. One, who does not wish to be named, claims to have seen one of the boys pick up a small rock from the front garden outside his house and throw

it in the direction of the moving taxi.

She said she could not see the taxi at the time and assumed that the loud sound of shattering glass that followed came from a downstairs window being shattered a few houses along. Only as the irate taxi driver came running back down the street did it become apparent that it was the back window of the taxi that had been hit.

The girl at the scene was heard to shout, "Shit! Get in the house", before ushering the boys into the house and shutting the door leaving Mr. Arkman banging from outside.

"I can't believe it man, I just can't believe it," he told *The Courier*. "Problems happen with students all the time but you get used to it. This is ridiculous. I'm twenty-two stone and these drunken kids have done this to my car, it's disgraceful."

The police were called to the scene and arrived just after 2.45am when they gained entrance to the residence and attempted to

calm the driver's agitations.

A scene of uncertainty unravelled as the police officers struggled to establish which individual had caused the damage.

One of the passengers was arrested and put peacefully into the back of the police car having allegedly admitted to the crime. The words of the arresting officer however demonstrate the uncertainty surrounding the event.

"He's admitted to it, but whether it was him or not we can't tell," he told Mr. Arkman. Northumbria Police later released a statement saying that "a 25 year old male was arrested on suspicion of criminal damage and has been bailed for further inquiries." The investigation continues but adds even further ammunition for those who view students a little more than transient inconsiderate pests in an otherwise affluent neighbourhood. Relations with local taxi firms seem to fare little better.

ALL'S NOT FARE...the damage caused to the taxi



Photo: Fran Infante



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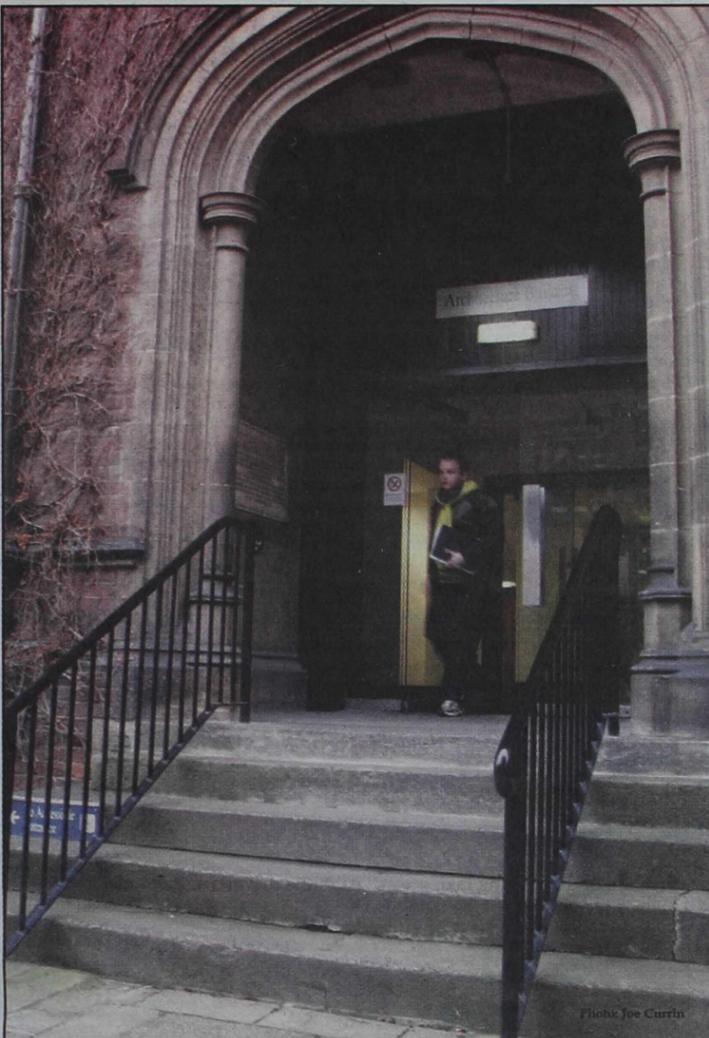


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>> CAREERS WORKSHOP: HOW TO SUCCEED AT INTERVIEWS, 1-2PM, MONDAY 25TH FEB (TODAY) IN THE KING'S ROAD CENTRE



THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE... Their response, or lack thereof, to the 2nd year exam irregularity is controversial

Shaky foundations in Architecture department

■ Scandal being kept quiet by anxious students in cliquy "studio society"

Kate McCann

A GROUP of second year architecture students who cheated on a multiple choice exam have been exonerated by the department concerned, raising serious questions about quality of assessments within the University.

The students, who have not been formally named, obtained a past paper for the architecture landscape exam from a third year student who had kept it from the previous year.

The paper, although not identical to the exam which was set in January, was very similar and gave those students who had access to the questions an unfair advantage over other students on the course.

The exam itself, which was multiple choice and negatively marked, comprised 50 questions taken from a text which students had been told to revise.

The third year concerned, who has also not been named, distributed the paper to second year students in the architecture studios, who then passed it on to their friends.

Many students were aware of the circulation of the paper before the exam took place, with some even passing it around in the corridor before entering the examination room.

This blatant display of disregard for rules set by the University has

lead to questions being raised over the "studio culture" which has emerged within the department; where students are reluctant to express concerns about cheating and unfair practices of their peers for fear of the social implications of their actions.

Many students seemed reluctant to talk about the issue, raising concerns that students who decide to play the system to their advantage can get away with it as long as nobody speaks up.

Education Officer, Ben Potter, told *The Courier*, "...it does seem to set a precedent that when things like this happen little or nothing can be done, especially if people are not willing to stand up and make a noise about it."

The University policy on assessment irregularities is clear, stating that "introducing examination scripts into the examination process otherwise than in the course of an examination" is an infringement of the University code of conduct and disciplinary action can be taken.

However, unless a student makes a formal complaint to the department, staff are not obligated to inform the University or take any further action themselves.

In an email received by all students on the course last week, the DPD for architecture, Dr Hentie Louw claimed, "No one needs to feel guilty in this case of having 'cheated', go-

ing on to explain that re-examining the module would have caused "disruption" and "taken time to resolve".

The situation has angered many students who feel that absolving those who studied the past paper is letting them off without punishment. One second year student told *The Courier*,

"I'm really disappointed that the school isn't going to punish those who cheated, it just makes the rest of us feel like we worked hard for nothing."

"I'm glad the University hasn't made us re-sit the exam because a lot of people worked through Christmas revising for it, but letting the cheaters get away with it just seems wrong."

The situation raises serious questions about the way University exams are managed and assessed, especially multiple choice exams where past papers are not available online.

Problems arise because students are allowed to remove exam scripts from the room once the exam is finished, often allowing papers into the public domain.

The architecture department are continuing to monitor the situation and claim that irregularities in marks will be noted and dealt with accordingly when final grades are calculated at the end of the year.

Business School unveil sensational new building

■ Stunning new 21st Century building for Uni Business School

Janelle Hardacre

NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY business school has announced its relocation to the £200 million Downing Plaza development.

The new school will be located on the former Scottish and Newcastle Brewery site, opposite St. James Park in the city centre. It is part of an ambitious project, "Science Central", in which Newcastle University is a major partner, along with One North-East and Newcastle City Council.

The new 100,000 sq ft development will house a collaboration of science, business and education departments.

Downing Plaza is part of a large-scale development known as Newcastle's Science City.

As well as the stunning new "Sci-

ence Central" venture, the 600,000 sq ft mixed use development will feature a 200-bed, four star hotel, a 462 bed student village, 24 residential apartments, 10,000 sq ft of retail space, basement car parking for up to 190 vehicles and 200,000 square ft of offices, across six iconic new buildings.

Paul Armstrong, Marketing and Development manager for Newcastle University Business School told *The Courier* how the school are delighted by the expansion plans: "Currently the School is spread across three sites so moving to a purpose built, brand new facility will offer the very best facilities for all our students and staff, all under one roof."

The innovative new buildings, designed by Ian Simpson Architects, are set to be another positive addition to Newcastle's varying array of architecture and will be clad in mod-

ern, iconic materials including stainless steel and glass.

The University is taking a 22 year lease on Downing Plaza, starting from 2010. Professor John Leopold, Acting Director at Newcastle University Business School, said: "We are looking forward to being in such a fine building on this prestigious site."

"Our relocation here will be a major benefit to our many students and will undoubtedly help to engage greater engagement with the business community."

Paul Houghton, Director at Downing, said: "A letting of this magnitude is a major milestone for Downing Plaza and the city of Newcastle."

"Downing has been associated with this site for a number of years and it is exciting to see our vision coming to fruition. We are delighted to have Newcastle University Business School as anchor tenants."



CITYGATE...The impressive new Business School

Classes on Wednesday cause clashes



Michael Watt

FOR most students, being blessed with a Wednesday afternoon free of lectures, seminars and the other trappings of a university degree means taking the opportunity to laze out on the sofa.

For the more dedicated members of the student body, Wednesday afternoon represents the chance to compete at their chosen sport with other universities for BUSA points, pride and prestige. Newcastle University puts great emphasis on encouraging the endeavours of its sporting students and the recent victory over Northumbria in the Stan Calvert Cup seems to validate this policy.

However, there have been insistent complaints by students doing many different degrees that lectures, seminars and teaching classes are being scheduled on Wednesday afternoon, which is time specifically earmarked by the University for sports matches.

Under the current system, teaching on Wednesday ends at 1pm, but several courses have been accused of running classes even later in the afternoon, trespassing on time allocated for sport and preventing students from competing in matches.

Sarah Gowing, former Ladies Hockey Club Captain, views this in-

coherence between academic time and sporting activity as a problem, stating that it often retards player development and jeopardises the fortunes of many teams in important BUSA matches, as the absence of just a few key players can mean the difference between victory and defeat. Miss Gowing went on to note that the problem is particularly acute for sports with a smaller player base, who, unlike the rugby or hockey teams, cannot replace absent players that easily.

Some students stress that ending lectures at 1pm still interferes with matches. Newcastle University Rugby Club Captain Rich McCartney notes that his team often needs to leave Newcastle at 10 am in order to travel to away matches, a time which students are often unable to make due to compulsory seminars or important lectures.

Ending classes at 1pm even creates problems for home games, as the team needs to be at the ground for 12:30 pm. It is not just students on high intensity courses such as medicine, dentistry or engineering which encounter problems.

McCartney himself currently studies Business Management, which only has 6 hours of teaching per week. However, two of his six hours run from 11am to 1pm on Wednesday, leaving his academic studies in continual conflict with his sporting pursuits.

Kelly Brough, who plays for the women's rugby team and studies geography, also echoes this complaint, saying that three hour practicals are often scheduled on Wednesday afternoon, resulting in up to a third of

her class missing at least some of this important study time in order to represent Newcastle in matches.

Students who pursue sport seriously at Newcastle University often say that the academic staff do not recognise its importance to the lives of so many people on the campus, and often regard studying for a degree to be the be all and end all. Mark Crane, a Student Committee Member in the School of Modern Languages notes that '[lecturers] often fail to understand that without access to sporting opportunities, students would just not come to Newcastle University.'

Academic studies and sport need not be mutually exclusive. Sarah Gowing comments that many lecturers do not realise that being selected to represent their university at the BUSA level is a 'major honour' for students.

Although she concedes that BUSA players are given some leeway, intramural matches are 'just as important' for students, and participants in these matches are often not given the same amount of sympathy and understanding from lecturers.

The academic staff have been quick to stress their respect for student's sporting pursuits. Karen Livingstone from the School of Modern Languages states that 'Wednesday afternoons are avoided at all costs' by class schedulers.

However, due to severe pressures on the timetable, there are some unavoidable instances where lectures or seminars do take place on that protected time.

Ms Livingstone also said that cancelling these Wednesday afternoon classes would lead to further time-

table clashes elsewhere during the week and would only cause more disappointment for other students.

It seems that sporting students are caught in a classic Catch 22 situation - if they attend all their classes they may forfeit their place on the team and jeopardise the result of important matches, but if they play in all the matches they may miss key parts of their academic studies.

Sarah Gowing, who has been part of the sporting set-up at Newcastle University for five years, admits that there is no obvious, easy fix to this problem.

Pressures on academic time mean that lecturers are unlikely to allow the teaching period to be further restricted on Wednesday.

The solution of course lies in a compromise, but the academic staff appear to have the upper hand at the bargaining table, as even Colin Blackburn, the Director of Sport at the Newcastle, recognises that a good degree should be the ultimate aim for

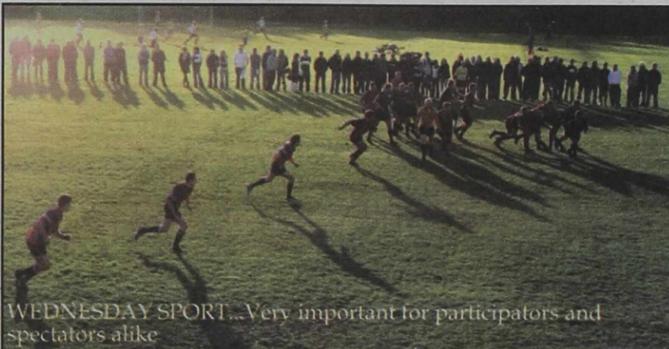
university students.

Although he recently met with three undergraduate deans aiming to prevent the 'creeping impingement' of academic courses upon time reserved for sports, he also says that 'very few of our students will become professional sportsmen or women.'

Even if they do, this career will be short, which is why a degree is so important. It gives students something to pursue after their sporting career has ended.

This issue may never be fully resolved to the satisfaction of both the academic and sporting sides of the University, but it is clear that many students who take part in sport see it as a major problem which can affect both their studies and their performance on the field.

Newcastle University must make extra efforts to define the line between academic study and sporting performance if its students are to achieve their full potential in both.



WEDNESDAY SPORT... Very important for participants and spectators alike

Keep it quiet!

Initiative encouraging students to be more considerate in the community

Gemma Davies
Editor

YOUR UNION is appealing to your better nature and urging to think of your neighbours with the Silent Students Happy Homes (SSHH) campaign, which launched last week.

The campaign raises awareness of any unnecessary noise students may make whilst living in the local area, particularly at later hours when coming home from an evening out.

Look out for posters, taxi stickers and window stickers over the coming weeks as the Union works to make sure all students in the city are aware of how important it is to keep the noise levels down - even for your fellow student neighbours!

The Welfare and Campaigns (WAC) were at Solution last Friday giving out lollies and stickers as people leave to remind them to quieten down on their way home for the benefit of the local residents.

To tie in with the campaign, the Union will be hosting a silent disco on 4th March whereby the only music played is through headphones that each person will be wearing, thus creating the idea of a silent nightclub!

The campaign has the support of the University Accommodation Service who are always keen to emphasise how important it is that Newcastle students are an accepted and welcome part of the local community.

Paul Bandeen from the University Accommodation Service said, "It's important that students are accepted and integrated into the community."

"This campaign is a great way to re-

mind people of their roles and responsibilities and we're fully backing it."

Newcastle's Student Support Officer, Rosie Duffield who is leading the campaign said, "The number of noise complaints has been low this year which is great, but there's always more we can do to encourage students to keep the noise down, particularly on the way home from a night out."

"This campaign aims to raise awareness amongst students and remind them to be respectful to other residents in the area."

"We are also encouraging students to be aware of noise at home, for instance playing loud music or having the TV on a high volume, as this can also be a disturbance to neighbours."

The campaign isn't just for one week, however. Newcastle's Union are pledging to carry the SSHH logo on all their event posters and continue the free lollies after Solution to remind students to think of their neighbours all year round.



Newcastle Professor scores impressive literary hat trick

Anoushka Periyar

SEAN O'BRIEN, Professor of Creative Writing at Newcastle University, has achieved unprecedented success after scooping three major awards within a year for his inspirational poetry collections.

In March 2007 O'Brien was presented with the Northern Rock Foundation Writer's Award in acclaim of his latest publication 'The Drowned Book'.

The award is worth £60,000 over three years, providing the necessary financial support to allow O'Brien to concentrate on his writing.

In October he was awarded his third Forward Prize, this time for Best Collection, and in January 'The Drowned Book' also earned him the T.S Eliot 2007 Prize.

This collection, written over five years, employs the motif of water across a selection of elegies to pay tribute to several of his deceased friends.

When asked by The Courier which award he felt most honoured to receive, O'Brien considered the T.S Eliot Prize to hold special significance as it is in the name of one of the most prominent poets of the 20th Century.

On presentation of the Northern Rock Award he pledged to take on 'less bread and butter stuff'. As a freelance writer, however, he finds it hard to turn work down. "I was surprised and honoured to receive these awards."

It's very encouraging. It's also important to attract new readers to contemporary poetry, and this kind of publicity helps to do that."

Indeed the press coverage which

inevitably follows these awards provides more work for O'Brien.

As the publicity calms down, however, so does the demand, allowing him to concentrate on his upcoming literary projects. Currently he is juggling several projects.

He is writing a novel, a new poetry collection, short stories and a play, 'Home Fires', which will be produced at the Live Theatre on the Quayside.

He is also translating the second part of Dante's Divine Comedy 'Purgatorio', for which he has previously translated the first part 'Inferno'.

O'Brien, who previously held the position of Professor of Poetry at Sheffield Hallam University, now teaches the Creative Writing Postgraduate course at Newcastle.

He believes the University's Creative Writing department is a good community, nurturing a young course which is growing in strength and reputation. Mod-

ules such as 'Creative Writing' and 'Poetry Workshop' are available to undergraduates, whilst Alliterati magazine, published once a semester, offers students an opportunity to act autonomously and have their own work published within the university.

O'Brien anticipates the forthcoming opening of The Northern Writer's Centre on Campus as further developing the department and enhancing the North East's strong reputation for poetry and fiction. Situated in the current Medical Centre, he predicts that 'it will provide a purpose-built venue for literary events and conferences, as well as study space and offices for literary organizations including New Writing North.'

Its work will be international in scope. O'Brien has set a precedent for new writing in Newcastle, promising great things for upcoming literature in the North East.

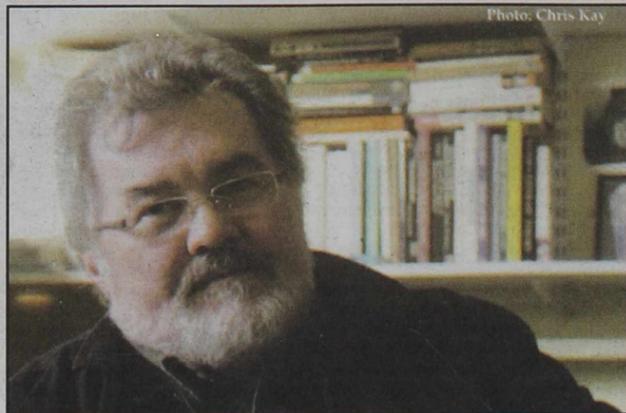


Photo: Chris Kay

Iconic Author, Dame Jacqueline Wilson

She has influenced the reading of thousands of young girls and can now add a DBE to her accolades. FRAN INFANTE chats to the sixteen year old school leaver turned award winning author of Tracy Beaker...



Fran Infante

shocked at how many people of university age still get excited at the mention of your name or your books even now that they're in their 20s. Does this popularity come as a surprise to you?

Jacqueline: I'm delighted that my books have made an impression!

F: Everyone seems to have their favourite novel of yours, do you?

J: I like The Illustrated Mum best.

F: Several of your novels have been televised. Did this come about as a result of their popularity or was that your plan at the time of writing?

J: I always concentrate on writing novels that will hopefully appeal to children - I don't think about possible television serialisation when I'm writing.

F: 'The Story of Tracy Beaker' has now sold over 1 million copies in the UK alone. Did you ever think it would become such a huge hit when you wrote it?

J: No, I thought Tracy would just be popular with a few children - I'm as-

“ I thought Tracy would just be popular with a few children - I'm astonished at her success... ”

tonished at her success, but very pleased!

F: Your novels deal with really serious and quite controversial issues that modern kids have to face, does your inspiration come from any personal experience?

J: I don't generally write from personal experience, I much prefer to make it all up.

F: You left school at 16, is this a decision you ever regretted? Or do you feel you benefited from an early start in the world of work?

J: I used to wish I'd been to university - but girls from my sort of background left school early in those days.

F: Reportedly you wrote your first book aged 9, what advice would give to young writers looking to break into the industry?

J: This 'book' was only twenty pages long and not intended for publication. I always advise young writers to read lots and to keep a diary. If you want to get your work published you have to be very aware of what is popular - and then try to produce work that is entirely different and original but will still fit into this slot.

F: What made you make the transition from journalism to being a children's author?

J: I didn't really want to be a journalist, but I had to pay the bills. I wasn't sure I'd ever make it as a children's writer but it's something I had always wanted to do from an early age.

F: As an author what made you focus on the pre-teen age group?

J: I like to think that I write for children of all ages but I suppose that it's because I can remember what it was like being ten very vividly (though I frequently forget what I've done last week!).

F: Have you ever been tempted to seriously pursue other forms of literature and leave this genre behind?

J: I wrote five crime novels for adults long ago and also radio plays - but I much prefer writing for children and teenagers.

F: You seem to have a new book released every few months. Can you see yourself continuing to write at this rate for the rest of your career?

J: I would very much like to slow down a little! But I do enjoy all the rushing about and meeting people that is also involved in promoting my books.

F: Do you have Newcastle anywhere on your itinerary for book signings in the near future?

J: I'm not travelling to Newcastle on my next tour in March, but my publishers have said I might possibly be in the area in October.

F: Is there anything else you like to achieve over the next five years?

J: I'd like to find more time for reading.

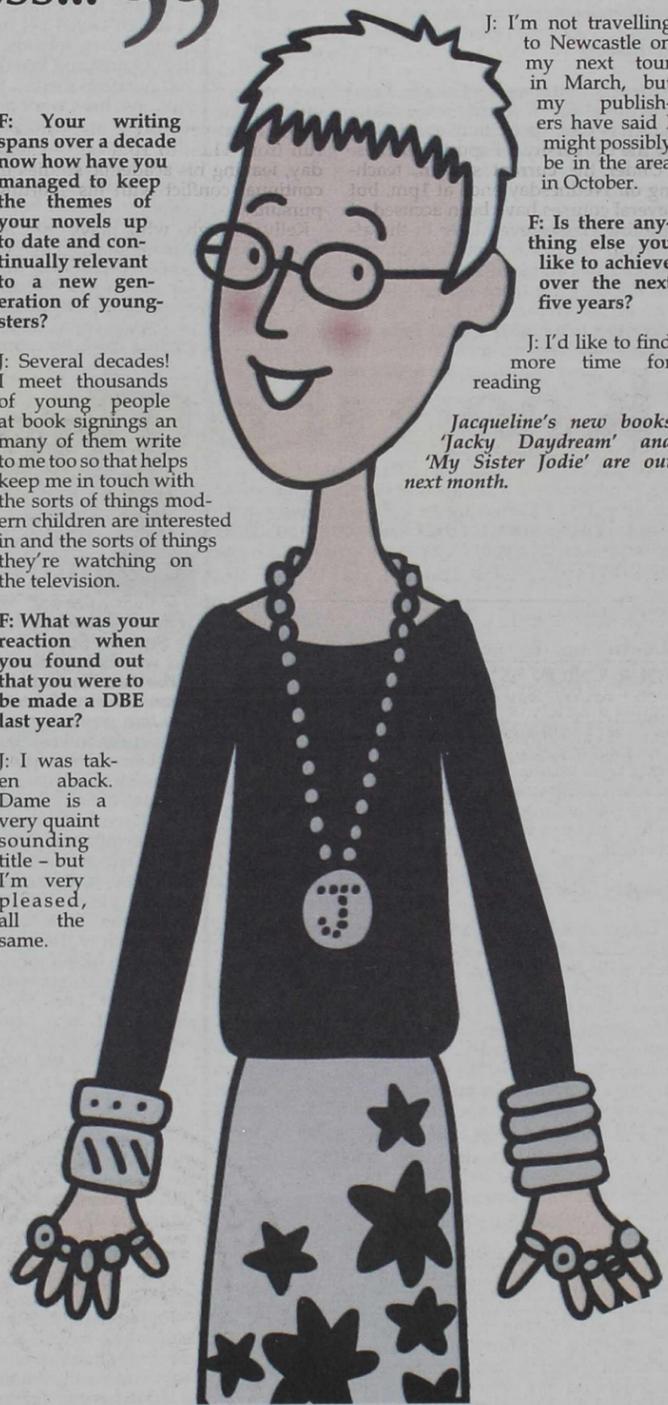
Jacqueline's new books 'Jacky Daydream' and 'My Sister Jodie' are out next month.

F: Your writing spans over a decade now how have you managed to keep the themes of your novels up to date and continually relevant to a new generation of youngsters?

J: Several decades! I meet thousands of young people at book signings and many of them write to me so that helps keep me in touch with the sorts of things modern children are interested in and the sorts of things they're watching on the television.

F: What was your reaction when you found out that you were to be made a DBE last year?

J: I was taken aback. Dame is a very quaint sounding title - but I'm very pleased, all the same.



WORDS OF THE WEEK

Fran Infante

Quotes of the Week:

"We live in an age when pizza gets to your home before the police."
- Jeff Marder

"Revision is only revision if it involves something you have already learned. Otherwise, it is reparation and regret."
- Harriet Swain, *The Art of really effective revision*, *The Guardian*, February 19th 2008.

Student skis 150 miles to get home

A student from Yangste University, China attempted to make the journey home on skis after the worst winter weather in fifty years brought all transports systems to a standstill.

He got twenty-five miles before he was stopped by police and driven to a long distance bus station. The National Student quotes him as explaining his actions saying: "I didn't want to stay at school alone, so I rented a set of skis."

Tit-illating

An Iranian student in Canada has been sentenced to two months in jail for sexual assault after kissing a woman's breast in an elevator. At the time of sentencing 25 year old Farhood Azarsina claimed "You can't expect all males to control themselves when the breasts are out."

Life Long Learning

Thought to be one of the oldest students in the UK MA Sociology student Alfred Alexander from Aberdeen turned 90 years old last week.

Referred to as 'Alfie' by his fellow students he continues to actively promote student rights despite being more than four times the age of most of his classmates.

Fat Sculpting Students

Three Catering Students from Adam Smith College in Fife, Scotland have triumphed at the annual Works in Fat competition. Collecting the gold, silver and bronze awards between them for their sculptures in solid lard the threesome stood out for their intricate designs and figurines.

Pot-ted plants

Students from the University of Michigan are being questioned by police after claims that they have been using their Biology project, in which they were asked to grow a variety of perennials, herbs and vegetables as a cover to grow Marijuana plants.

As reported by the Seattle Post-Intelligencer the plants were seized from a University greenhouse near the main campus after they were spotted by a member of staff who was monitoring the progress of the project, giving a whole new meaning to the term 'extra credit.'

Naughty Schoolgirl

A Tokyo man has been arrested after turning up in a high school dressed in a girls' school uniform complete with flowing wig. Thirty-nine year old Tetsunori Nanpei was apprehended after school children screamed at the sight of him.

He attempted to conceal himself inside the school, hoping his outfit would allow him to blend in, unfortunately though before long his wig was lost and his cover blown. On being taken into custody Nanpei claimed he bought the costume on the internet and just put it on for a stroll near the school last Wednesday.

You're Knick-ered

A Singaporean Professor in a Chinese University has pleaded guilty to stealing women's underwear from University dorms. The Professor was caught by dormitory security who later found several sets of knickers and bras in his backpack, after garments started to be reported missing from washing lines. Reportedly a lawyer for the thirty-nine year old has defended his client claiming that he suffers from a psychiatric disorder and has been stealing women's underwear since he was 14 years old.

DNA database debate is necessary



Paul Brannon

W e Brits seem obsessed with our right to privacy, our right to civil liberties, our right to this and that; more so than many other nations.

However, it seems that nobody is willing to accept that liberties and freedoms come with a cost. It is a privilege to live in England with the freedoms and benefits that we enjoy because of it, and I firmly believe that all that we take for granted on a daily basis comes with a price.

Sadly, we live in a world where we are a primary target for terrorism, from various sources including Islamic fundamentalists, the quiet-for-now but ever-present IRA and the growing threat of North Korea, to name a few hostile third parties. We also seem to be fighting this war on two fronts, and domestically, troubles are almost as bad, as we are rapidly falling into a pit of social decline—gun crime is up to approximately 30 incidences of fire-arms offences daily, murder rates generally aren't decreasing, and people are literally getting away with crimes (except of course, the heinous British motorist...)

I haven't even yet mentioned the threat of home-grown terrorist splinter groups who turn against and bite the very hand that feeds and nurtures them... Something has to give, but most Brits want a mile from the Government, but are unwilling to budge an inch.

So, when I read suggestions in the *Guardian* and the *Independent* that a senior police official had suggested that a national DNA database should be compiled, where every British citizen will be required by law to have their DNA taken and stored in a secure, national database in the hopes of increasing crime and terrorism prevention, I was shocked, if not surprised at the immediate and widespread criticism such a suggestion elicited from the population, and of course

the Government.

A senior police officer has argued for a universal register, after two killers were convicted on DNA evidence. Sally Anne Bowman's killer, Mark Dixie, and Suffolk serial murderer Steve Wright were both captured because their DNA was taken after unrelated offences.

But the Home Office said a mandatory database "would raise significant practical and ethical issues". The DNA database, which covers England and Wales, currently contains around 4.5m profiles - routinely taken from criminal suspects after most arrests.

“ Brits want a mile from the Government but are unwilling to budge an inch ”

It is already the largest of its kind in the world but is controversial.

Since 2004, the data of everyone arrested for a recordable offence - all but the most minor offences - has remained on the system regardless of their age, the seriousness of their alleged offence, and whether or not they were prosecuted; that is a lot of information.

Ok, the Government don't have the best track record at keeping our data secure, but is anybody really hurt by losing their driving license details? I doubt it.

However, if it were my friend that was murdered and whose corpse had been sexually assaulted, I'd hope that the culprit would be put in jail for good, even if I upset a fair few

pro-liberty activists along the way.

Every criticism against such plans is wholeheartedly understandable, however I really don't know how the general public expect our government, police and intelligence services to protect the country, when everybody is so thoroughly convinced that the powers that be want an Orwellian police state.

They don't. It might feel like it when there is CCTV everywhere, but if you have nothing to hide, what's the problem?

Everyone seems so preoccupied with 'defending civil liberties' and criticising the police, but nobody takes any positive steps forward to increase the security of our nation.

If you are mugged or raped, you'd sure as hell want some chance of identifying the criminal. Imagine how many rape victims would achieve justice if there were a national DNA database?

Imagine how many smug criminals who committed crimes ten years ago and think that they got away scot-free could be caught with the new measures? Justice could and would be achieved for considerably more people than it is now.

Rather than criminalising the entire population (as is one favoured objection to the plans), I believe that such measures can only exonerate more innocent people. Ok, you're accused of a crime, there's DNA on the scene, it isn't yours, and then you're exonerated quickly.

I'm not naive enough to suggest that a national DNA database is a silver-bullet to the abolition of crime in the U.K, nor am I suggesting that it is a faultless proposal, but I am astonished that there is not even going to be a debate in the Commons about such a potentially profound issue.

I wonder whether the consensus would change in Government if the police were unable to identify the DNA of the perpetrator of a murder of a government official's wife, should such an event occur.

The ever Bigger Brother



Ben Woodward

A h, the latest storm in a teacup - the police think that we should have a compulsory national DNA database.

Move aside Archbishop, someone else has offended our delicate Daily Mail sensibilities this week. Some clarity: half the reason the papers have kicked up such a storm over the latest developments in DNA evidence is so that they have an excuse to print more pictures of Sally Anne Bowman (whose killer may have been caught sooner if there had been a National DNA register).

"She was a model. Did you know she was a model? Just in case you didn't, here are several photos from her modelling career augmented by a few candid holiday snaps. Now back to the murder case." I believe it's known as Missing Pretty Girl Syndrome, and it's bloody cringeworthy.

However, once the hacks had wiped the dribble off their keyboards, some of them started making sense.

The UK has the largest police database of citizens' DNA in the world. Over 3.4 million people have their information stored on it, since you can be forced to give DNA following an arrest for any offence. I know people who have been arrested for drunk and disorderly (or as we call it round our way, "acting like a student") and subsequently wound up on the database despite never being charged or convicted of an offence.

There are over a million people like this, and in England and Wales their information is never deleted once it's on the system.

But fair enough. After all, it was an arrest for petty theft in 2003 that netted Steve Wright, the Suffolk serial killer. Wright's DNA was entered into the database and five years later it led to his conviction. And yes, poor photo-

genic Sally Anne's murderer could have been banged up within about a day if the police had had his DNA. Arguments for compiling a universal database of everyone in Britain? Yes.

Convincing arguments? Well there are well over 60 million people currently residing in the United Kingdom, so presumably compiling a universal database would take a little bit of work.

Let's just presume that the resources behind this almighty operation are going to magically appear from somewhere. I mean, the police do have an infinite amount of money,

“ We like to imagine civil servants as faceless automatons doing our bidding, but they're only human ”

time and manpower, right? Right.

The government have already shown recently that they cannot really be trusted with our personal information.

Just in case you weren't aware of how shocking their lack of organisation is - they lost the name, address, date of birth, National Insurance number and bank details of 25 million people.

What if, while comparing DNA, there was a clerical error and a perfectly law-abiding citizen wound up looking at a rape charge com-

mitted by someone vaguely related to them (or a complete stranger)?

Weirder things have happened. We like to imagine civil servants as faceless automatons doing our bidding, but they're only human. God knows how many screw-ups you or I would make in that position.

Last year a senior judge stated that the current system is unfair and biased against ethnic minorities, while a universal database would be more fair.

However, this is surely a case of shooting the messenger. A disproportionate amount of ethnic minorities on the database would either mean that crime is linked to race or that many police officers arrest first and ask questions later, particularly when the suspect is black or Asian.

It would be nice if forcing everyone in the UK to submit their DNA would provide a simple solution to the problem, but it wouldn't. Hence that argument is a total non-sequitur.

We're all going to accept the much-hated (and pointless) ID card scheme whenever the government finally put it into action. Would they not have us on a short enough leash already without taking DNA from every citizen?

Like ID cards, we will presumably be paying for the pleasure of painting a slightly larger target on our backs for the convenience of The Powers That Be.

And whatever happened to innocent until proven guilty? I have no problem with rapists and murderers (even those arrested for minor offences, really) having their DNA stored, because they have been identified as a risk to society.

But the government was right not to consider taking it any further. When I commit a crime the police can take whatever bodily fluids they want, but until then I'll keep them to myself, thanks.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Joe Daunt

Barnardo's play writing competition: '10play'

The children's charity Barnardo's are running a play writing competition aimed specifically for students.

Industry professionals will judge the competition known as '10play', with the winner having their play performed live at a theatre in Liverpool.

The competition is a great chance to show off your writing skills, or for anyone who has an idea for a film or TV programme.

For those interested, you must construct original ten-minute plays with all £10 entry fees being donated to Barnardo's. Every single script will be read by the professionals at LA Productions, a highly respected TV and film production company.

The best entrants will be submitted to a judging panel consisting of Colin McKee (one of the founders of Brookside), Jimmy McGovern (writer of Cracker and the BAFTA award winning show The Street), Jack Thorne (Shameless, Skins) and former 10play contestant Dave Kirby. Dave said that '10play gave me a great opportunity and platform to prove to others that I could write...it's a wonderful opportunity for aspiring writers or anyone who wants to see if they've got what it takes'.

To register online go to: www.barnardos.org.uk/10play.

Alternatively post your script and cheque (made payable to Barnardo's) to Michael Phillips, 10play, Barnardo's, 7 Lineside Close, Liverpool, L25 2UD.

A final reminder that all you need to do is to write your script ten minutes in length and pay £10 entry fee. Best of luck!

Students required to help volunteer for The National Blood Service

The National Blood Service are looking for volunteers to help promote forthcoming blood donor sessions on campus.

This could be anything from handing out flyers, organising table top displays or distributing posters.

They are also open to suggestions for any other ways students can think of promoting the blood donor sessions.

For anyone wishing to donate blood themselves, the sessions will be held on Thursday 17th and Friday 18th April in various locations around campus. For further information contact Phil at phillip.hay@newcastle.ac.uk

Interviews for Freshers' Week Crew 2008

Forms are now available from Union Reception for people who'd like to get involved with being on the Freshers' week crew in 2008.

Fill it in, hand it back then get yourself along to the interviews to get yourself a place on the 2008 crew!!

Form Deadlines:
Supervisors/Chiefs: 4pm, Tues 26th February

Crew: 4pm, Tues 4th March
Interviews:
Supervisors/Chiefs: 9-5pm, Fri 29th Feb & Fri 7th March

Crew: 9-5pm, Mon 10th, Wed 12th & Thurs 13th March

Drivers: We will also need a trusty, fun-loving fleet of drivers to compliment the old guard, so if you are over 21 and hold a full driving licence, we need you! Get in touch with us at freshers.week@ncl.ac.uk.

Top graduates Teach First

Lindsay Gulliver

TEACH FIRST is a new British graduate programme which recruits the best students our universities have, and trains them to enter some of the toughest schools in the country once they finish their degrees.

It is their mission to address society's disadvantages by transforming "exceptional" graduates into "effective and inspirational" teachers who will become leaders of their chosen field. In particular, they will target those students who would not normally consider pursuing a teaching career, to do so in lieu of a high-powered city job.

Some secondary schools often face "significant obstacles" including high pupil mobility, multiple spoken languages and families suffering the effects of deprivation. It is hoped that with the introduction of excellent, newly graduated teachers to these schools, these obstacles which have hindered the education of thousands of underprivileged pupils can be overcome.

The radical new programme takes talented graduates, and instead of joining the ranks of big business and banking, these young men and women are trained as teachers and sent, temporarily, into some of Britain's most difficult schools. Recruits are only committed to the scheme for two years, after which they can leave, in many cases joining companies at a higher level than those contemporaries who have joined businesses straight out of university. There is evidence that the experience of teaching in tough environments can make one appear a far stronger candidate to employers.

Teach First, which is ranked 14th in the Times Top 100 Graduate Employers, expects participants to make a difference not only in the classroom, but also in their wider school community.

The Teach First website extended this point further: "Through the leadership development component of the programme and by using their own initiative, participants are encouraged to channel resources to where they are most needed.

Using creativity and drive, participants are expected to raise the aspirations to the highest levels and unleash new opportunities that will measurably benefit individual pupil performance, while enhancing the quality of life experienced by all in their school communities."

A 2008 Ofsted Report, judged the young teachers to be "amongst the most exceptional trainees produced by any teacher training route", adding in one school, that a rapid improvement in standards could be attributed "almost entirely to the contribution of TeachFirst participants".

Ben Potter, the Union's Education Officer, told The Courier, "It seems to be a very good scheme, both for graduates and for schools. The social

aspect especially is a great step forward to have more school-age kids exposed to high flying university graduates.

I think it would probably have a very beneficial impact on their attitude towards university. I think it also has the aspect that the graduates will often be younger than most of the other teachers they may have come into contact with. This can be beneficial as the kids can relate more to someone closer to their own age."

He continued: "From the graduates point of view, it's a great alternative to a normal graduate recruitment scheme. The number and calibre of businesses that back the scheme is immense, and it's especially good if a graduate can get on one of the schemes which means they automatically get offered a job after the two years of the teach first scheme.

The skills and experience they get will be invaluable and even if they don't choose teaching (which apparently 60% do on a similar scheme in America) they can go forward into other fields with an amazing breadth of qualifications."

The only down side, as Potter pointed out, is the initial salary, which starts at £16,000 - lower than most other graduate recruitment schemes. However, in his opinion, the social aspects of the scheme outweigh the low salary.

Abi Nurser, a third year English Literature student here at Newcastle University, who has ap-

plied for the scheme, agreed that the scheme is an opportunity to both develop skills and help the children, saying: "What drew me to teaching was the opportunity to give something back to the community whilst developing skills that would be transferable to any career."

However Nurser also raised fears that by encouraging graduates into teaching purely for the benefit of their careers, rather than for altruistic reasons, disadvantaged schools may not benefit at all. Indeed throughout their two years teaching, trainees meet many of the businessmen who help fund the scheme, providing invaluable networking opportunities.

However Teach First do stress that they have a rigorous vetting process, eliminating all but the most enthusiastic and committed.

Suzi Clark of Teach First, told The Telegraph, "The way we see it, we're helping to create future business and government leaders who will never forget their two years of teaching or lose sight of a mission to help disadvantaged students - we view ourselves not just as an organisation, but as a movement."

A registered charity, Teach First is dependant upon private funding from businesses, individuals and schools. For more information about recruitment, visit their website <http://www.teach-first.org.uk/>



TEACH FIRST...for ambitious, talented graduates who want a teaching challenge

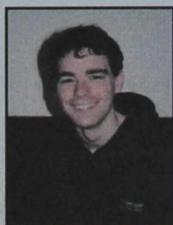
VOX POP: HAVE YOUR SAY

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION, PUT TO YOU BY Victoria Beedles
Should we have a compulsory National DNA database in the UK?



Max Cosby, 1st Year History

"I think this a bad idea. This would take away from individual anonymity within society, and leave people with no privacy rights. This idea of a database system can only go wrong, I feel it would leave people mistreated."



Dan Rose, 1st Year Information Systems and Accountancy

"It would be too much of an invasion into our personal lives. But to a certain extent with our nation increasingly becoming a 'big brother state' this system already exists."



Rachel Lobb, 2nd Year Accountancy

"I'm for this idea in principle. I don't see why it would be an invasion of privacy unless, you've got something to hide."



Maria Martinez, Music Performance Masters

"It could be a success, because this would make it easier for the police to catch criminals. However, it's a scary thought that everyone is being watched by the government, and we'd just have no privacy."



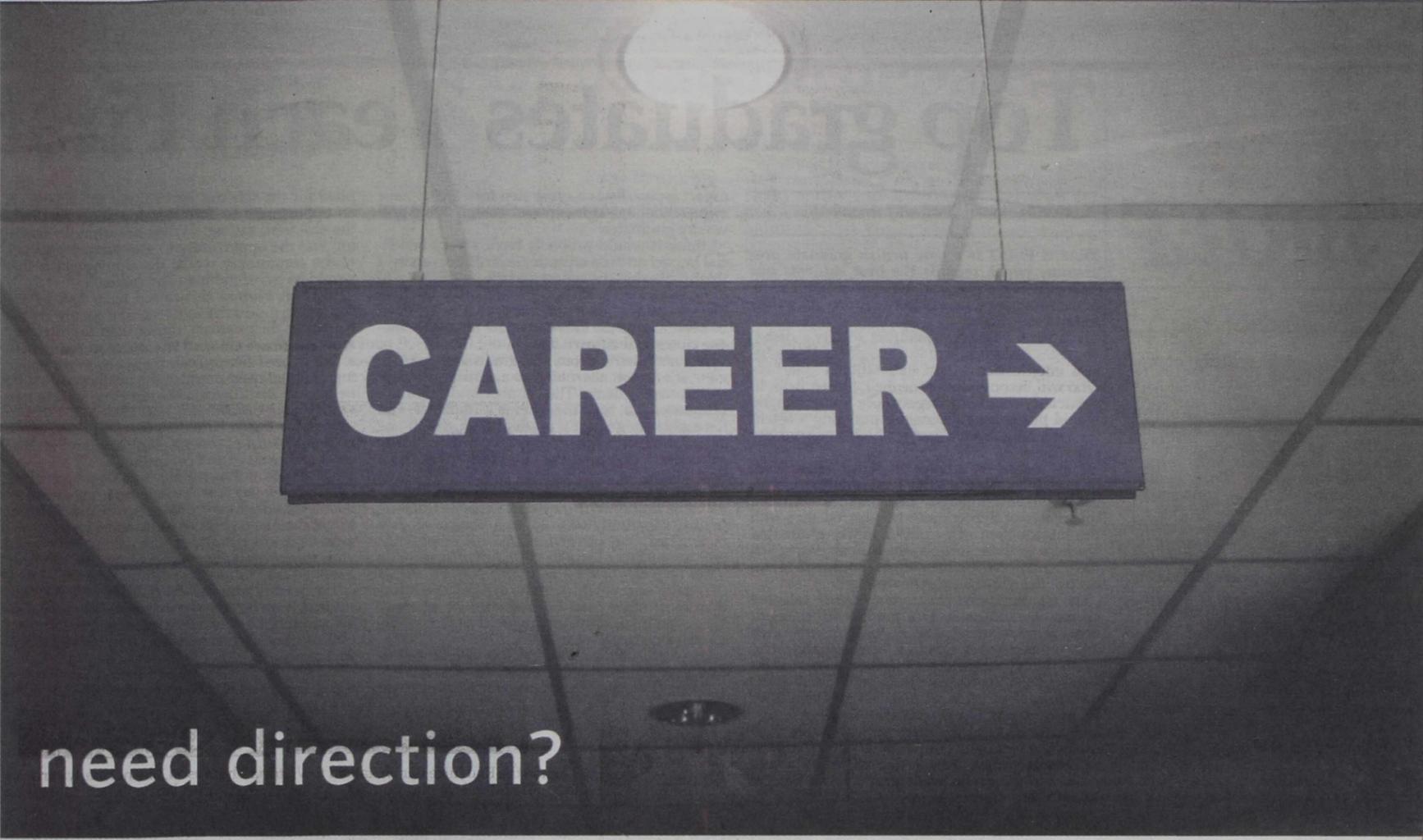
Oliver Bone, 2nd Year History

"This is a great idea! It would help solve so many more crimes quicker, this is exactly the type of system our police force needs. I've heard of so many cases that could've been solved quicker if this method of evidence was available."



Luke Lynch, 2nd Year History

"I don't really think this is good idea. As a nation we are already being watched wherever we go. With a national DNA database, the government is only extending their unnecessary surveillance!"



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Every day at Nigel Wright will be centered around communication, whether with your colleagues, clients or candidates. It is vital that you communicate effectively and clearly; you must not only be articulate but also skilled in listening in order to understand what motivates people and how their decision process will work.

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No two days are the same for a recruitment consultant and it is essential that you can be flexible and thrive under pressure. Both the ability to organise and to be flexible are vital to work in an environment in which clients can be demanding and there are deadlines to meet.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING AND TEAM WORK

Although you are given plenty of autonomy and opportunity to work independently, cooperation is vital to create an enjoyable and productive atmosphere within the office, allowing the business to be most effective and profitable. Forging meaningful long-term relationships with both clients and candidates is a key part of a consultant role, and is vital to quickly gain the trust and respect of both parties.

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Recruitment is an industry where you really do 'get out what you put in'. Using your initiative is key to being successful in such a meritocratic business. Our graduate programme at Nigel Wright gives you the opportunity to take responsibility for your own territory, candidates and clients, while offering the support of senior consultants and their expertise in specific market sectors. Although you are working closely in a team you must also be independent and willing to create opportunities within your territory.

"Despite enjoying my degree in Ancient History and Archaeology at Newcastle University I was sure that working in the field wasn't for me. I wanted to stay in Newcastle and work for a great company with an outstanding reputation. The competitive salary, the excellent bonus scheme, the beautiful modern offices and the fantastic atmosphere here at Nigel Wright have exceeded my expectation of a good place to work. I knew that personality and drive were more important here than my degree discipline and that's what brought me to apply. Since joining Nigel Wright I have realised that good organisation, presentation, communication and time management skills gained at university are important and the key to success here is confidence, commitment and ambition."

**KIM MCGUINNESS, CONSULTANT WITHIN INTERIM FINANCE,
A GRADUATE IN ANCIENT HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY - NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY.**

If you would like to be part of a professional, international organisation where you will be expertly trained, rewarded and recognised please call Claire Rubin on 0191 269 0674 or email a copy of your CV to keepanopenmind@nigelwright.com quoting the reference number COU02.

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ELECTION MANIFESTOS

Have Your Say

What?

The Union elections are the most important event in the Union calendar.

Every student has the right to vote for their student representatives.

Read these manifestos and come to hustings on Tuesday 4th March at 1pm (in the MLK, top floor of the Union).

At hustings all the candidates are required to do a speech on why you should vote for them and you then have the opportunity to ask them questions.

This should help you to decide which candidate you want to win.

How?

This year voting has gone online! This means that you can vote from any computer, anywhere in the world as long as you have a valid ISS login. Go to vote.ncl.ac.uk from 4pm on Tuesday 4th (just after hustings has finished) and then there are 50 hours in which for you to cast your all important vote until 6pm on Thursday 6th.

The way the voting works is by single transferable votes. This means that you enter a 1, 2, 3 etc instead of a tick (this isn't a problem with online voting now).

You need to put a number 1 next to the candidate you want to win. If you have a 2nd and 3rd preference then put a 2 and 3 next to these candidates.

You can submit with just a 1st choice or with all the boxes completed or any combination, as long as someone is marked as '1'.

The system will not allow you to submit your vote if you've done it wrong so it couldn't be simpler!

When?

So don't forget ballots open at 4pm Tuesday 4th March until 6pm on Thursday 6th. Don't forget to use the vote that you're entitled to.

Student Support Officer

Barry Griffiths

I'm Barry, an Accounting & Finance student and (hopefully) your next Student Support Officer



With over 5 years experience representing students, and almost as many working in student welfare, I am fully qualified for the position.

Student support is all about helping you make the most of every opportunity. For me that includes...

- Health -

Your health is the most important thing you have, yet health care provision for students is among the worst.

In addition to the Union's successful campaigns on sexual and mental health I want to tackle issues such as addiction, healthy eating and prescription charges.

- Safety -

You all have the right to feel safe wherever you may be.

I aim to work with the University to stamp out bullying, and with the sports centre to offer basic self-defence classes for all. If elected, 2008/09 will also be the Year of the Nightbus.

- Housing -

Everybody has experienced a dodgy landlord or an awkward neighbour at some point.

I plan to work with estate agents and the council to take the drama out of both selecting and living in student accommodation.

So support me with your vote this week so I can support

Michael Harvey

Hi, I'm Michael Harvey and I'm running for Student Support Officer. I believe I have the relevant experience and the motivation to do a great job, in a way that will advise students without preaching to them.



My previous experience includes **LGBT Officer 05 - 06, Students with Disabilities Officer 07 - 08, Societies Exec, 2 years of Welfare and Campaigns committee** plus experience of several **University committees**. I currently run a weekly quiz in **Halls of Residence**.

If elected I pledge to:

- Run effective campaigns all year round (not just for a week)

- Ensure all Freshers receive a **Welfare Encyclopaedia** to guide them through University Life

- Review and improve the **Nightbus**, encouraging more students to use this invaluable service

- Implement a "buddy" system for students walking home after Solution

- Operate weekly "drop-in" sessions in Halls of Residence

- Encourage active involvement and awareness for ALL students including Freshers, local students and International students

- Promote religious and racial tolerance

- Build on previous work done by the Student Support Officer in the fields of sexual and mental health.

Vote Michael Harvey for Student Support Officer!

Michael knows safer sex, and he's not afraid to ask!

Peter Mercer

VOTE PETE!

Why hello! My name is Pete Mercer and I feel I would make an ideal Student Support officer for the coming academic year.



As of last year, I have been a longstanding member of and active contributor to the Welfare and Campaigns committee. Coupled with my experience in society promotions and creations, I am qualified for this position: I know how campaigns are run.

Via campaigns, I intend to increase awareness of these primary focuses:

- student depression - with closer collaboration with Nightline and The Samaritans.

- academic pressure

- student finance and housing

- sexual health - with larger circulation of free protection and STI awareness material.

Additionally, I intend to increase inclusivity regarding both matters of welfare and of the way in which campaigns are organised.

Most crucially though, I feel I understand the actual significance of, and have personally collided with, student issues (on every front!), making me a sympathetic, highly relatable and experienced point of reference and a friendly face to whom anybody can come to speak about anything, no matter how large or small.

So vote 'Super-Pete!' your Student Support officer and...

"I'LL BE THERE FOR YOU... FASTER THAN A SPEEDING BULLET!!!"

Editor of The Courier

Samuel Parker

I've been your Film Editor this year and the founding Editor of Alliterati, the university's creative writing magazine since 2006.



I've been behind the 'Anxiety No...', 'Generation X' and 'Lessons Learnt' weekly columns.

I've been in it every week: now I'd like to be Editor of the Courier.

I believe in diverse, original and challenging journalism, a continued commitment to quality news and sport, and in finding our most entertaining columnists.

I also believe that the Courier should benefit our student community in practical and fun ways. I propose:

- A brand new centre page, featuring a complete listing of the week's best Union, University and student organized events and nights out

- A new 'private ads' space for you to sell and buy text books, advertise for band mates/project volunteers or simply big up any event you're hosting - for free

- A weekly Post Grad Page in which we research the best routes into popular careers, as well as identify what you can do while you're still at University to give you a head start

- 'Search For The House Party Of The Year': photos and reports from your lives...

So, for innovation and dedication:

VOTE SAM FOR EDITOR!

Holly Poynton

Hi, I'm Holly, vote for me to be the Editor of The Courier because:



I have the experience.
- Three years writing for The Courier and one year as Features Editor
- Editor of RAG magazine 2008
- Experience working on the Evening Chronicle and Accent magazine.

I have the dedication to:
Bring YOU :

- Accurate and investigative reporting of stories that affect YOU on and around campus
- Coverage of national and international events
- High quality interviews

Increase publicity for societies by:

- including a 'Societies Diary' so clubs and societies can advertise their events to 12,000 students
- Continuation of society profiles

Improve the Courier website by

- giving it a more professional look
- including additional exclusive match results and league tables online especially for minority sports.

Bring back

- free tickets for events such as the Newcastle Vipers Ice Hockey

Make Pulp more inclusive by

- including a wider variety of music and inviting music societies such as Rock Soc and Indie Soc to write columns.

Continuation of:

- Puzzles pages
- Extensive intra-mural and BUSA sports coverage
- Solution picture pull-out
- Courier involvement with RAG magazine to make next year's even better

Suzanne Anita

Morais

Hi! I'm Anita and I'd like to be your Student Support Officer for 2008/9. I believe that life at university should be enjoyable and stress-free.



Many students, including myself, have found times where we need some kind of support be it with exams, housing, family & friends, finance and health. The support services provided by the Union Society form the basis of an essential support system for many students from a variety of backgrounds; I hope to continue raising its profile throughout the campus.

As treasurer of the music society last year, and current president of the Catholic society I have experienced representing student groups, organising events and campaigns.

Being the culture, faith and nation representative on Societies Exec., as well as holding a place on Union Council, has given me an insight into the running of the Union, its day-to-day activities and its impact on student life.

I hope to be approachable and adaptable towards students' needs. As SSO I would be committed to the full range of duties without judgement or personal mandate and would welcome the opportunity to give students the support and care that they seek.

Vote Anita for Student Support! I care for your welfare.

Eve Payne

At some point throughout your time at university you are likely to experience many different pressures. These pressures are helped by student support, however many people are unaware of its facilities.



Whilst I will continue to support the strong existing student support structures, e.g. Sexual Health campaigns, I am aware that changes are needed.

My main aims:

- Introduce a buddy system whereby second and third year students volunteer to act as 'buddies' for first years to help them integrate into university life.

- Increase awareness of the existing facilities, by ensuring each hall of residence has student representatives on Welfare and Campaigns Committee (WAC) and Union Council.

- Focus on improving housing in general by reforming current contract procedures.

- Email regular updates on upcoming campaigns and events.

- Create a chill-out zone, which would also provide information about the support facilities on offer.

Why Vote for Me?

- I am on WAC crew and have participated in many Union welfare campaigns.

- I have experience of the Union's support resources e.g. the Student Advice Centre.

- I have a strong understanding of the Union through RAG, being a student representative and having also sat in on WAC committee.

ELECTION MANIFESTOS

Activities Officer

Andrew Berrie

Hi! I'm Andrew Berrie and I really want to be your next Activities Officer.



Whilst at university I have planned, organised and advertised a wide variety of events ranging from pub-crawls to a sell out silent disco as part of RAG Week. These skills I will use to organise a Graduation Ball that will provide not only value for money, but prove a night to remember.

I propose a society loyalty card that rewards student spending within the union, allowing societies you are a member of to redeem points on a range of goods and services, such as food and drink.

I will increase involvement by creating a Refreshers Week that provides taster sessions and inter-society evening events.

I will provide further training to societies through a series of seminars on subjects such as sponsorship, finance and event management, improving your CV by getting you the vital skills employers look for and providing you with certification of these skills.

I will also be readily available with regular office hours to provide advice and support for societies and anyone interested in getting involved or wanting to set a new society up.

Vote Andrew Berrie for Activities
- Giving You More

Imogen Davies

Vote IMMY DAVIES for ACTIVITIES

<http://vote.ncl.ac.uk>

Why vote for me??!

My Experience:

- As a member of Societies Exec and Treasurer of the 20 Minute Club I have good knowledge to help YOU in running YOUR societies

- I've organised events such as the 'secret' holiday for 32 students and weekly events from hide and seek to karaoke - this qualifies me to organise YOUR events from the Grad Ball to Society Awards!

- I've been involved in RAG, Freshers Week and WAC crew at every level from crew to supervisor to committee member to organising events

My Aims:

- **Union Facilities:** Work on getting more free Union space and improving the facilities for YOU

- **Help:** Drop in sessions for ANYONE who needs help setting up or maintaining societies

- **Training:** Exciting personal training for all society committee members to allow YOU to run societies how YOU WANT TO!

- **Society Executive:** Increase the profile of the committee by increased publicity and encourage people to get involved via online voting

- **Society Awards:** Create NEW awards to encourage more participation

- **Snow Ball and Grad Ball:** Ask YOU what YOU want from YOUR Balls via an online survey



Ian Dodds

Hi! I'm Ian and I'm running to be the new Activities Officer. This will mean I look after the 120+ societies that already exist, encourage the creation of new ones and the development of all of them!



I'll also be involved with RAG week, the IGF and the Snow/ Grad balls.

And why should I represent all of this for you?

Well, throughout my time at Uni I've been massively involved with all things Union and active; 2 years on Freshers crew, 2 Years on Rag crew, organising the Abseil and Bungee for RAG 2008, been the treasurer and social sec of 2 societies, involved with many others and much, much more!

I aim to not only encourage the growth and development of societies new and old, but do the same for their members as well...no one should finish a year and feel like joining a society was a waste.

The Grad Ball is meant to be one of those things you remember forever and I intend to listen to what the people want; so that they do so, it'll be special trust me!

Your vote means the world to me and I won't let you down!

IAN FOR ACTIVITIES!

Christina Hardy

VOTE CHRISSEY HARDY FOR ACTIVITIES

"I believe every student has the right to set up a society and be in any society"



****I Have In The Past****

- Member of a variety of societies (Executive Committees on one)
- Staff Student committee
- Exec committee of Alnwick Charities Drive (2004)
- Part of the Widening Participation Partners Scheme
- RAG Crew
- Fresher's Crew
- Student Rep
- Student Union Bar Staff
- Union Pub Quiz Master

****I Am.... In The Present****

Appealing for the views from all societies about what they want..... this is YOUR Union Society

****I Will In The Future****

- Hope to work with the existing part time liberation officers showing a constant awareness for the Equal Opportunities Policy within Societies and Union events.
- Make some of the Formal Events more accessible (students can't always afford the expense)
- Supporting the growth of smaller societies
- Help societies gain access to external sponsorship
- Continue Scott Adam's work to increase student activism

Being both a student and staff I know how the union works. Using the old cliché- I care about students and the student union and I feel this is the most important tool for a sabbatical position.

It's Not Hard Vote Hardy

President

Henry Akinosho

My name is Henry Akinosho and I'm running for the position of Student Union President in the upcoming elections.



As a student of Newcastle University for more than three years I have seen a lot of changes occur in the union, but truth be told there is so much more that needs to be done; our union has a maximum capacity of 6000, we have 18000 students at our university. Like our university continues to excel, our AU rankings rise and our societies grow, so too should our union.

We need a 21st Century union for 21st Century students at a 21st Century university. The time for action is NOW!

My vision is to see our union grow: I propose to look into ways of modernising and extending our union; improving the variety of advertisement and expand its catchment area, making more of the activities in our union accessible to all students; and creating more job opportunities for students within our union... So that's it, my plans for the future of our union and I'll implement these plans with the same level of enthusiasm and energy I live my life with.

VOTE TO MAKE AN IMPACT!

VOTE HENRY FOR PRESIDENT!

Michelle Alister

Vote Michelle C. Alister For Union President today!!!

Since my own Freshers' week, I have:

- remained a loyal, active member of our Union Society.
- represented Team Newcastle for Trampolining, a BUSA sport, at competitions nationwide. I am also on the exec.
- co-founded the ever strengthening PsychoSoc, been elected secretary and still reside on the exec, establishing membership, finances and organising numerous social events.
- been heavily involved in Union events like RAG week.
- made Supervisor in Freshers' Week.
- obtained a seat on Union Council, enhancing my understanding of Union operations.

Such diverse responsibilities have developed my diplomacy, negotiation and skilled communication.

Spread the Love:

The Union is full of fantastic hidden gems few people know about. My main agenda is to get more people into the Union, and using the already available services, through better marketing and promotion.

If elected, I will endeavour to:

- Build member loyalty.
- Represent student views to the world beyond the Union steps.
- Continue feasible expansion.
- Improve communication with members.
- Combat apathy; increase member involvement and voter turnout.

I believe I am the best candidate for President. Do your Union a favour; Vote well; Vote Michelle.



William Richens

My Ultimate Goal

- To increase participation in the Union Society, which has the potential to enable ALL students to make the most out of their time at Newcastle University



My Policies

- Create a regular 'surgery' where students could voice their concerns about the Union Society directly to the President in a confidential and approachable session
- Increase the participation of mature students, international students and students from ethnic minorities
- Produce an activities calendar to raise awareness of all the different Union based events throughout the year
- Create a computer cluster in 'The Retreat', which rarely gets used, to enable students to study more easily within the Union building
- Use the online voting system to conduct opinion surveys and referendums on contentious and important Union decisions

Why Vote For Me?

- I have experienced almost all of what the Union Society has to offer from writing for the Courier to volunteering through SCAN, and from organising Ethics and Environment Week to being on Freshers, RAG and WAC Crews

- I know and understand how the Union runs, having sat on Union Council, as well as chairing and sitting on a number of other committees

Education Officer

Charlotte Ellis

FOR EXPERIENCE...

In addition to three years as a Staff-Student Committee member and being elected School of Psychology Union Council Representative for two years running, I also currently represent over 18,000 students as the only Undergraduate Representative on the University Teaching and Learning Committee.



I have also been actively involved in numerous Union Society committees including Welfare & Campaigns, Elections, RAG, and Disciplinary Committee, and participated in both Freshers' and RAG week as crew and supervisor.

FOR IDEAS...

- Increased Advertisement of School Representative Positions and Committee Vacancies Outside of the Union:
- Freshers' Fair stall
- additional information in introductory packs
- dedicated Course Rep notice board
- targeted emails to relevant schools
- Online Elections for School Rep Positions
- encouraging democracy and increasing awareness of the Union Society
- Development of a Consistent Framework for all Staff-Student Committees
- create working group
- clearer guidelines of minimum expectations
- reinstate faculty forums
- comprehensive training
- Continued campaign for a Permanent Member of Staff for Student Representation Issues
- Improved Awareness of ALL Union Society Services
- downloadable PodCast tours of the Union
- greater integration with the university induction lectures

VOTE CHARLIE ELLIS FOR EDUCATION
<http://vote.ncl.ac.uk>

ELECTION MANIFESTOS

Athletic Union Officer

James Greene

"Living for the Wednesday"

The AU has been at the centre of my university experience. If elected I intend to enhance this experience for the better!

Money

I aim to increase sponsorship and allocated grants. Implementing fair and transparent distribution of all finances, for all clubs (BUSA and Non-BUSA).

Wednesdays

On the Pitch

- Work closely with the Education Officer and the University to make sure Wednesday afternoons are **focused on sport!**
- Improve on our already solid BUSA ranking (9), putting Newcastle on the sporting map.

Socially

- Expand the integration of all Clubs and societies. Whether your sports are **BUSA, Non-BUSA, Intra-Mural, or Society based**, Wednesdays will get **bigger and better!!** I have already entered into negotiations for this!

Stan Calvert

Goes without saying...WIN...again!

Intra-Mural

'Sport for all', I will work closely with the Sports Centre aiming to **expand Intra-Mural** activities and make the leagues more conspicuous and **accessible** at all levels.

As 3rds Hockey Captain and Committee member, and keen Intra-Mural player, I have been able to view all aspects of University sport. I therefore believe that if elected I will have the balanced yet hugely enthusiastic approach required to make Newcastle Uni sports mad!!



Alistair Thompson

Not just for campaign week...

I have a passion for all sport and will work hard to ensure that **everyone** gets the full benefit of the AU.

I am President of Athletics and have been on the AU Exec for 2 years, this year as Vice President. So I know all about the AU.

- Funding

Ensure fair distribution of budget for both BUSA and non-BUSA clubs complete with advice.

Continue to reduce any debt without clubs losing out.

- BUSA

Currently 3rd and wish to remain at the very top.

- Non-BUSA

Equally as important so deserve fair support.

- Wednesday night

Improve the biggest night of the week to include the entire AU!!

- Office hours

Provide regular office hours and listen to everyone's opinions or problems no matter the size or stature of the club.

- The Union

After a year on Union Council I have knowledge of how the Union runs and will work to improve it.

- Stan Calvert

BACK TO BACK WINS! Entering new sports.

With my extensive knowledge and experience of both non-BUSA and BUSA events, I feel that **together** we can build a great AU.

VOTE ALI FOR AU OFFICER!



Samuel Thomson

Hi, my name is Sam Thomson. I'm a final year Zoology student and have been involved in the Athletic Union since I first came to university. As a member of the Lacrosse club, I am a first team player and Social Secretary. I regularly liaise with the AU office and have a very good understanding of its running.



If elected I will:

- **Be dedicated** - To getting you the best deal for Wednesday evening socials, making sure that we can all celebrate our victories together in one venue.

- **Be successful** - By maintaining our top 10 BUSA ranking position and by retaining the Stan Calvert cup.

- **Be fair** - By treating all clubs fairly and on an individual basis, paying attention to both BUSA and non-BUSA clubs.

- **Be profitable** - By securing a big sponsorship deal and by organising fundraising events I will raise money that will aid clubs' finances.

- **Be approachable** - by keeping regular office hours and being there to help out your club when you need it.

- **Be encouraging** - Promoting sports within the university and getting as many people involved in the AU as possible.

Vote Sam Thomson for AU

Campaigns Officer

Andrew Whyte

Hi, I'm Andy, a second year Biology student campaigning to be Campaigns Officer! I'm involved in union based activities and have had valuable experience on both RAG and Fresher's crews, but would like to give something back by promoting the union events and endeavouring to highlight important issues which need to be addressed.



I believe I can bring enthusiasm and commitment to the post, as well as being friendly and approachable, campaigning for the issues that matter to students most.

As Campaigns officer I would:

- Highlight campaigns with suitable publicity, working closely with the Courier and the Union Society to keep all students abreast of initiatives and key issues.

- Implement a clinic to listen to the students views on what matters most, to make campaigns more focused, allowing better representation by the Union.

- Push for a few high profile campaigns throughout the academic year.

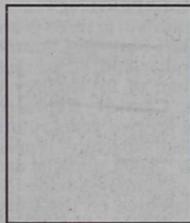
- Boost Newcastle University's standing within the community and maintain strong links with the wider student body.

So please exercise your democratic right and help make a difference by voting me, Andrew Whyte as Campaigns Officer.

Vote online at vote.ncl.ac.uk between Tuesday 4th March 4pm and Thursday 6th March 6pm.

Exec Officer Without Portfolio

James Meredith



MANIFESTO AND PHOTO NOT SUBMITTED

Aaron Sreaton

Students in general know very little about the heart and soul of what we call the 'Union Society', aka The Students Union. A sad fact is that in some cases, this knowledge amounts to nothing.



It's not that people don't want to get involved, it's that they would if they could. However they won't be able to unless we give the responsibility to someone who is willing and able. That person I believe is me, Aaron Sreaton.

Here is My Three Fold Mission:

- **Big 'n' Up the Union Campaign, let the students know!**

- **Is NUS 'areet'? Give the students the BIG-GER picture**

- **To Attend major events, as well as NUS events and promote Newcastle Union Society**

The Union is more than a building, it's our way of having a voice as a student body. Elect me as your Executive Officer and WE together can put the Union into the hands of the Student Body and make it the real voice of the students. It's not going to be easy, but it's going to be worth it. I know we can do it if you choose to elect me.

Gender Equality Officer

Eva Elks

Hello boys and girls!

My name is Eva and I am running for gender equality officer. We have come a long way towards equality for men and women, but there is still more to be done. I believe that we are still judged on our gender - Girls I'm sure you'll know what I'm talking about if you've ever been hassled out on a Friday night. Boys, I'm sure you get tired of being told you have to be chivalrous just because you're the man.



As gender equality officer I would campaign for better services in the union, linking with sexual health and counselling services to support Newcastle students. I would also promote awareness about inequality on a national and global level, like the pay gap and paternity rights, running events for International Women's Week and V-day.

I would like to be approachable and available for students who have experienced gender discrimination, or anyone that has ideas or suggestions for what they'd see happen in the union. I will work hard to take Newcastle a step closer to equality for men and women.

Hasanain/Lennie

Make A Big Difference. Vote No Difference. Sara & Stuart - Manifesto for Gender Equality



Hey, we're Sara & Stuart. We're running for Gender Equality Officer as a job share, because we believe it is important to achieve a balance of both genders within this role. We are first year Politics students with 3 years experience in various areas of student representation, including Diversity Committee and Union Council. To us gender equality is about achieving a fair balance of rights for all regardless of gender - to make no difference based on gender.

We aim to build on the foundations laid down this year and work to ensure that the Gender Equality campaign gains a greater presence on Campus, in this its second year.

We wish to bring forth campaigns which will change the often gender based perception of certain issues, we will continue with campaigns against domestic violence against women as statistics show that 1 in 4 women will suffer such abuse, we will also seek to raise awareness that in up to 40% of cases the victims of domestic violence are male. We also plan to run gender campaigns around issues like suicide, rape & eating disorders.

ELECTION MANIFESTOS

RAG Officer

Riches/Budge

Are you Raving about Raising And Giving?

Team RAG RAVE are!!!

We are Michelle and Emma and we are running for RAG organisers.



Why would we make amazing organisers?
 - We are enthusiastic, outgoing RAG RAVERS keen to extend our experience.
 - We will work with the RAG committee and other union officers to guarantee RAG is bigger, better and more profitable than ever before.

Why is RAG important to us?
 - We are passionate about raising money to change people's lives.
 - Our past experiences have inspired us to make RAG as exciting and enjoyable for everyone as it has been for us!

What will we do to make RAG more successful than ever?
 - Raise awareness of RAG, especially during Freshers Week.
 - As well as repeating much loved RAG activities - organised pub crawls and Boomerang - we have many new events planned to add variation to RAG, including theatrical performances and daytime non-alcohol related events.
 - Create a range of events, involving a diverse population of students, to raise more money than ever before!

Ultimately our aim is to make Newcastle RAG week one of the best in the country!!

Vote RAG RAVE for RAG organisers!!

Natgrass/Morgan-Wynne

RAG ARMY

Hey, we're Lisa and Georgia - RAG ARMY- we need you!

We want to be RAG officers for 08/09; we believe we are the best people for the job.



We aim to smash the previous £20K record, running bigger and better events throughout the year, involving more students as well as hosting the biggest and best RAG week EVER! So...

HOW?

- We plan to run RAG raids all year long to bigger cities such as London;
- More people; more events, raising more awareness for the charities we choose;
- New events such as a RAG Ball but keeping old classics such as Boomerang and the Silent Disco, also re-introducing the Slave Auction;
- We want to achieve cultural awareness and diversity by introducing more non-drinking RAG events without cutting any of the fun;
- We have RAG and Freshers' Week experience along with charity event organisation and fundraising;
- We would like to work closely with the other officers - the Activities Officer in particular - and all societies to ensure higher student involvement;
- And finally we'd love to become involved in the NUS National RAG.

Thank you for reading this; please vote RAG ARMY for RAG officers!!!

Pope/Veillette

VOTE RAG TO RICHES

With a little bit of work and imagination, you too can help turn RAG to Riches!

We're Brid and Helen and we're running for RAG organisers 08/09.



We've been crew/supervisor on the past two RAG and one fresher week, been on RAG committee; social secretary for a society and been crew on other social events. We feel all of this has given us enough organisational experience, and helping with events to ensure an excellent year of RAG events!

- We hope to,
- Include more non-alcoholic events such as and intersociety sports day
 - Raise RAG awareness throughout the university
 - Include our own ideas, adding a touch of our sparkle to the events
 - Improve on tried and tested events
 - Raise a record amount for RAG!

We are also keen to get as involved with the RAG charities as possible with volunteering schemes so we, and other students, can see first hand where our RAG money goes.

We've been really inspired by the previous two RAG weeks and hope we get the chance to inspire the same passion in others.

Please help us achieve this and

VOTE RAG TO RICHES!!

Ethics & Environment

Miller/Henderson

Jen is currently one of the E&E officers and would like to carry on with the campaigns currently underway by doing it again in 2008-09! Alex has successfully project-lead E&E week this year, and feels a larger role within the Union would help her develop the campaigns she initiated in the week's organisation. Together, they want to change the world (starting with the Union...)



We want to see the following things happen:

- Remove plastic bags from the Union, encouraging alternatives and trying influence the local community to do the same!
- Change the Union & University's investment policy to be more ethical and encourage socially & environmentally responsible research.
- Integrate more with the University's waste management through biodegradable packaging of food & trying to get an Anaerobic Composter.
- Make the E&E forum and committee more regular & organised. Also encourage more student-university interaction through attending the Fairtrade Steering Committee meetings, promoting even more fair-trade goods in the University & Union.
- Encourage more ethical student eating by reducing air-miles of food in the Union outlets and educating the student body on ways to support local producers and initiatives in the area.

Love, Peace & Harmony xxx

Students with Disabilities

Matthew Riggall

Hi my name is Matthew Riggall and I'm running for students with disabilities officer.



I believe to achieve equality in this university all people should have the ability and confidence to act out their lives as they see fit. However I feel in order to achieve this change is needed not only in accessibility, but in social aspects. My aim is to allow freedom of choice to all students.

- If elected I will,
- 1) Deal with any concerns about the running of the society, and be willing to listen to any proposed solutions you guys may have.
 - 2) Improve the accessibility of certain areas currently difficult to reach.
 - 3) Create and support focus groups in order to see what you think needs to be changed.
 - 4) Listen to anyone in need of help or support.

I believe that I'm an excellent choice for Students with disabilities officer as I am in the unique position of being neither physically nor mentally disabled. However I do have a condition that affects my day to day life and therefore I'm able to see things from both sides of the coin.

Remember everyone has their limits

Vote for Me for Students with disabilities officer

Convenor of Disciplinary

Sarah Hoddinott

VOTE SARAH HODDINOTT As your Convenor of Disciplinary



Why me?
 As a potential Convenor of the Disciplinary Committee I aim to be impartial and approachable to all students, and will put student's welfare first.

I am currently a Union Councillor and a member of the present Disciplinary Committee, and have worked closely with the present Convenor of Disciplinary and Liberation Officers. Through these experiences I will ensure that next year will have the best possible start in terms of representation, diversity and ensuring the Union is a safe and enjoyable place for everyone.

- My aims ...**
- Publicise the disciplinary process and how students should go about reporting.
 - Ensure that the Disciplinary Committee and the Officers Performance Review Committee convenes and can run self-sufficiently, in order to train members of the Union Council and Committees.
 - Hold confidential 'drop in' sessions to advise, inform on any matters of discipline or any queries regarding the Union Constitution, to allow the people to have a point of contact for their welfare.
 - To ensure the constitution and bye-law are upheld and enforced within the Union.

Convenor of Debates

Michael Dallaway

Our Union Society offers the superb opportunity for people to voice their opinion and get themselves heard by the huge student community. If elected, I intend to develop our Union as a place where students are never afraid to put their views across and put themselves in the spotlight. Progress can be achieved in these areas:



- **Inter Varsity and Inter Mural Events.** I would develop on the successes of previous competitions, helping Newcastle secure a position as one of the best all-round debating events in Europe. I would also put strong emphasis on developing the Inter Mural debating tournament, encouraging the development of new speakers from every area of the university.
- **Encouraging public speaking in the Union.** Through individual competitions and regular public debates (including Newcastle/Northumbria and Newcastle/Durham debates), we can give a voice to people who may not enjoy the standard debating format.
- **High profile speakers.** Through working closely with the University and the Union Society, I would work hard to secure a program of high-profile speakers at our Union, be they alumni, journalists or celebrities.

Through developing in these key areas, we can move closer to reaching our incredible potential in this field.

RON

Ron is not the mascot of that multinational conglomerate McDonalds, nor is he some mysterious character who has not chosen to submit a photograph, so why should you vote RON?



RON stands for Re-Open Nominations.

If it so happens that you do not want any of the prospective candidates to be elected into a position, you can vote to RON. In the event that RON has more votes than any of the candidates, the election will be run again at a later date, meaning that other people not previously nominated can now become candidates.

RON is also useful if you do not have a second preference, for example, if there are two candidates in the election and if you'd rather the election be re-run if your favourite does not get in.

Basically, RON is your get out clause. It's not used very often but if you feel strongly enough then do it.

REMEMBER, IT'S YOUR RIGHT TO RON!

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the
diving
bell and
the
butterfly
elephant

- Featuring*
1. metamorphosis
 2. goldfrapp
 3. electric 6
 4. the laing
 5. el toreto

issue no. 1167
3rd march 2008

ARTS

METAMORPHOSIS

NORTHERN STAGE

A SIX-LEGGED NIGHTMARE by Franz Kafka takes to the Northern Stage this March.

Said to be one of the hottest shows lined up for 2008, Metamorphosis tells the story of Gregor Samsa, a young travelling salesman who goes through the transformation of his life when one seemingly mundane morning he inexplicably wakes up as a gigantic insect.

As if that's not bad enough, Gregor's family are repulsed by his vile appearance and the

whole house is swiftly plunged into turmoil.

As their revulsion turns to resentment, the Samsa family's struggle to maintain respectability and normality soon takes its toll.

Kafka's classic 1912 tale of alienation and fear has been adapted by David Farr and Gísli Örn Gardarsson into a parable of the coming horrors of the Nazi regime.

Catapulted into the modern age with a gravity defying split level set and vertigo-inducing aerial stunts, Metamorphosis' mix of intelligence and acrobatics should simply not be missed. Promising to be both comic and profoundly moving, the acclaimed Lyric Hammersmith production is accompanied by a haunting score by Nick Cave and Warren Ellis.

Metamorphosis
Northern Stage

Tue 4 - Sat 8 March 7.30pm
Student tickets are £8 - book soon to ensure tickets.

Alex Siggers

SHOWCASE SPACE



THIS WEEK'S SHOWCASE:

KERRY HYNDMAN 4TH YEAR FINE ART
SCARED WOMAN NO.2 OCTOBER 2007
OIL ON CANVASS 50CM X 70CM

www.kerryhyndman.co.uk

ARTY QUOTE FOR THE WEEK:

I LOVE LOS ANGELES. I LOVE HOLLYWOOD. THEY'RE BEAUTIFUL. EVERYBODY'S PLASTIC, BUT I LOVE PLASTIC. I WANT TO BE PLASTIC.
- ANDY WARHOL

SHIPLEY GALLERY

PULP TAKES A LOOK AROUND THE SHIPLEY ART GALLERY AND THE NEW EXHIBITION BY STEVE SPELLER

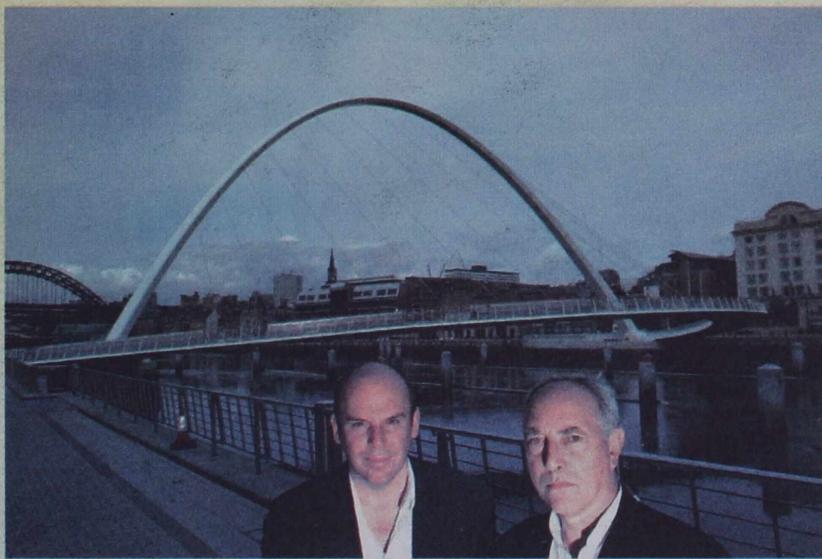


Image by Steve Speller

FIRST IMPRESSIONS were full of promise as I marched towards the impressive Edwardian lines of Gateshead's Shipley Gallery.

A similarly impressive history puts this fine institution firmly in context.

On his death in 1909, local solicitor and art collector Joseph Ainsley Davidson Shipley donated substantially to the City of Newcastle a collection of paintings and further money.

It seemed perfect, until a clause in his will stated that the Laing Gallery was not to benefit in any way from his generosity.

So Newcastle rejected the bequest, and in a bizarre turn of events Gateshead was offered the collection.

It has remained in this imposing structure since its 1917 opening.

The gallery is supposed to house a striking blend of contemporary craft and fine art, though on my visit more than half of the gallery was, and until Spring of this year will be, undergoing vast redevelopment.

This means of course that my views are based on the rather less noteworthy presentation of nonetheless fairly interesting temporary exhibitions on offer this season.

It started well: in the central hall, a selection of oil paintings from 17th-20th century British and European artists explores narrative in painting.

There are many individually interesting oil works, including Old Cullercoats: Spate Gatherers by Henry Perlee Parker (1795-1873), which provides a retrospec-

tive spin on that effective Sunday morning seaside hangover excursion.

What spoils the exhibition however, are the accompanying explanations that go with each work.

Empty, sweeping and frankly patronising statements like 'Can you imagine what [the guy in this painting] is thinking about?' or 'Can you imagine what [woman in painting staring into middle distance] is thinking?' preoccupied me and removed my enjoyment from the actual exhibition.

I found it unnerving that this gallery, having been established from philanthropic foundations is now trying to extend its charitable too far, by attempting to impose interpretational 'pin points' onto a work.

The next room provided some relief in contrast.

Steve Speller's A Blueprint for Life photographs the faces behind the names of those figures literally responsible for building our society.

Examples included Margaret Calvert, designer of British road sign pictograms, and Steve Alsop, who designed Peckham Library and broke his rule of never returning to a project, to be photographed for this exhibition.

It's a worthwhile and thought provoking exhibition and really brings forward that notion of 'who's behind what'.

It compensated for how sloppy the display lighting was anyway. Bring on the redevelopment.

Luke McFarlane

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K

A BLAST FROM THE PAST

THE LAING'S NEWCASTLE CITY PAINTINGS

LAND AND SEA: CHARLES NAPIER HEMY AND HIS BROTHERS

The Laing Art Gallery is currently displaying a series of work by Charles Napier Hemy and his brothers, Benedict and Thomas, entitled 'Land and Sea'.

Charles made a name for himself in the 19th century as both a marine and landscape artist, whilst his younger brothers also became reputed marine artists.

Although they led quite dissimilar lives to one another, the brothers continued nonetheless to share a love for the sea, which is perceptible in their work.

Several of the pictures from 'Land and Sea' depict the Tyne and the nearby coast as it was roughly one hundred years ago, which is fascinating because it documents some of the changes that have occurred in the region since then, showing life as it was for people living and working in the vicinity of the water.

The exhibition illustrates the might and beauty of the sea concurrently, and depicts it when it is both calm and raging.

The colours and textures vary depending on the effect the artist wishes to create, an example of which is Charles' 'Women and Children First', which shows women and children trying to get to safety from a sinking ship in the midst of a storm.

The colours used here are darker, and show the sea to be almost black and a deep green in colour, which adds to its threatening effect.

The use of oil painting in the piece also contributes to the power of the picture, as it is applied thickly to show how the sea is raging, which makes it seem to jump off the canvas.

In paintings such as 'Through Sea and Air' however, the sea is represented using lighter colours and more subtle textures, which creates the effect of calm.

Not one of his most popular works but interesting nonetheless, Charles' 'Three Dinghies' is a watercolour showing a boat from three different angles, paying attention to the way in which the water's appearance changes from each angle.



Although it seems to be whimsical and somewhat loosely painted, the images show the reflections, shadows and colours of the water beautifully, and later provided inspiration for some of his more major pieces.

'A NEWCASTLE FAMILY OF ARTISTS' THE RICHARDSONS FAMILY

'A Newcastle Family of Artists' explores the work of North East painter Thomas Miles Richardson, who made a name for himself in the 19th century as a prominent landscape,

marine and figure artist, and the work of his sons and nephews.

By the 1840s the whole family were prominent figures in the North East art culture. Several of them travelled on the Continent and used their paintings to document the rapidly changing scenery and lifestyle of the 19th century that they witnessed.

Some of their work also illustrates different landscapes in the North East.

I found Thomas Miles Richardson Senior's painting 'Winter Scene', which is a combination of pencil and watercolour on paper particularly eye-catching, as the techniques employed are fairly unusual.

The picture illustrates a small cluster of houses in the midst of a blizzard, and to highlight the snow drifts, Richardson has left some parts of the white paper exposed.

In addition to this he has even scratched into the paint which again shows the white paper underneath.

This adds to the harshness of the cold he is trying to portray.

Another picture worth seeing in the collection is Henry Burden Richardson's 'Cockmount Hill', which shows a person standing against part of Hadrian's Wall and looking out to the sweeping Northumbrian landscape.

The idea that the figure is surveying the countryside as opposed to the wall could suggest that the North East landscape is as deserving of our attention as the Roman relics themselves.

The effect is heightened because the viewer wants to look at what the figure is looking at too, so is also encouraged to concentrate on the beauty of the surrounding countryside.

Joanna Sweeney

BRIDA

BRIDA IS THE NEW NOVEL FROM THE BEST-SELLING AUTHOR PAULO COELHO.

IT IS THE STORY of Brida O'Fern, one of the youngest Teachers of the Tradition of the Moon, who is on her quest for knowledge.

She has long been interested in various aspects of magic, but has a burning desire for more than just this.

Through this search, she meets people of great wisdom who sense she has a gift and each teach her something about the ways of the world.

In turn this leads her deeper into the mysteries of life, and she questions who she is. Each part of the journey teaches her something new about the trials of life, through a wise man in the forest, for instance, she is taught how to overcome her fears and how to dance to the music of the world, and how to pray to the moon, as she moves closer and closer to her destiny.

This novel, published for the first time in English is in many ways a typical Coelho novel - like Santiago in The Alchemist, (Coelho's most famous novel to date) Brida is also in search of what Coelho describes as her 'personal legend', as she strives to find a balance between her relationships and her desire to become a witch.

Brazilian Coelho's fascination with spirituality dates back to his hippie days when he spent time travelling the world, learning about secret societies and oriental religions and mysticism, before he dedicated himself completely to literature, and influences left over from this time are very much in evidence in his literature.

In 1986, he walked along the famous pilgrim route Road of Santiago, and prior to this, in Holland, he met a person known as J who drove Coelho towards Christianity, and in particular becoming a member of a Catholic group called Regnus Agnus Mundi which had J as its leader.

This led to Coelho being imprisoned and tortured, as the Brazilian military considered it too subversive.

Drawing praise from readers as varied as Madonna to Nobel Prize winner Kenzaburo Oe, and beautifully written, this challenging novel is sure to become every bit as successful as his other novels.

Published by Harper Collins on 3rd March 2008, priced at £14.99 hardback.

Sophie Robson

DON'T GET TOO TRUNK...

AS YOU MAY OR MAY NOT BE AWARE, Fine Art degrees at Newcastle culminate in an annual Degree Show exhibition.

An average of between forty and fifty 4th year students work consistently throughout their final years to fund the event.

Every aspect of the exhibition must be financed and organised by the students in order to transform the department and the Hatton Gallery into a large scale open exhibition.

This year's Degree Show opens on Friday the 30th of May and the students have done a considerable amount so far to raise money.

Through a variety of events including auctions, gigs and a contemporary art stall at the Baltic we are getting gradually closer to our £10,000 target.

This money funds everything from painting floors and walls to collating professional exhibition catalogues and advertising the show.

We have several exciting events coming up including a new night at World Head Quarters to be held on Tuesday 4th March from 11pm-3am.

Elephant! Is Newcastle's newest and most eclectic club night and will be nothing short of massive!

Bringing together DJs from two of WHQ's most popular events Elephant! has something for everyone who knows anything about good music.

Sully and Emre from 'inertia' play a diverse mix of electronica, alternative indie and house.

Expect music from Justice to Squarepusher, The Smiths to The Avalanches. These guys truly have taste and know what you want to hear.

Kaiser DJ from 'sub:division' and 'deviate.' This is a rare opportunity to see him playing banging breaks, electro and techno in an eagerly anticipated return to Newcastle after recent success supporting the likes of Erol Alkan and Annie Mac.

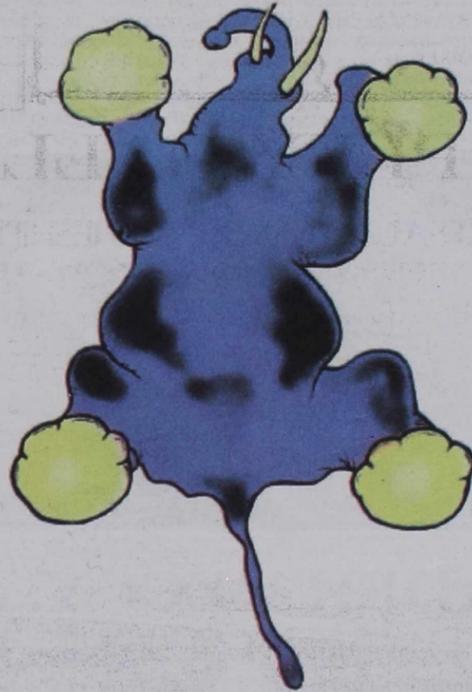
Sitting down is not an option, this set is guaranteed to blow your mind!

All this will be brought to you in the legendary, spiritually uplifting WHQ where drinks cost peanuts and bigger really is better!

Admission is £3 if you bring along one of our flyers or £4 to pay on the door, all proceeds go directly towards the Fine Art Degree show so come along and show your fellow Newcastle students some support and we'll guarantee you grand old night out!

Emma Cummins

elePHANT!



11PM-3AM
£3 B4 11.30 or with
flyer, £4 on the
door.
Cheap drinks and free
stuff!

Electronica/Breaks/
House/Tech Funk
Tuesday 4th March
@ whq

EVENTS



Photo: Steph Feng

POSTCARD PERFECT

IF COUNTRY WALKS AND DELICIOUS PUB GRUB ARE YOUR THING, ESCAPE TO THE HISTORICAL VILLAGE OF CORBRIDGE

CORBRIDGE IS a quaint, picturesque village in Northumberland filled with postcard perfect cottages and quaint terraced houses. Its narrow roads are lined with tiny craft shops, galleries and coffee houses to idle away the time. It's the kind of place you head to enjoy simple pleasures such as a leisurely stroll or good pub food. Five minutes here and you'll forget you are just 18 miles from the hectic Newcastle centre where all your work and stress waits for you. It offers a chance to embrace the village life, and enjoy the country ways, if only for a few hours. All in all just very relaxed, pleasant and lovely and amazingly there are even animals like horses and cows to be seen, a rarity on the streets of Jesmond. The air is fresh, if slightly tinged with the smell of ma-

nure, and there is no rumbling metro or hooting cars to interrupt the tranquillity. For those of you with Hunters and wax jackets, this is definitely the place to parade them.

The gallery is worth visiting, and although small it has some local, fairly commercial art to have a gander at. If you need that special gift there is a collection of shops which sell an array of treasures, hand made cards and clothing. If, like me, you need a coffee after walking for fifteen minutes around the village then there are numerous coffee shops to choose from, a couple of which are especially tempting, warm and cosy with big slabs of homemade cakes to gobble. If you are looking for something more substantial i.e. a big fat Sunday lunch, then you have definitely come to the right place. Being from the country myself

I know a good pub when I visit one, and Corbridge boasts a couple. I've had meals in both that have been utterly delicious, although I am a massive fan of Sunday dinner so perhaps I'm bias. There are of course options aside from the traditional roast, and puddings which include proper custard... mouth wateringly good. However, there is a catch as these pubs are not particularly cheap. If you have got cash to spend though, (or someone who wants to spend cash on you), then I'd say Corbridge is a wise move. It may be a bit of a trek but parking is free and on a sunny day the scenery is beautiful so, providing it doesn't p*ss it down, your efforts will be rewarded!

Emily Butterworth

By Car - Corbridge is easily accessible, situated just off the A69, 20 minutes from Newcastle and 35 minutes from Carlisle.

By Train - Located on the train line between Carlisle and Newcastle, with the village centre just a 5 minute walk from Corbridge station. The service is run by ARRIVA Trains

BE SALSEDUCED!

GRAB YOUR DANCING SHOES AND DISCOVER YOUR UNDISCOVERED TALENT FOR SALSA AT TIGER TIGER EVERY TUESDAY NIGHT...

ALWAYS ON the look out for new ideas on how to stay fit and healthy whilst having the most amount of fun possible, I was intrigued when a friend mentioned Tiger Tiger were hosting weekly salsa dancing classes.

Salsa has long since been one of the most recognised forms of Latin American dance, and one that is equally well known for its sauciness! Bearing this in mind the salsa evening is named SalSeduce, and it is one of the biggest Salsa experiences in the North East. Hourly classes are available for all levels and are taught by top Salsa instructors and guest teachers. When the steps have been learned there is a rare opportunity for a 'free dance' session from 9pm onwards, (I imagine this to be like the scenes from Dirty Dancing but Latin inspired!), a real op-

portunity to release the passion within. What is great about these classes is the accessible, welcoming atmosphere. Variety is encouraged and no one is excluded, whether you're a beginner, a pro or eighty years old you are made to feel at ease in what could be a potentially embarrassing situation. If you're worried you haven't got a partner, don't be. Partners are constantly rotated and you are encouraged to bring family or friends, not just significant others. The emphasis is on relaxation, fun and frolics...so if you feel inspired to unleash the passion within shimmy down to Tiger Tiger on Tuesday night and dance that stress away!

Emma White



Where: Tiger Tiger, The Gate, Newcastle

When: Tuesday nights
8.00pm - beginners, improvers, intermediates
9.00pm - intermediate plus

Entry - £6 until 10pm, £2 there after
£5 with NUS until 10pm, £2 thereafter

www.salsadancingnewcastle.co.uk

READER RECCY: SKINT!!

THURSDAY NIGHT @ LIQUID

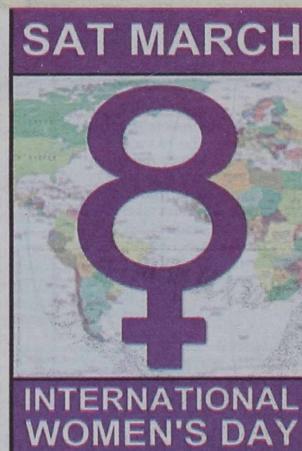
SKINT IS just a state of mind. No really, it is. I wasn't convinced either - surely being skint means a staple diet of porridge and spending nights house-bound, wallowing in self-pity whilst probably pretending to enjoy hours of brain-numbing TV.

Thankfully Liquid feels sorry for us poor lot and wants to take us out - and for this we should be eternally grateful. Every Thursday, for the measly price of £1, we can party together; skint students united, until the wee hours. And drinks are cheap too; double vodka red bull is £2.60 and - get this - all bottles are

just £1.30! Intoxicated, excitable (and likely to be experiencing a sugar rush from all those Alco-pops) you should dance like no-one's watching to the commercial r'n'b, dance and classic club tunes that will put you in an insanely good mood: you have been warned! Arrive early to guarantee entry (10.30pm should do the trick) and be prepared to bulk buy your beverages upon arrival to ensure that it is raving - and not queuing - that is the order of the night. Thursday is officially the new Wednesday night in town - you heard it here first.

Victoria Critoph

PREVIEW



TO CELEBRATE International Women's Day on 8th March, World Head Quarters (WHQ) has decided to run two events that celebrate all that women have contributed to the world of music. The first takes place in the afternoon (2pm-5pm) and is a free afternoon of girly swapping - the idea being that you bring unwanted (but in good condition) girls items, such as clothes or gifts and swap it for stuff you might want. You know if it has been a success if you leave in a different card to the one you arrived in!

These events have been taking place up and down the country in aid of local women's charities and have been incredibly popular and definitely well worth a look. In addition, WHQ are also providing dancers, comedienne, food, drink and henna body art to keep you entertained and provide an interesting and different way to spend a Saturday afternoon.

In the evening (11pm-3.30am) WHQ continues its female friendly vibes with a Saturday night set that focuses on the very best records by the greatest female artists of all time - from Amy Winehouse to The Supremes. The night is both a laid back alternative to Arcane and a chance to dance to songs you haven't heard in years, all proceeds go to Oxfam so you are safe in the knowledge that you are helping alleviate problems for women around the world on your Saturday night out!

Antonia (President)

For ticket prices and information go to www.myspace.com/WHQ

INTERNATIONAL CUISINE!

PULP WRITERS REVIEW JUST A FEW OF THE GLOBAL TASTE SENSATIONS ON OFFER IN NEWCASTLE ...



A TASTE OF SPAIN @ EL TORERO

IF DECISION making isn't your forte then tapas is definitely for you. Tucked away beside the castle in the centre of town is a gorgeous authentic Spanish tapas restaurant. Upon entry you cannot help but notice the warm, friendly atmosphere and excellent décor.

Perfect for a group meal or a romantic date, you cannot go wrong with El Torero. It's the destination that will satisfy all, as it's impossible not to find something in the menu to fulfil all requirements. I was accompanied to El Torero by a vegetarian and a self-defined fussy eater. Each of whom were stuck for choice whilst browsing the large menu on offer. We eventually did all manage to choose three dishes and placed our order with the waiter who not only spoke fluent Geordie, but also surprisingly turned out to speak fluent Spanish, as do all the waiters at El Torero.

The meals themselves were flavoursome, varied, reasonably priced, tasty and also very filling. I'm ashamed to admit that even I was struggling to finish the food on offer.



This restaurant is one of the best I've been to in Newcastle and I would definitely recommend it to all those in search of a good meal out. So grab the bull by the horns and head to El Torero.

Tom Stables

A TASTE OF INDIA @ ASHA RAVEL

RAVEL IS the only restaurant of its kind in the North-East to offer contemporary Indian cuisine at its finest. It boasts an exquisite Eastern aroma from the very moment you step into the chic two floor building. With a grand bar lounge area which is nestled beneath the delightful open plan restaurant.

Situated away from the pubs and clubs of the city, it is positioned perfectly on the Gateshead Quays right beside the Sage and Baltic. It towers so high up that through its fish tank atmosphere of windows stretching the length of the restaurant area, it boasts sensational views of the Tyne Bridge.

The ex warehouse is furnished to perfection, giving it a feel of elegance and sophistication. Ranging from the softly furnished secluded seating areas in the lounge to the rich red paint that covers most walls gives it an inviting atmosphere.

Another unique feature is the glass panelled kitchen area, as you can see everything that is happening. The chefs truly did deliver after a starter of lobster soup (£6.95) followed by a main of prawn masala (£16.95) with house pi-

lau (£3.95) I was really impressed. Although the food is slightly expensive compared to your usual Indian restaurant, it is undeniably exceptional.

Bookings are taken on the understanding that the table is yours for the whole evening, so you can enjoy the spectacular views and environment without feeling as though you are being rushed; making it the ideal place to go for a celebration.

Ashleigh Sawyer



Photo: Chris Brown

EL TORERO SPANISH RESTAURANT

El Torero Ltd
Millburn House
The Side
Newcastle upon Tyne
NE1 1PR

Tel: 0191 233 1122

OPENING TIMES:

Every day from midday until 11pm
Sunday midday until 10.30pm

Email: info@eltorero.co.uk

RAVAL LUXURY RESTAURANT & BAR

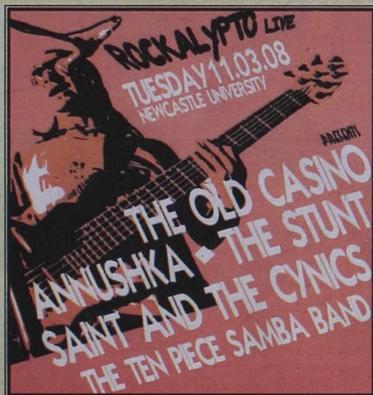
Kent House
Church Street
Gateshead Quays
Newcastle Gateshead
NE8 2BL

Tel: +44 (0)191 477 1700

OPENING TIMES:

Dinner: mon-sat 17.30 pm -11.30pm
Raval bar: mon-sat 11.30 am -12.00 Midnight

Email: info@ravaluk.com



UNION ENTS

THE UNION IS HOSTING A NEW NIGHT! ROCKALIPTO LIVE FEATURES LIVE BANDS AND NON STOP ROCK!

ROCKALIPTO IS a new rock night in Newcastle. It aspires to become a regular weekly rock night in central Newcastle. The night will feature live bands, DJ's and most importantly, uninterrupted rock music from the beginning of the night until the end. The opening night will showcase 3 live bands:

The Old Casino, The Stunt and Saint and the Cynics, as well as a 10 piece percussion band. After the gig, there will be free entrance at the BOX (after party) with Special Drinks Offers. See below for the band biographies and further details of this event.

WHERE: Newcastle Union - The Basement

WHEN: Tuesday 11th March

ENTRY: £5 - Doors open from 7.30pm

SEE BELOW FOR THE BAND BIOGRAPHIES.....



THE STUNT

From myspace.com/thestuntuk

"Hello... in case you haven't noticed we are called 'STUNT'. We've been playing in various forms in and around Newcastle since our first gig at the bridge hotel on the 1st March 2003. We are a four piece indie band (2 Guitars, Vocals, Drums and Bass). We might not have the coolest haircuts and skinny black jeans that it appears you need to succeed at the moment, but what we do have is some of the strongest songs and vocals you'll hear nowadays. Modesty isn't really our strong point but we really believe in our music which we hope shines through. Hope to see you at a show soon..."

SAINT AND THE CYNICS

From myspace.com/saintandthecynics

"Currently known as 'Saint and the Cynics', we are a band of students from Newcastle College who divide genres. Each band member brings their own influences to create songs that differ from one to the next. Combining all of our music influences we have crafted a number of pop songs with a soulful vocal. There's definitely something for everyone in this band. Songs will be up soon!"

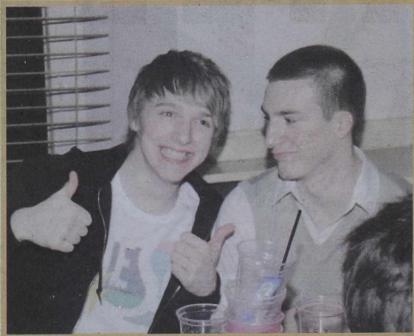
THE OLD CASINO

From myspace.com/theoldcasino

"The Old Casino is made up of: Johnny- A chemist who was playing guitar before he could even walk. After blowing the socks off the public in Blackpool and Durham, he has moved to Newcastle to continue his saga of rock as our lead guitarist and vocalist. Victor- A music student of Spanish origin who can play any instrument he lays his hands on. His slanning beats and immaculate taste gives the band so much flavour and keeps the rock alive. Alx- A true believer, Alx travelled all the way from Peru to join the Old Casino and he was not disappointed. His Latin flair on the bass truly completes the band paving the way for world domination."

SOLUTION

If you're lucky enough to be circled, you and a friend have won guestlist places for this week's Solution. Pop into The Courier office (opposite Cochrane Lounge) with your smartcard to claim your prize by 10am on Friday (ask for Gemma).

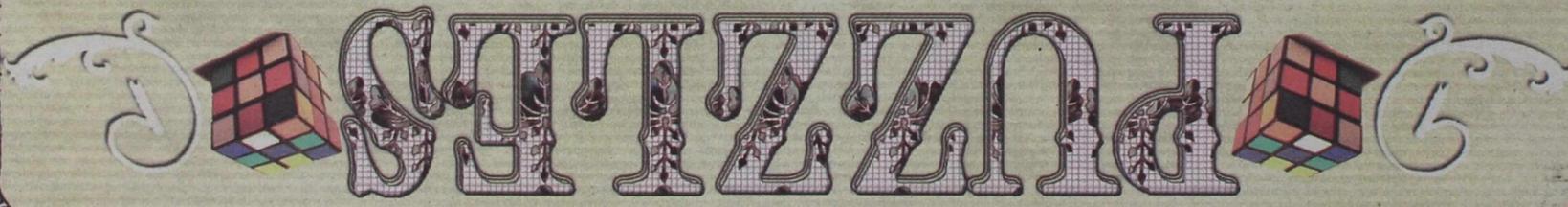


All Photos: Peter Dixon

HUGE PRIZE WEAWAY WALKERS
FIRE MAGIC STILT WALKERS
BRAND NEW MUSIC LINE-UP
LIVE DANCE VIDEO FEEDS

NEWCASTLE'S BIGGEST STUDENT FRIDAY NIGHT

ALL NEW! SOLUTION



Compiled by Puzzles Master Megan Darby

KRISS KROSS

QUIZ CORNER

Every answer in this week's quiz includes a herb or spice. Good Luck! Solid what is the name of the girlfriend of the protagonist "Kaiden"?

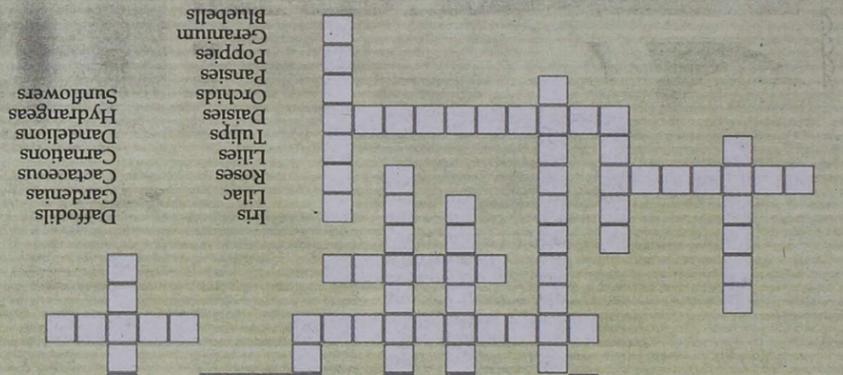
7) Which children's TV show includes the characters "Bert and Ernie", "Big Bird" and "Oscar the Grouch"?

8) Which Category B British local prison is located in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham?

9) What is the name of a place or facility which manufactures coins for the city?

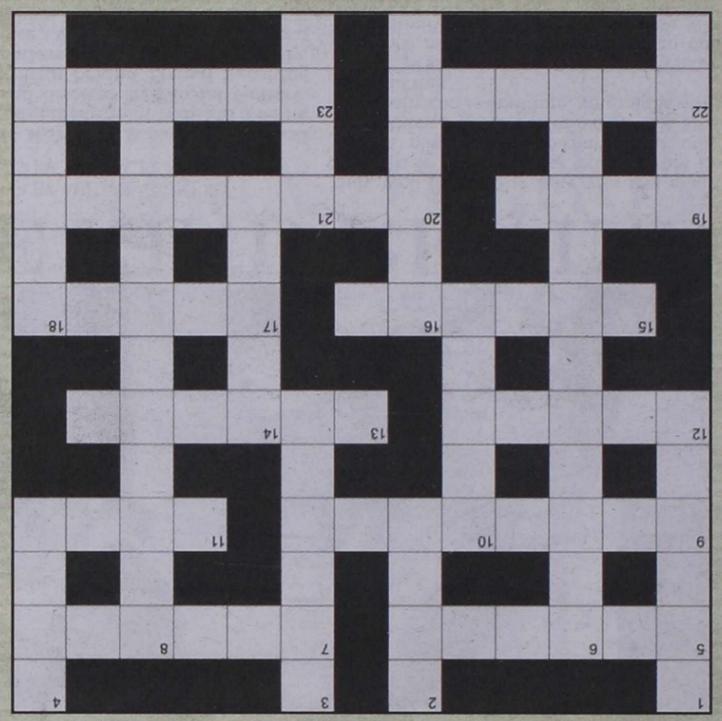
10) Which Scottish Football team play their home games at "Tulloch Caledonian Stadium"?

Fit these words relating to flowers into their correct positions in the grid. Compiled by Caroline Melloy.



COURIER CROSSWORD

The first person to drop their completed crossword into The Courier office (opposite Cochrane Lounge) will win guestlist for themselves plus a guest to drop their completed crossword into The Courier office (opposite Cochrane Lounge) compiled by Katy Chatterjee



- Across**
- 1 Famous line from the Wizard of Oz: "Toot, I don't think we're in anymore" (6)
 - 2 To fix (4)
 - 3 Capital city of Lebanon (6)
 - 4 A shade of blue (4)
 - 6 Miniature resident of a fictional island in Gulliver's Travels (11)
 - 8 Well-known New York skyline building featured in King Kong (6,5)
 - 10 Exhale (5)
 - 14 Eighth letter of the Greek alphabet (5)
 - 16 Plant with sharp needles (6)
 - 18 To stand around aimlessly (6)
 - 19 A Japanese alcoholic beverage made from fermented rice (4)
 - 21 Speech defect (4)
- Down**
- 5 Charm - tempt (6)
 - 7 Famous word shouted by the Greek philosopher Archimedes from his bathtub (6)
 - 9 First name of the surrealist painter Dalí (3-2)
 - 11 Able to move quickly and easily (4)
 - 12 Popular term for futuristic fantasy novels (3-2)
 - 13 Water-loving creatures with webbed feet and flattened tails (6)
 - 15 German city - site of the 1972 summer Olympics (6)
 - 17 Artist's board (5)
 - 19 Lower part of leg below the knee (4)
 - 20 Type of seafood (8)
 - 22 Chinese martial art (4,2)
 - 23 Rounded shape (6)

MAGIC NUMBERS

12 D of C = 12 days of Christmas. Can you work out the following? By Megan Darby

- 1066 saw the B of H
- 42 K in a M
- 6 NC
- 7 P for a CT
- 3 L on a S
- 5 P of I
- 1.618... is the GR
- 100 Y of S
- 44 is the IDC for the UK
- 7 DS
- 69 was the S of L

DO YOU WANT TO WRITE THESE PUZZLES?

If you're interested in being a puzzle setter for The Courier then e-mail editor.union@ntl.ac.uk. We're open to new ideas too!

Graduate careers in consulting. Rising and shining. Just another day at the office for a high performer. **accenture** High performance. Delivered.

MAGIC NUMBERS ANSWERS: Answers: 1066 saw the Battle of Hastings; 42 kilometres in a marathon; 6 Nations Championship; 7 points for a converted try; 3 lions on a shirt; 5 pillars of Islam; 1.618... is the golden ratio; One Hundred Years of Solitude (novel by Gabriel Garcia Marquez); 44 is the international dialling code for the United Kingdom; 7 deadly sins; '69 was the "summer of love" QUIZ ANSWERS: 1) Vanilla Ice 2) The Clove 3) Basil Fawlty 4) Dill Pickles 5) Red Hot Chilli Peppers 6) Rosemary 7) Sesame Street 8) Wormwood Scrubs 9) A Mint 10) Inverness Caledonian Thistle LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD ANSWERS: Across 7 Brewer 8 Earwax 9 Weighs up 10 Code 11, 6 down Beer garden 13 Enticing 15 Sun visor 17 Echo 19 Bias 20 Melanoma 22 Cajole 23 Enamel Down 1 Breeze 2 Swag 3 Frisbees 4 Reap 5 Tricycle 6 See 11 12 Revision 14 Thriller 16 Urinal 18 Hamper 20 Meet 21 Naan

FILM



IF VARIETY be the spice of life, then this week's Pulp Film is a vindaloo forged from the belly of Mount Vesuvius.

We review Jack Black's latest Jack Black vehicle, *Be Kind Rewind*, take a tense trip into Iraq in *Battle of Haditha* and spend at least ten minutes trapped inside the paralysed body of a former media playboy in the remarkable *The Diving Bell & The Butterfly*: three films that could barely be more different if they tried.

Elsewhere, we start new our feature 'Rescreen' that takes a look at criminally underrated films, and launch our new gossip column 'Off The Record, On The QT & Very Hush-Hush' with resident snoop Pete Duggan.

If the Film team had followed suit with their Hollywood counterparts these last few weeks and gone on strike leaving me to scribe the lot, I'd have picked *The Cable Guy* as my underrated film and used the gossip column to spread rumours that I was about to be made the new James Bond.

What a brave new direction that would mark for the franchise: a fragile, human Bond, who looks and sounds just like you. An educated Bond, who can give a half-baked definition of post-modernism after a couple of martinis. A sensitive Bond who, upon finding the Russian nuke set to explode in London in three minutes, would hide under the nearest metal shelf and stroke his own hair until everything was ok again...

If variety be the spice of life, and this week's Pulp Film is a vindaloo; be grateful I'm not the only cook. Or we'd all be paying for it the next morning.

Enjoy the new stuff, won't you.

- Sam Parker
pulp.film@ncl.ac.uk

THE DIVING BELL & THE BUTTERFLY



DIRECTED BY: JULIAN SCHNABEL
STARRING: MATHIEU ALMARIC

ART CINEMA director Julian Schnabel has achieved something exceptional in this beautiful French film based on a remarkable true story.

Jean-Dominique Bauby was the charismatic and successful editor of *Elle* until he suffered a stroke at just 43 that paralyzed his body but left his witty and imaginative mind intact. With the patience of his carers in hospital, he wrote his life story and described his entrapped life by communicating letter by letter with his one working eye.

Schnabel's telling of this incredible story is equally impressive - as a film maker he actually transports the audience into the character and consumes us with this overwhelming concept. As expected, the film can be rather heavy going - it is long and drawn out just as Jean-Do's life with locked in syndrome is and yet it is sprinkled with a sense of humour and with beautiful shots and images.

The film seeps into his past and reflects on his relationships with his many women, his children and the heart warming interaction with his father as Jean-Do reflects on his mistakes and tries to live with himself.

Arty, all in French and a million miles away from any of our lives as students in Newcastle, I particularly urge those who would normally run a mile from world cinema to go and see this film. I fear it will be lost on DVD and must be experienced on the big screen, no place better than the equally arty and quirky Tyneside Cinema.

Becci Sharpe



Tyneside
Where your passions go to

THE BATTLE OF HADITHA

DIRECTED BY: NICK BROOMFIELD
STARRING: ELLIOT RUIZ, MATTHEW KNOLL



THIS FILM recreates two days in the town of Haditha, Iraq from 2005. On this day a road side bomb killed one Marine and injured two more. The effect of this bombing was horrifying as his highly strung comrades burst with rage and attacked local families, killing twenty-four men, women and children.

Director Nick Broomfield continues in the same style as *Ghosts* by making a quasi-fictional film set up in the style of a documentary to create a perfect picture of events. To add authenticity to the piece, the roles of the soldiers are played by former Marines who have served in Iraq, while Iraqi civilians are used to play the residents of Haditha.

The film is played out through three interweaving narratives: of the Marines, the two insurgent bombers and the residents of the houses overlooking where the bombing will take place. This latter narrative is of the innocent victims of this crime, the residents who will be brutally killed.

We are drawn to them as they do their best to raise their children and give them a normal life within this war-torn country. But then after witnessing the preparation of the explosive, they find themselves torn between telling the Americans and facing cer-

tain death at the hands of the insurgents, or of saying nothing and risking the wrath of the invaders.

This picture perfectly captures the issues in play within Iraq on all sides of the divide: from the youth and inexperience of the American Soldiers, the role of foreigners within the supposedly Iraqi led insurgency and the day to day abuses suffered by local residents. It is extremely poignant how one of the bombers immediately regrets his actions when he sees the killing that takes place after.

This film is extremely brutal, but very eye opening. While there is some wooden dialogue this is a price worth paying for the authenticity provided by the ex-marines. It should be a must see for anyone interested in the war in Iraq, but may be one to avoid for anyone looking for an easy evenings watch.

Tom Rowland-Symondson



Tyneside
Where your passions go to



BE KIND REWIND

DIRECTED BY: MICHEL GONDRY
STARRING: JACK BLACK, MOS DEF

BE KIND REWIND is not your typical Hollywood comedy, mainly due to it being written and directed by Michel Gondry, the Frenchman behind *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* and, less famously, *The Science Of Sleep* (as well as several music videos).

The concept of the film is fairly silly - Jack Black manages to magnetise himself and subsequently wipes all the tapes in his friend's video store. The bulk of the movie involves them re-filming various films themselves, using whatever and whoever they can get their hands on (a process dubbed 'Sweding' in the film).

Gondry injects his own personal brand of silliness into the mix, and it seems to work. The best bits of the film are the snippets of 'Sweded' films we are shown, which function as an outlet for Gondry's more 'home-made' approach to film-making.

Whether or not you go and see this film

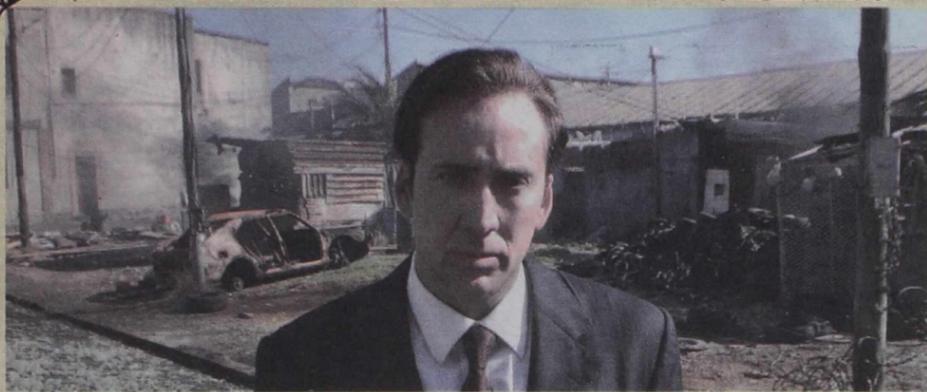
may well depend on how you feel about Jack Black - the popular opinion that he always plays the same character is only strengthened by his performance here, so if you really can't stand him, you might want to avoid this.

The film as a whole, though, is much more than one man's performance. It's an ode to creativity, and working with what you have, and provides a good couple of hours' entertainment (especially when you factor in all the 'Sweded' films you'll be looking for on YouTube when you get home!).

Clare Baldwin



EMPIRE



RESCREEN THIS WEEK: LORD OF WAR

IN A NEW REGULAR FEATURE, PULP IDENTIFIES THE GREAT MOVIES THE WORLD OVERLOOKED...

This Amnesty-International approved 2005 drama was not a flop.

It made a good return and was well-reviewed. So why would I describe it as "under-rated"? Because it's good showing was just that. Good. Moderately successful. The critical consensus basically declared "Yeah...yeah...mmm."

The film's mission, to highlight the evils of the massive and bloodthirsty evil arms trade, were respected. But even the positive reviews tended to be tempered with complaints, dragging it away from the "classic" status it was shooting for and reducing it to "that Nicholas Cage movie."

Such griping has done much to sully the film's name, and to obscure just how excellent it is. It's an engaging and informative story, chronicling the career of Cage's amoral arms dealer from the Cold War to the Bush era, from decaying Soviet armouries to gory African warzones.

Some viewers complained that the film's glossy, Hollywood appearance detracted from its mission to reveal a very grimy and unglamorous side of life in the real world. Others pointed out the contradiction of having to root for a slick, witty main character, played by a charismatic movie star, of such morally bankrupt awfulness.

But at the end of the day, these are all niggles. It helps to stop trying to see Cage's character as an anti-hero, but just recognise him for the uncomfortably entertaining villain that he is. Vibrant cinematography and showy tricks (like the infamous "bullet-camera" opening credits) don't weaken the film's message, but give it more punch, ramming it into the minds of the audience in a way both guiltily enjoyable and compelling.

The movie's messy bleakness, without neat little solutions or shoved-in redeeming features for its protagonist, is totally appropriate and leaves just the right impression of thoughtful sadness, the kind that stews in the brain for days on end afterwards; like in all the best message movies.

Peter Shelton

CLASSIC SCENE

#4 12 ANGRY MEN BY JOEL MOSELEY



THE CASE has been heard, the evidence has been seen and it is up to the twelve jurors to decide the fate of the accused. After the twelve strangers vote to decide the verdict of this young boy, eleven vote guilty and one, juror 8, votes not guilty.

With a unanimous decision required, the eleven jurors set about convincing juror 8 of their point of view. However, as time goes by it becomes increasingly apparent that the case is indeed flawed, and one by one the jurors begin to change their votes to not guilty.

Left alone as the final guilty vote, juror 3 tries one final time to convince the others of the boy's guilt. In doing so he unwittingly reveals his own personal motives behind his decision to condemn the boy. With his argument in pieces juror 3 is forced to change his vote to not guilty.

Juror 3: Well say something. You lousy bunch of bleeding hearts. You're not going to intimidate me. I'm entitled to my opinion. Rotten kids, you work your life out...no. Not guilty. Not guilty!

With an agreement now reached the twelve men adjourn and the audience are left breathless from the drama that has unfolded.

WORLD CINEMA

PULP LOOKS AT THE FOREIGN SUPERSTARS TAKING HOLLYWOOD BY STORM

Hollywood's remakes of foreign films can produce really great results, such as *The Departed*, a remake of Chinese thriller *Infernal Affairs*, but then sometimes, it doesn't: just think *Vanilla Sky*.

It has always been difficult for foreign cinema to break through into the mainstream and foreign actors and films are often sidelined at major awards ceremonies. But does this year show the tide is turning?

The Best Actress Award of this year's BAFTA's pulled together some of the best acting talent of the moment. The nominations included British legend Julie Christie and Cate Blanchett, as well as young rising talents Keira Knightley and Ellen Page. Yet to mine and everyone's surprise, it was the little known French actress Marion Cotillard who walked away with the award. The night was a triumph for foreign actors; as Javier Bardem deservedly received Best Actor in a Supporting Role for his blistering performance in *No Country for Old Men*. It was fantastic to see the Oscar wins follow suit.

Marion Cotillard began her career in the mid nineties and is well known in France. However, she did not gain mainstream attention until 2003's *Big Fish*. Cotillard was mesmerising as the homicidal Tina Lombardi in Jean Pierre Jeunet's *A Very Long Engagement*, a film which was sadly

neglected come award time due to funding disputes. Cotillard's performance in *La Vie En Rose* received consistent critical acclaim and has inevitably brought her into the limelight. Cotillard's upcoming projects include the film *Nine*, also starring Penelope Cruz and Javier Bardem and *Public Enemies* starring Johnny Depp and Christian Bale with Michael Mann at the helm.

Javier Bardem similarly remained unnoticed by mainstream cinema goers until his acclaimed role in the 2000 biopic *Before Night Falls*, for which he was the first Spanish star to receive a Best Actor nomination from the Academy, and he is now the first Spaniard to win an Oscar! This recognition has taken over ten years for Bardem despite his brilliantly versatile performances in nearly twenty-four films. His success for *No Country For Old Men* is a step in the right direction; final acknowledgement of a true talent.

The events of both the BAFTAs and the Oscars seem to mark a transition for the foreign actor. Hopefully this should herald the beginning of recognition for world cinema stars. Spanish actress Penelope Cruz has successfully managed to gain roles and success in both the Spanish and American film industry. Mexican actor Gael Garcia Bernal has also garnered similar success and has finally been brought to the attention of mainstream cinema audiences through his standout performance in *Amores Perros* and mainly through the hit *The Motorcycle Diaries* for which he was nominated for Best Actor at the 2005 BAFTA's.

These actors are now all hot property in Hollywood and have the versatility to star in English language films and world cinema. Acknowledgement for foreign actors as significant contributors to world wide cinema has taken too long. Hopefully we will be seeing more of foreign talents and we should all be excited about their future work!

Rebecca Hodgson

OFF THE RECORD, ON THE QT AND VERY HUSH-HUSH... ALL THE LATEST MOVIE GOSSIP WITH PETE DUGGAN



THIS MONTHS big movie news came in the form of an announcement from New Line that their production of *The Hobbit* is finally a go.

After much speculation and the near legal case with Lord of The Rings maestro Peter Jackson, the film is due to start pre-production as soon as possible with New Line hoping to fast track the film to a cinema near you sometime late 2009/early 2010.

The big question of who will direct the film is also much closer to being answered with Pan's Labyrinth director Guillermo Del Toro leading the charge to direct the 2 part epic with the aforementioned Jackson

as producer...

...Warner Bros. decided fairly rapidly to pull back on their marketing for *The Dark Knight* after the tragic death of Heath Ledger. Warner were in the process of beginning a fairly intense viral marketing scheme similar to the ones used by *Lost* and *Cloverfield* but have put pretty much everything on hold for the next few months.

...Speaking of *Cloverfield*, director Mark Reeves has signalled his intention to helm a sequel; while he is currently working on 'The Invisible Woman' he said last week 'if we can find something that is compelling enough and that is different enough for us to do, then it will probably be worth doing'. The film made \$41 million on its US release giving it the highest January opening gross in history...

...The trailer for *Indiana Jones 4: The Kingdom Of The Crystal Skull* also burst onto the internet this week; the film which stars both Shia LaBeouf and Cate Blanchett alongside the whip cracking Harrison Ford does indeed look impressive and is bound to have Indiana Jones fan boys hyperventilating in front of their computers for months to come...

...The big trailer release for me this month however was the first look at M. Night Shyamalan's new film, *The Happening*. Starring the increasingly entertaining Mark Wahlberg, it is focused around a potentially apocalyptic terrorist attack; bear in mind however that this is a film from the director of the *Sixth Sense* and *The Village* so a unexpected curveball ending is almost guaranteed...

...finally, news this month comes straight from last Sunday's Oscars which after all the near cancellations turned out to be a huge success. The show, hosted by the ever brilliant John Stewart, was much more low key than normal but still maintained that uniquely fun Oscar feel. The results were unsurprisingly unsurprising with the academy stumping for nearly all of the big favourites; *No Country For Old Men* lead the charge with 4 awards including Best Picture and Director while *The Bourne Ultimatum*, *Atonement* and *There Will Be Blood* all picked up a handful of awards each...





MUSIC



BIRD FLU IS SO LAST YEAR

COUGH snuffle... Oh what a fortnight! Having still not shaken this terrible virus (or man-flu, or it could even be bird flu) I hope to get better for this next week for the second instalment of good ol' Paris Is Burning. Along with this night there's also some great gigs on including Gary Numan, The Fall and Sunderland's finest, The Futureheads.

In our record box we review Tom Deluxx's sophomore release, the Curse Words EP. For any Ed Banger/Boys Noize Rec fans out there this is a **MUST BUY** so go check him out at www.myspace.com/tdlx I promise you won't be disappointed!

And don't forget to check our website for extra reviews and videos of the hottest shit around!

Jimmy (bird flu) and Ruth (hot bird!)

pulp.music@ncl.ac.uk



TOP FIVE THIS WEEK

- 1) Paris Is Burning @ The Northumberland Arms, Friday 7th March
Underground electro night with some exciting guests up it's sleeve!
- 2) Gary Numan @ The Academy, Friday 7th March
Noel Fielding will be there, and so you should be!
- 3) Foals, @ Academy 2, Sunday 9th March
08's hottest new band are back for some math-infused chipper-rock!
- 4) Wax:On @ Digital, Friday 7th March
Plump DJs top a breaks-heavy line-up at the Times Square club.
- 5) Queens Of The Stoneage @ The Academy, Wednesday 5th March
Queens return to play their re-scheduled gig.



PREVIEWS PARIS IS BURNING @ THE NORTHUMBERLAND ARMS, FRI 7TH MARCH

AFTER their opening night last month almost burned down the Northumberland Arms, Paris Is Burning returns in fine fashion with a storming London headliner in the shape of Tronik Youth. With remix credentials that include The Gossip, The Rakes and Goose, and with forthcoming mixes for New Young Pony Club along with his own material being released on Backyard, 2008 is set to be the year Tronik Youth goes global.

Resident DJs Paris Is Burning and EatDisco will be warming up the dancefloor with some juicy techno tuneage! Expect hard-edged electro such as Boys Noize, Surkin, Modeselektor, Justice and Para One rubbing shoulders with wonky beats from Duke Dumont, Crookers, Boy 8-bit and Alter Ego. And with a new licence taking the night on til 3AM this is an unmissable night for anyone wanting the freshest underground party in Newcastle.

PARIS IS BURNING
FRI 7TH MARCH
@ THE NORTHUMBERLAND ARMS (BETWEEN M&S AND ELDON SQUARE)
DOORS 9PM-3AM
FREE BEFORE 10PM. £4 AFTER

Jimmy Asquith

THE FUTUREHEADS @ NORTHUMBRIA UNION, MON. 3RD MARCH

It's great to hear more from The Futureheads again and their loveable Sunderland quirk. After being dropped by their record label in November 06 the future looked bleak, but with an album out in 2008 anticipation is in the air. Expect new material to be played next Monday - it's rumoured to be 'punkier' than previous offerings. Classics will no-doubtedly be in the set list, so get your acapella together when Hounds of Love starts up! All together now... 'Oh, O-Oh' 'Oh-Oh-Oh'

Chris Mandle

DEAD MEADOWS @ THE CLUNY, TUES. 4TH MARCH

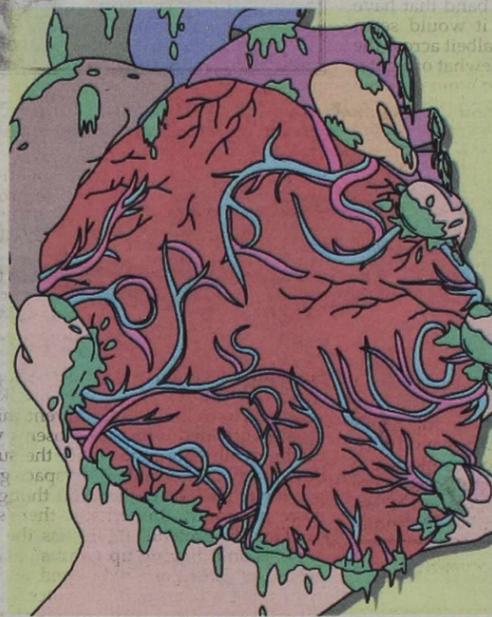
Dead Meadow are returning once again to the Cluny in support of their latest album, *Old Growth*. Interested parties can expect swirling, whirling guitar atmospherics, lush drones, swinging drums and dreamy vocals about wizards wrapped up in some of the loudest paisley shirt patterns seen since the 60s. Dead Meadow gigs are always laid back in the extreme, and the welcoming environs of The Cluny should ensure a thoroughly groovy time is had by all. Don't forget your lava lamp...

Samual Denney

JACK PENATE @ NEW- CASTLE UNION, MON. 3RD MARCH

Get your dancing shoes on! The Jack Peñate rockabilly bandwagon shuffles into the union this coming Monday. The last year has seen the much hyped Peñate signed to XL and the release of his frenetically paced debut album, 'Matinee'. His style, for those as yet unacquainted, is best exemplified on the well known single and album opener 'Spit at Stars'. This Monday Newcastle Student Union will play host to this unique and quirky performer who's entrancing live show will no doubt deliver a memorable, laugh fuelled and unique evening of dance floor action. Expect hoarse throats and blistered feet the following morning.

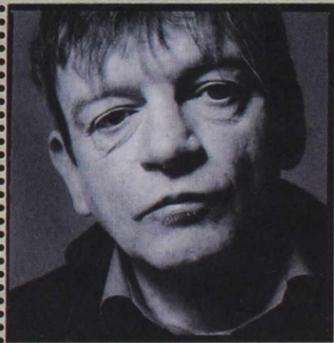
Olivia Mee



THE FALL @ NEW- CASTLE UN- ION, WED. 5TH MARCH

Emerging from the Manchester scene which also produced Joy Division and The Buzzcocks and based around vocalist Mark E. Smith, veteran post-punk outfit The Fall have survived for over 30 years, and, with an almost ridiculous turnaround of band members, have produced 27 albums to date. Despite their longevity in the business, they have not, for reasons unbeknownst to many, achieved any widespread success, instead enjoying a cult following amongst their devoted fans, which included the late John Peel; their biggest claim to fame is perhaps providing the theme music to Football Focus on BBC One. But having influenced bands such as diverse as Sonic Youth, Pavement, The Smiths, Franz Ferdinand and LCD Soundsystem, The Fall remain as relevant in 2008 as they did 1978.

Phil Copley



NEW YORK NOUVEAU

BORED, bored bored bored. Hence Alice Vincent's fall through an online rabbit hole to some shiny, new chrysalis emerging in New York. There's no need to leave our shores...

I HAVE been finding, of late, that the old line "new music just hasn't produced anything very good" is being uttered from my lips with increasing frequency. Sometimes I fear that I sound either a) like a prematurely old woman who can only hark back to the heady days of 2001, 2, or 4, or b) ignorant of some unbelievably cool scene that's occurring. It's true; I haven't picked up a copy of the NME for a good while. Yet, maybe this is because there's never been anybody particularly interesting on the front. Skinny jeans? Check. Too much hair? Check. Guitar? Check. Band name beginning with 'The'? Check. It's not that there aren't any new bands around - indeed, there are hundreds of guitar-toting, mic-wielding little hair-rufflers created everyday - but rather that they're all aspiring to be the next Strokes, Libertines, or Arctic Monkeys. As a result, the U.K music scene is dominated by poor pastiches of the bands that, ironically, have inspired this dearth of innovation.

However, after checking out yet another band that have been claimed to be the 'next big thing', it would seem something very interesting is happening... albeit across the pond. Vampire Weekend's Myspace is somewhat of a gateway (on this side of the Atlantic, at least) to a music scene that is not only packed with bands that differ greatly from those that have been residing inside NME for the past forever, but also from one another in New York. The refreshment positively oozes from Vampire Weekend's debut single 'Mansard Roof'. Such is the extent of genre-hopping in this tune that when I hear it I'm sure I've been transported to a hot subcontinent in a 1930s tea dress whilst a beautiful

person serenades me with grammar rules. In short, it sounds like nothing I've ever heard before. The intelligence of Vampire Weekend's music may well be due to their innovative influences; front man Ezra Koenig apparently reads a lot about Colonial Africa and India. This literacy is reflected in their self-confessed specialism in "Oxford Comma Riddim" - no 'indie-



Above right: Dirty Projectors; Above; The cover from Vampire Weekend's Mansard Roof



alt-rock' in their genre box, then.

Indeed, delving into Vampire Weekend's friend list is like witnessing a 21st Century New Yorker Bloomsbury Group. It would seem these bands have near-incestuous links to one another, either through university friendship groups or the uber-trendy underground club nights they attend, and the urge to create something wholly different and beautiful pervades throughout. Take, for example, Dirty Projectors. A foursome (plus orchestral friends for shows and recordings) of extremely talented vocalists who manage to make ethereal noises over organic basslines and drumbeats. These guys might well be signed to Rough Trade but one listen to the epic 'Fucked For Life' certainly demonstrates their distance from the scenester-filled Shoreditch location of the label's shop.

Sam Buck Rosen are another Brooklyn band in this scene who are doing radically different things. Bizarre electronics are entwined with Sam Rosen's vocals over the top of catchy synth chords to create the super fresh 'Soulshake-downparty'. Indeed, their Myspace gives a spectrum of super novel pop. Just when you thought it couldn't get any more pleasantly unlistenable there's MGMT. Cute lyrics of 'Time to Pretend' ("I'll miss the playgrounds and the animals and digging up worms" and cheery "yeah, yeah, yeahs" to finish) are juxtaposed with a melodic backdrop so heavy it's difficult not to dance.

It might not be to everybody's taste. You might like one

song by one band in the entire scene. The point of this mini-revolution that's happening in New York right now is that it's shiny and new and entirely different from anything else around; including itself. Part of the delicious joy of these bands is that they sound entirely different from each other and that they're genre defining - hence why it sounds a little bit weird. Of course, they're making music to be heard and enjoyed, but I can't help but feel that they're doing it to kick start the NY scene started by The Strokes six years ago that is in very much need of a makeover. Good on 'em.

Alice Vincent

LISTENING LIST

- Vampire Weekend- Mansard Roof
- Dirty Projectors- Rise Above
- Dirty Projectors- New Attitude EP
- Sam Buck Rosen- The Look South
- MGMT- Oracular Spectacular

NOTES FROM ... PENDULUM IN EDINBURGH

I ALWAYS thought the music scene here would be pretentious and vain. But when visiting a friend, my misconceptions were smoothed out. After an intense Ring of Fire (with ridiculous Scottish rules) we were planning where to go when a girl burst through the door. "I have 6 VIP tickets to Pendulum!" I'd never seen Pendulum live, but the atmosphere was intense. All the posh kids stopped caring what their hair was like or that UV paint was seeping onto their Abercrombie as we danced from the side of the stage. It might have just been the University's SU, but it was a great venue; low ceilings, twisting staircases to confuse even the sober. After the gig we soldiered on to a wildly ambitious bar called Frankenstein's; ugly, knobby tables, with an uneven bar and odd lights blinking. We necked some colourful cocktails and again we dashed away into the night to our final destination. We walked through, I felt my hand get stamped and I followed the group down a narrow staircase. With each step another thudding bassline blasted out from somewhere. I looked around downstairs; this, The Cabaret Voltaire, used to be an old wine cellar, and was now one of the most talked about venues in town. Wooden floorboards, a low ceiling and stone walls told me this building was old. With trebles down our throats we took to the dance floor. Local MC's got up, freestyling into the early hours of the night. I felt like I was in Skins. This was such an underground music scene for such an above-the-surface city, and I'm lucky enough to hit it again at Easter!

Chris Mandle

LOST LOVE...

KINGS OF LEON: YOUTH AND YOUNG MANHOOD

IT'S SUMMER 2003 and as a mere fourteen year old I'm at that age where rebellion and revolt are starting to seem like quite a cool thing to do; the school tie gets lower, the hair longer than your mum wants and the music you play gets louder. And which band should embody all this? Enter Kings of Leon. Four Nashville residents complete with ragged beards, unkempt hair and a love for chain smoking and whisky. But best of all, equipped with debut album, Youth and Young Manhood, that literally knocks you back a step or two. This was music at its raw and powerful best, tune after tune piling out, anthem choruses thundering over breathless guitar lines. From the wild, energetic 'Spiral Staircase', through to heart-wrenching epic 'Trani', these are songs that are at home in a dingy indie club or a sun-drenched field. Front-man Caleb Followhill slurs, screams and generally does everything that shouldn't make good music for song after song, and how it works! Here is an album built for live performance which transposes to the stereo perfectly. 'Youth and Young Manhood' didn't just fuel teenage rebellion, it fuelled my love for music.

Rob Sellars

REVIEWS

ALBUMS

GOLDFRAPP SEVENTH TREE

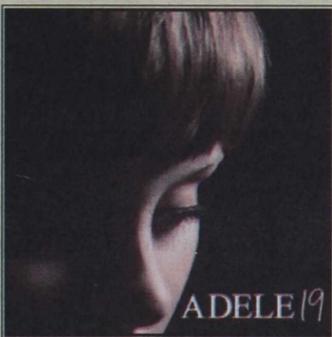


IF 'Felt Mountain' was a sultry undressing, 'Black Cherry' a beautiful perverted bit of foreplay (animal heads included) and 'Supernature' a commercial climax with Marc Bolan having a bit of perv through the window, then 'Seventh Tree', the fourth Goldfrapp album, is a post-coital herbal cigarette smoked whilst wandering around a forest with a small coven of Kate Bush-worshipping sylphs. This music is certainly not for the dancefloor, it's too fragile; the songs have lost their sleaziness and glitter, but they encompass more. It's Sunday music yes, but for 'cool kids' who've spent the previous night in Boombbox trying to get photographed for DirtyDirtyDancing. It may alienate some fans of the band, but will be sure to win over a strange new tribe of beautiful freaks in the process.

8/10

Danny Rawcliffe: Rufus Wainwright, Smolik, Kate Bush, Lykke Li

ADELE 19



THERE'S a wealth of female singer-songwriter talent around these days. This record however, is brilliant reminder that talent really isn't everything (quite obvious if you think about it really, I mean, have Dragonforce ever released anything remotely listenable?). Adele can really sing, it's a voice that oozes control and confidence in itself; it's really not that that's the problem. It's when she starts to write songs. Over-achingly sensitive to the point of insincerity, great glutinous globs of sound flop from the album like mockney beached whales. It's terrible shame that with the likes of Laura Marling and Emmy the Great around, the powers that be have selected Adele for stardom, but there you have it. As she herself might say, whateva.

3/10

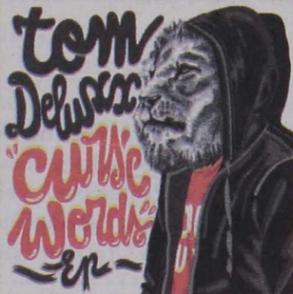
Dave Wingrave: Fryars, Emmy the Great, Tegan and Sara

SINGLES

TOM DELUXX CURSE WORDS EP

TOM DeluXX is to Boxon Records what Justice was to Ed Banger. The spark. The artist that tears ears from people's heads and forces them to listen. His debut single (and Boxon's first release) 'Drama Queen' proved that he had the raw grit and intelligence to match the rest of the French electro movement, and this, his follow-up EP, will surely see him skyrocket beyond his peers. With bass that would even make Boys Noize blush, and choppy ghetto vocals as so loved by the wonk movement, Curse Words see's Tom smash the spectrum wide open with a bombardment of frequencies that'll surely empty bowels by the time it hits clubs. Complete, uncensored filth. Indulge!

Jimmy Asquith: D.I.M., Kap10Kurt, Passions, JBAG



WE ARE SCIENTISTS AFTER HOURS

THE boys from WAS disappoint here with the first single from their second album, Brain Thrust Mastery (released 17th March). Their last album lent them a space in my heart, so I struggled to find a good nugget to say about this single, unfortunately, all I could come up with is - it's catchy. Indeed bland vocals and boring melodies replace lyrical genius and exciting guitar hooks. Shame, as their off stage persona really is hilarious, maybe they should consider a slot on BBC 3 instead.

Heather Welsh: Boys Noize, Pete and the Pirates, The Maccabees, Mystery Jets

TINY MASTERS OF TODAY HOLOGRAM WORLD

TINY Masters are a rock and roll sibling duo - aged 11 and 14 - who produce retrograde punk fuzz with as authentic a swagger as many of the big kids in the garage rock playground. Unfortunately that particular genre is so over-saturated and unimaginative that only the gimmick of pubescence distinguishes this song from other White Stripes imitators.

Roz Tuplin: Destroy Disco, Kylie Minogue, Hot Chip, Dragonette

THE TING TINGS GREAT DJ

THE Ting Tings are storming the UK with more colourful wonderment than the inside of a helium balloon. Think of a lovechild of Blondie and the Gorillaz performing like a Scissor Sister and you're almost there. It's loud, attitude-infested disco pop with youthful guitars and catchy chords and will be in your head for ages!

Chris Mandle: Alphabeat, Sam Sparrow, The Kooks, British Sea Power

MGMT TIME TO PRETEND

TIME to Pretend' is the sound of summer. The candyfloss synth vibrato will thaw out your winter blues and get you set for garden picnics and glasses of Pimms. The surf-stained vocals will have you crying out for the sun, and it's all topped off with enough harmonic variation to remain in your jukebox until summer actually comes. Hell, its only three months away!

Gordon Bruce: The Cribs, Radiohead, Burial, SMD

MIA PAPER PLANES

MORE coherent and slightly less schizophrenic than previous records but no less cosmopolitan, or downright insanely amazing. You could almost be excused for calling it pop apart from the fact the chorus focuses around incongruous gunshots and ringing cash registers. The track samples the Clash's 'Straight to Hell' to create yet another multicoloured, multi cultured masterpiece.

Harriet Fitzgerald: Beirut, Justice, The Rapture, Noah and the Whale

ELECTRIC 6 @ ACADEMY

Often labelled a "cringe-worthy novelty act" Electric 6 (with support from local Freerunner), pulled in a surprisingly large crowd at the Carling Academy. Previous tours have seen them team up with Kid Carpet (a bloke playing ELC kids instruments) and just manage to fill out the Academy 2, but this time they weren't so far off selling the place out. The night was built on contrast; along with the expected preposterous innuendo, the band proved to be weirdly polite. They graciously thanked both the support bands and the crowd for showing up at regular intervals, seeming quite stunned at the admiration they were receiving. Front man, Dick Valentine, arrived on stage draped in a long purple cloak, with his back turned to the audience before jumping into their most recent hit, 'It's show time'. I figured people would react well, but the real enthusiasm would be reserved for "that one everyone knows - Gaybar". I was wrong. The crowd chanted near lyrically perfect to almost every song, seemingly mesmerised by the group! Perhaps the nicest thing about the show was that it was for everyone - there was no dress code, no set stereotype, just a bunch of people having a really great time, from oldies to kids, cyber Goths to mods - they were all there. Interestingly the show was almost shaped by political agenda; most people walked away with "Bush - I don't like you" T-shirts, and Mr Valentine couldn't resist throwing a regular barrage of insults at his president. Although they're not the most controversial band out there, these boys don't hide their opinions, and I reckon their latest album, I shall exterminate everything around me (that restricts me from becoming the master), is probably worth a listen. They're really not just a "cringe worthy novelty act", but a definite must see live!

Anna Craig

ATLAS SOUND

LET THE BLINDS LEAD THOSE WHO CAN SEE BUT CANNOT FEEL

SOME albums are mere collections of songs, shoved together with little care or attention to detail (hey there, Robert Pollard!), while others take the listener on a journey and demand to be listened to as a whole. Bradford Cox's solo debut from his ambient-pop Atlas Sound project epitomises the second approach - from the muffled samples of opener 'A Ghost Story' to the crystalline beats of 'Cold As Ice' to the tense 'Bite Marks', the album evokes images of flickering fluorescent lights, of childhood wonder and adolescent growth pains, with the subtle soundscapes of guitars, electronic programming and treated keys that Cox crafts giving the whole album a daydream-like feel. It's an album that requires several listens before its treasures are revealed, but the attentive listener will be rewarded with an elegant and graceful piece of artistry whose power doesn't end once the final notes fade to black.

8/10

Mark Corcoran-Lettice: Radiohead, Captain Beefheart, The Fall, Nick Cave

FLYLEAF FLYLEAF

I OPTIMISTICALLY assume that wealthy, overweight businessmen who have affairs with their blonde, nubile secretary interns are, somewhere deep in their grey matter, dimly aware that they're being sickeningly clichéd. I have no such faith in Flyleaf. The self-proclaimed 'Christian Nirvana' who cut their buck teeth on the back-roads of Texas, falling into every 'what not to do' pothole they could, would not be worthy of even a callous glance from you, undoubtedly savvy reader, were it not for the fact the album has shifted over a million units stateside. A million is rather a lot. Enough to give everyone in Newcastle roughly five copies each, an action I really cannot condone. Type Flyleaf into Wikipedia for a quick curio fix, a cautionary tale, but do not, whatever you do, help drag the American scene back into the rut it was just starting to scabble out of.

2/10

Dave Wingrave: Fryars, Talib Kweli, Emmy the Great

LIVE

Bedson at Bedtime

■ IZAAC CARLISLE discusses why anyone would swap sleep for stress in a twenty-four hour computer cluster

SOMETIMES, work can get too much. Sometimes, the number of hours in the day are too few to get through the piling up of reading and essays. You need to make time; you need some way of getting to 9am as slowly as possible. You need... the 24-hour Computer Cluster!

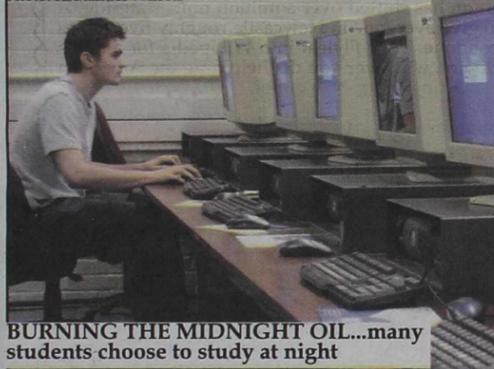
Known locally as 'The Bedson', its use as the centre of excellence for all late pieces of work is legendary throughout the undergraduate world. The centrepiece is its ability to somehow function 24 hours a day, 7 days a week without cleaning, fixing or air conditioning.

For all the thousands of pounds worth of equipment there, one thing they have forgotten to put in is a toilet. There isn't even a bucket and spade, forcing you out of the cluster and into the security office to use theirs.

When its ready to stop working and get some food you realise there isn't anything open, and have to trek through the cold, passing drunken first years walking back to halls before you get to Salt 'n' Pepper or the 24 hour Café.

Sometimes I think that they should commercialise

Photo: Alexander Wilson



BURNING THE MIDNIGHT OIL...many students choose to study at night

it. There should be a McDonalds in it or at least something else promoting local, fair-trade, organic products. It should be a place of relaxation, maybe putting in a spa or equivalent. Instead of building new lecture theatres, or buying the next IT equipment available they should instead look at creating a new 'Super Cluster', that works beyond 24 hours a day. At least put a pub in it.

I could say that I've done this as some sort of experiment, that I've spent a majority of my night slumped on a computers staring at the mindless souls that need to stay in such a desolate place to finish their work. Instead, this was a choice. It wasn't for work, it wasn't forced and it wasn't necessary. The reason was just that I had come back from a night out and wanted to check my email.

Such a thought might shock people. 'Why would he do such a thing?' But it is an urge, a necessity. NSR has to be listened to, Facebook has to be checked, MSN has to be opened...

Maybe it's just me. Maybe it's just the same feeling that people (women) have when they walk past a sale shop and something just lures them in. Except not many people know where this Newcastle Institution is located. It gains its popularity through word of mouth, the whispering in ears about a place that offers unlimited revision, unlimited enjoyment and mostly, unlimited time.

The fact is that the 24-hour computer cluster has changed my life. Before, I was a naïve individual, worrying about the lack of computers on campus and having to rely on the unreliable RAS system. Before the light was shined into my eyes I cried into the sunset as I walked home, eager to see who had sent me a message or was dying to talk to me about something of the utmost importance.

This Cluster, this Bedson, has changed all that. It has given me the opportunity to waste more time in the daytime but still have the opportunity to get it done in the end. To be able to spend more time browsing useless facts on Wikipedia or watching bears ride bikes instead of doing work. Because I know that it doesn't really matter, I still have the Cluster to give me the time to finish my work.

SOCIETY: PROFILES

GUINNESS AND REAL ALE SOCIETY

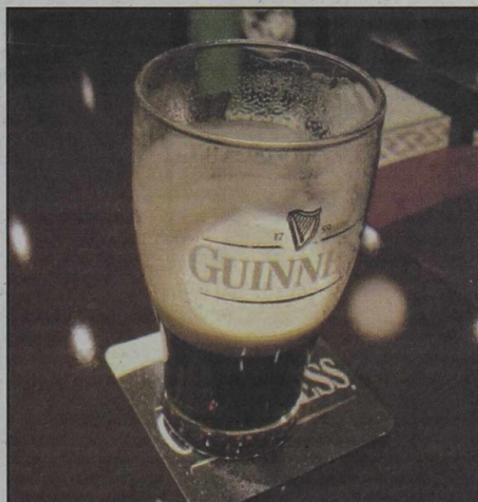
■ CORDELIA ROSA

IN A NATION of supposed lager louts it was refreshing to meet someone who really appreciates a good pint of locally brewed ale, so over a pint of Double Maxim (Sunderland brew) I interviewed the social secretary of the Guinness and Real Ale Society, Andrew Macdonald, to hear about the fun and banter that goes down during their pub socials, pub crawls and pub quizzes...

Andy and the team have a good rapport with several traditional Newcastle pubs including The Newcastle Arms, The Hotspur, Three Bulls Head and The Crown Posada. Their "hub" so to speak is The Collingwood Arms, where a quiz takes place every Tuesday. The society meet and challenge their general knowledge quite often bringing home the prize not just for most points but for the best quiz group name.

The pub quiz is not the only fixed weekly event in the G.R.A.S calendar they also have a pub crawl once every two weeks. Andy's favourite route is Monument then on to Ouse-Burn along the river followed by somewhere near Byker and finishing in the Cumberland.

I did question Andy on whether they were all able to make it home after so many pints of ale and Guinness but he stressed the fact that they are a society that appreciates good ale rather than just wanting to get blind drunk on it, so drinking responsibly is one of the society's ground rules. There was an incident last



term where a new member got a little carried away and was sick all over the bar floor in the Bridge hotel... Luckily they have restored their reputation at this particular place by having their Christmas party there. The Christmas party is just one of the benefits to being a member of G.R.A.S, they are currently planning a trip to Dublin with flights being subsidised so that everyone will be able to really have a proper Guinness in its motherland.

If you don't like Guinness or Ale don't think you cannot partake in this society, Andy reassured me that you can drink wine, brandy, whisky whatever your preference, all are welcome but you are expected to know your ale facts for the ale pub quiz at the end of every term...

To find out more on The Guinness and Real Ale Society you can check them out on Facebook, under the name NUGRAS. A little something that might encourage you is the free t-shirt you receive on joining...



Boy v Girl

This week:

ASKING SOMEONE OUT

■ CHRIS KAY

there's no original opinion that won't get you a look of scornful disbelief from the fairer sex if you don't agree that, as a rule of thumb, men should do the chasing

WHEN it comes to modern mating rituals most students are veterans of the tried and tested formulas, or at least in my case, vaguely aware of them. We all use cultural examples as a benchmark for our own expectations, whether this is the frustrated courting of Jane Austen's novels, or from the enlightened wisdom of Lucy Pinder, doling out solutions to desperate males from the glossy bible of Nuts.

For my own part I never read Austen or had a raging testosterone count that my spotty peers revelled in. I was doomed to learn (or not learn) much later in life the complex politics of enticement.

However, it seems to me that arguing in an opinion piece whether men should do the enticing is a pointless affair. There is no original opinion that won't get you a look of scornful disbelief from the fairer sex if you don't agree that generally, as a rule of thumb, men should do the chasing. Yet in reality it is rarely that simple.

Women are seemingly fickle with their logic. On the one hand they want to be chased and desired. This apparently is true to a limit, and that limit from my observations usually comes at the point where they are being grinded from behind at 2:30 in the morning by an overweight Neanderthal whispering 'You love it, you slag'.

Most rules seem to suggest that men should take the first move, gain the feminine interest, and then just ignore them for a few days. While women scornfully rue this as an emotionally cruel move, it is better than being seen as an over keen love puppy who sends sixteen unrequited texts a day. This, my friend, will result in becoming labelled as 'cute', a fate that puts you on an equal sexual par with small fluffy animals, good for cuddling, but not much else.

It is as much a game for women as it is for men. The main difference is that men usually play the bumbling extremes of the scales. By contrast a woman's selection of her potential partner is seen as a sophisticated choice of refinement, rather than the more realistic tale of smitten drunkenness. Often her boyfriend will be akin to the morning after regret of a post-night kebab as it decides to stick around longer than expected.

■ VICTORIA CRITOPH

by sitting pretty and being stubborn, waiting for him to make the first move, I like to think that us girls are doing guys a favour

IN THE metrosexual modern age it's boys who should still do the asking out. It's not because us girls are shy, nor are we afraid of being turned-down - it's because we like knowing that they're keen and making them work hard to get us.

I'm well aware that it's bang-on-trend to be a feminist these days, but, quite frankly, there's a difference between believing in gender equality and taking the place of a man (and yes, I know we get to wear the trousers too, but it's ok to wear a skirt once in while).

In fact, by sitting pretty and being stubborn, waiting for him to make the first move, I like to think that us girls are doing guys a favour. Surely we're letting (although some may see it as forcing) them become the quintessential English gent that their grandparents would be proud to show-off.

Effectively, in doing so, we're filtering out the goodies from the baddies, seeing who will actually be bothered to try and win our affection, and, by the process of elimination we land ourselves with the best of the bunch. It's the survival of the fittest and all that.

So let's get technical now. In evolutionary terms, men are supposed to spread the seed, right? Biologically, they're programmed to impregnate as many females as possible, and, whilst this seems utterly horrifying to any clued-up girl nowadays, it does nevertheless demonstrate a go-get-'em attitude which I hope men haven't lost, or, worse, suppressed because they know girls will go and get them instead. So I ask, who are we to mess with Mother Nature? - she knew what she was talking about.

Now, I know the Noughties are supposed to be all about abandoning tradition aren't they, defying convention and all that - that's why we get our kicks from hearing about troubled individuals, and why it is the likes of Amy Winehouse and Pete Doherty who are, unashamedly, the height of 'cool' (whatever that is!). Anyway, if we go on like this we're going to get ourselves into a pickle; if we tell Tradition to f*** off we can't expect to be treated with respect. So let's embrace it. If we stick with tradition and let boys do the asking-out, we'll be ladies (in trousers) instead of ladettes.

So here's my twisted logic (just go with it): It's not natural for boys to wear skirts, in fact we cringe at the sight of men in skirts. So let them do them do the gentlemanly thing, lend them your trousers and let them ask you out. After all, if boys will be boys, then we might as well let them.

Safe As Houses

■ **EMMA MARLOW** investigates.
the reality behind the crime statistics

EVERY student should be able to feel safe in their own home or on the street, but after interviewing several students this week, I have discovered that many feel the need to 'watch their back' when out alone and most will only venture out in daylight or with a group of friends. However, some students I spoke to, especially guys, are not following basic precautions and thinking about their personal safety enough. By simply taking a shortcut or displaying their phone as they walk, they could potentially be putting their lives at risk. Only the other week, a student was attacked with a baseball bat, near Jesmond. So, how safe do you feel when walking to friends or the local newsagent?

For all popular student areas the majority of students felt safe when walking or cycling during the day. However, after dark many will not walk alone, opting to travel in groups or by car. This is because they feel unsafe walking through quiet, poorly lit areas, such as Exhibition Park and across the town moor. The metro is also avoided late at night due to suspicious characters usually

found loitering at the stations and many would not feeling safe sitting in empty carriages. The evening is also the time when large groups of younger teenagers can be found walking the streets, often drinking alcohol, which is intimidating to anyone, but especially a young girl walking alone.

The main reason that young people need to take care when travelling alone is that they are an easy target. Students, especially, can be popular targets for attackers, due to the high likelihood that the individual will have an expensive phone, jewellery, ipod or cash located on them. Statistics show that the majority of attacks occur after 6pm and 30% of these involve mobile phones.

Student accommodation has also been considered unsafe by some students. This is partly due to a recent increase in the number of robberies and break-ins in the Jesmond and surrounding area. When questioned, most students claimed to have never experienced any theft or criminal damage personally, but many had heard of a friend or colleague who had been the victim of theft

or vandalism. Areas with a high number of student properties are usually targeted by thieves since any one house could potentially contain several laptops, MP3 players, TVs and many other portable goods, much greater than that found in an average home. Student houses are also easily identified and thieves may return each year, when new tenants arrive. Statistics from 2006/07 reveal that Newcastle has a higher number of offences related to crime when compared to the national average, but total offences had decreased from the previous year by 6.6%. 1.5 robbery offences occurred per 1,000 Newcastle residents which was higher than the national average of 1.2 per 1000 people. Burglaries were nearly twice the national average at 8.2 per 1000 (a total of 2,323 offences) compared to 4.3 per 1000. 5,988 offences for violent crime occurred in the same year which demonstrates that these crimes happen on a daily basis and are not uncommon, as many people believe.

How do the individual areas compare?

Heaton

Most students interviewed felt Heaton was a moderately safe area to live. The many back alleys were considered most dangerous and many students avoided using these at night, even if it meant a longer route home. Some students had noticed incidents of street crime in this area but did not feel particularly threatened. These included bins being set alight and youths throwing stones/rubbish.

Jesmond

Jesmond was considered safe and relatively free from vandalism and

young gangs compared to other areas. However, Jesmond is known for having a high rate of burglary and car theft. Most of these are opportunist cases and are easily prevented. They are often caused by valuables being left on display in cars and homes and doors being unlocked / unsecured. Jesmond is more of a target than other student areas though as it renowned for accommodating wealthy students which means it is a popular site for robbery and personal attacks. Jesmond can also be extremely noisy in the evening due to house parties and people walking home after a

night out. Although usually harmless these raucous individuals could be intimidating to others. Overall, Jesmond is a safe area as there are always a lot of pedestrians around until late and the majority of the area is brightly lit.

Sandyford and Spital Tongues

These areas are more residential with a lower student population and are not as much of a target for thieves. As a result they are seen as a quieter place to live with trouble and violence being less common. Neighbours are more likely to look



"I feel safe in Jesmond at any time, but as with any area I wouldn't choose to walk a long way home on my own at night"

-Zoe Thompson, stage 3, Biochemistry with Immunology from Jesmond

"I feel safe as houses most of the time, but I do notice gangs of chavs hanging around the local shops in the evening which could be intimidating to others"

-Kevin Conroy, Stage 3, Medicine from Heaton

"Heaton is a safe place to live and well lit. I have barely seen any trouble in the area but there are a

large number of youths around in the evenings"

-David Rudman, stage 3, Pharmacology from Heaton

"I feel safe-ish when out in Jesmond but do not like answering the door to strangers"

-Rosanna Smailes, stage 3 Medicine from West Jesmond

"I feel extremely safe at Newcastle, especially in Jesmond, but I will always use routes I am familiar with after dark."

Helen Barrett, stage 3, English Literature from Jesmond

"I feel safer in Jesmond than I do at home. This is because Jesmond is always so busy and it is well lit at night."

-Amy StJohn-Glew, stage 3, Pharmacology, from Jesmond

Positive Action

Crime rates throughout Newcastle are actually decreasing, with a 25% reduction in robbery and harassment cases, which should make students feel a little more at ease. 'Safe Newcastle' is a recent project, in partnership with Northumbria Police, to improve the safety of young people and improve community confidence. Plans include the installation of burglar alarms on student houses and the presence of Police Community Support Officers in residential areas.

Byker

Byker is renowned for being a 'rough' area with higher amounts of theft. For example, don't expect your bike to be still there when you come to retrieve it a few hours later or your new car to be scratch-free. Many students don't consider living in Byker because of its reputation and high crime rates, however the cheap rent reflects the areas unfavourable crime statistics.

The great hoodie debate

■ **VICKY CRITOPH** looks back at the hoodie slogans of University past

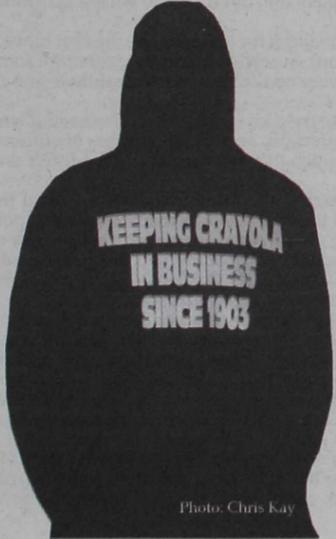


Photo: Chris Kay

THE HOODED jumper: initially symbolic of 70's New York hip-hop culture, worn only by working-men, street thugs and athletes, the hoodie (as 90's culture termed it) has evolved into a staple, must-have item for chavs, surfers, skateboarders...and students. For us, the hoodie is the single best, and most remembered, thing about a university society or team - and it's the humorous slogans and sexual innuendos that really do it for us.

But in light of the infamous Felch Soc hoodie debate and worrying levels of violence at Stan Calvert, our legendary hoodies are under threat. With our fairly recent Stan Calvert victory (well, we're still revelling in it aren't we), there's been a degree of 'Poly-bashing' in the air, and unsurprisingly on our clothes. It's an event which, year after year, is renowned for its outrageous (but amusing) insults hurled between the two sides. Exceptionally offensive slogans from previous years include; 'Northumbria was going to put on a

nativity play but they couldn't find a wise man or a virgin', slating the inferior intellect and moral capacity of our opponents. As well as the simple, yet poignant 'McScumbria' which takes its inspiration from the low-life 'restaurant' chain and ingeniously alludes to Northumbria's polytechnic, although aspiring university, status.

This year, however, students were warned by its organisers to tone things down. Our shirts lamely, in comparison to a wealth of witty captions which have existed before, featured a league table with Newcastle shown to be excelling dramatically above Northumbria, with a caption reading 'Northumbria, you do the math' - and whilst I can appreciate that the pun is that they probably can't do the math, this one - let's be honest - just doesn't quite make the grade.

It seems other societies have deliberately dulled down their taglines, or perhaps this is because their society is dull by nature (no offensive intended). Take the Lawyers

for instance. I know a few; they seem like a friendly, sociable bunch yet their new hoodies will read 'Trust me, I'm almost a Lawyer'. Perhaps I'm wrong on this one, but I just don't get it. To me this just confirms an existing (although, I imagine, an insanely irritating) belief that lawyers are too sensible for their own good. They should have gone with 'A good lawyer knows the law; a great lawyer knows the judge' or even the outrageously zany 'Lawyers don't always play by the rules' - both of which were contenders for achieving hoodie status.

And then at the other extreme there is Felch Soc. It's so far off the scale that it's been dropped as a society altogether...mainly because of its 'tounge-in-cheek' hoodie design (I'm sure you've all seen it by now) which is nothing short of crude. With the risk of sounding like a complete bore, it's societies such as these, which have gone too far; they've made every sexual innuendo emblazoned on other hoodies look tame in

comparison. And this clearly was their intention.

Nevertheless it's a tad far fetched to argue that these captions encourage sexual promiscuity. Whilst we live in an age obsessed, and defined, by consumerism, in which we are endlessly being brainwashed by advertising so that we buy into a brand or a lifestyle, we can still make a point of saying no. If we can resist buying a Kate Moss item because it doesn't suit us (however great it looks on the hanger), then surely we're not naive enough to go for everything that's offered to us. Similarly, just because we like to make jokes about sexual promiscuity, this doesn't mean that we'll lose our wits when we it comes to sex. Instead, our hoodies innocently play up to the student stereotypes that we are assigned - we supposedly structure our lives around drinking, socialising, sleeping alone, and sleeping with the opposite sex (all whilst pretending to be highly academic). Our hoodies say yes, we work, but we play hard too.

TRAVEL

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Voyage to Venezuela

■ **WILL MONTEITH** encounters gun-wielding bankers, spectacular natural beauty and Barney the Dinosaur in the South American nation

PROCRASTINATING with two mates last year, someone suggested that a trip to Venezuela; the host of the Copa America football tournament seemed an interesting way of burning time over the summer. Having all travelled before we were fairly self-assured and before long we had booked flights and spent overdrafts without having dwelled too hard on the potential problems awaiting us.

It was only in the next few weeks that I started to research the region. Venezuela has been classed the fourth most dangerous country in the world and Caracas (the capital and our destination) amongst the most unsafe cities of Latin America.

Politically, it is thought that the country has been (and still is) on the verge of revolution as the socialist president Hugo Chavez increases his grip on the country, pushing through increasingly controversial reforms on a floundering economy. Oh, and the region is second only to its neighbour Colombia in instances of drug trafficking and related crimes. Not to worry though, we'd all been on a gap year...

We arrived in Caracas on the 12th June armed only with a return ticket, extremely sketchy Spanish and a vague idea as to where we would spend the first night. Having just read that muggings by fake taxi drivers at the airport were not uncommon, we opted for the most official (and reassuringly expensive) taxi rank we could find.

Naiguata was our destination; a nearby coastal village which would mean avoiding a night in precarious Caracas - or so we thought. Our first brushes with Venezuelan hospitality left a lot to be desired. We eventually found the only hotel/hostel in the village: 'hotel a la piscina', the 'swimming pool' of which was filled with dirt. The room was simple, consisting only of two mattresses and two dozen cockroaches while our host doubled the price as the taxi drove off.

The next obstacle was our lack of local currency; contrary to guide book advice dollars were not accepted nationwide. After a lot of wondering, a little despairing and some confused interaction with locals, we eventually exchanged some money and identified the village's only English speaker.

'Elizabeth' attempted to reassure us by describing the village as 'safe' and informing us that the murder on the beach the previous Sunday was completely out of character of the place. She did however negotiate us a way out for the following day, ironically via central Caracas, which we did precariously with the help of several locals.

To be fair we would learn that this experience was not a fair overall representation of the country and its people. Our next few destinations were on the beaten track and deliberately chosen as such (Puerto Ordaz and Isla Margarita). Here people were more used to travellers but not so used to you that they would try to rip you off. They would not stare at you as suspiciously as in Naiguata.

We found that sparkling golden sand and warm, crystal clear waters along the Caribbean coast put us at ease and helped us adjust to very different surroundings. Days spent on these beaches seemed close to paradise.

Abandoned but for us and a few Venezuelans, we drank cheap cold beer and played beach football with local kids. We met two of only a handful of European travellers that we encountered over the entire trip. They were friendly enough and would prove to be useful accomplices (one could speak some Spanish). We aimed to join an excursion into the wild Orinoco delta before catching the Brazil-

Mexico game in an opening round of the Copa America.

After looking into a few 'official' tours of the delta, we settled for a much cheaper 'pirate' tour offered to us by 'Robin'; a local Del boy (Around £60 for three days). We immediately began to question this decision after setting eyes on his fairly knackered boat and being quoted a suspiciously high deposit for 'supplies'.

After asking if he planned to survive on caviar we eventually fell for his charm and paid him the few thousand Bolivares hoping that he would turn up the following day. Fortunately for us he did and we spent the next few days swimming in rivers surrounded by squawking parrots and monkeys, fishing for piranhas and eating and sleeping with an indigenous Waroa tribe.

But for a few modernisations (such as the unfortunate introduction of Coca Cola into their diets) the tribe still lived as its ancestors have for thousands of years. We had easily the best meal of our entire trip here, freshly caught and fried catfish and a local variation on flatbread; simple yet amazing.

These remarkable few days brought us very close (and on occasion too close) to nature! Back on the mainland, after some bartering we managed to get some black-market tickets for the football; roughly £20 to watch both Ecuador-Chile and Brazil-Mexico. Where the average South American cannot afford to follow their team around the continent, Brazil and Mexico were well supported.

Supporting the underdog, we merged with some noisy Mexico fans and watched their team pull off a shock 2-0 victory. There was loads of flair on display with the Brazilian Robinho and his Mexican counterpart Marquez (of Real Madrid and Barcelona respectively) particularly inspiring.

Ciudad Bolivar was our next destination, a town commonly used as a stepping stone to the Angel falls. This turned out to be one of the strangest places in what was turning out to be a bizarre country. Looking for a hostel, we walked past someone in a full Barney the Dinosaur costume dancing to house music on a busy high street. The following evening we went in search of nightlife to find that the only place open was somewhere between a gay bar and a strip club where locals were particularly friendly!

Finally I had a brush with the more macho side of South American culture. The government's artificial increasing of the value of Venezuelan currency meant that exchanging money in the street

(as opposed to the bank) gave you a much better exchange rate. Carrying out this practice with an amigo, we decided to follow a 'banker' upstairs into his office buoyed by the fact that we hadn't experienced any problems before. Ominously he locked a gate behind us, leaving us fairly uneasy but I thought he seemed genuine enough.

However, no sooner had we put our money on the table than a man came round the corner pointing a gun directly at us. We understood his mix of shouts and body language and dropped to the floor. Meanwhile I was disturbed as to why the 'banker' was grinning at us. Confusingly the gunman then lowered his gun and burst out laughing. The whole charade was a staged practical joke. Still in shock we changed our money as normal - albeit without arguing quite so vehemently for a high exchange rate!

Angel falls was by far our most expensive excursion (£180-200 for 3 days) due predominantly to the fact that it is inaccessible by road and we had to take a five seater private plane. This in itself was fairly exciting; flying high over Canaima national park in a fairly rickety plane driven by a musty old Venezuelan pilot.

The area had been chosen as a site for the filming of Jurassic Park and the associations were obvious; the wild landscape was characterised by ferocious rivers and stand-alone tabletop mountains or 'tepui's'. Angel falls itself was astonishing; water fell from the clouds. However, more exciting was a walk underneath a deafening waterfall close to our camp.

I would definitely recommend a trip to Venezuela to anyone interested in adventure and wildlife. Although the football was a great distraction, there was far more to explore than we expected and places such as the Orinoco delta and Canaima national park remain relatively untouched by tourism.

Although people may appear distanced at first, we found the vast majority of locals to be friendly and trustworthy and you will not be pestered by salesmen and crooks as in nearby countries (a few of us went on to Colombia).

It is definitely worth checking out the currency situation before you leave; taking dollars or American travellers' cheques may mean you receive nearly twice as much for your money. You will feel more confident with a low level of Spanish. Return flights are available for under £500 (www.statravel.co.uk).



CHARLOTTE HANGER

WHEN I think of Britain I think of fish and chips, Eastenders, cups of tea, and my gritty yet hip hometown London. I do however, think that Durham is probably the most picturesque town, and the one which captures the old-school quaintness of England perfectly. Its cobbled streets and Sunday markets selling homemade fudge and toffee make for a well-spent afternoon. Durham also has a beautiful river running through it, and pretty walks are to be had around its green banks.

My favourite travel destination is a million miles away from the small city of Durham. 'Isla Mujeres', also known as "backpackers' paradise" is a small piece of land near Cancun, in the South of Mexico. Discovering this island is how I imagine Leonardo DiCaprio must feel when he uncovers the surreptitious island in 'The Beach'.

Most people, including tourists, drive golf buggies everywhere on 'Isla Mujeres' as it is too small an island to use cars. The beaches here are typical of the Caribbean, with white sand dunes and warm turquoise waters, and beach bars with swings instead of seats are scattered around the island with various beach parties happening under the stars each night.

I couldn't travel to Mexico, or anywhere in fact, without a big pair of sunglasses and plenty of sun cream. Skiing in the snow or surfing the waves, these two items always come in useful.

When I am away from home I definitely miss my friends and family the most, unless of course they are with me! I also miss decent Cadbury's chocolate - cheap Spanish remakes of their 'Fruit and Nut' just are not the same! Something that I can be certain of not missing is the clouds and the rain that come with British weather.

One mistake not to make when travelling is to throw away your plane tickets. This is what happened to me as I slipped my tickets into my Prêt à Manger bag at lunch in the airport, and then later threw the bag in a bin. Luckily my sister, knowing me slightly too well, thought of looking there when I couldn't find them!

In the future I want to see if the 'American Dream' really does exist. I am interested in exploring America, and I hope to travel to the USA, and travel up and down the east and west coast.



Go around the world
this summer

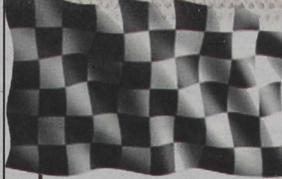
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EU STUDENTS

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Did you know you may be eligible to apply for help through the **Financial Assistance & Childcare Fund?**



For further information about the Fund and eligibility criteria contact the Student Wellbeing Service Financial Support Team:

student.fin-supp@ncl.ac.uk
 or look at our website:
<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/financial-support/international/faf>

No Fix No Fee!

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Student IT Services

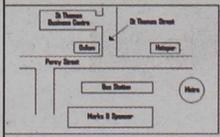
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We've been providing students in Newcastle with a reliable, affordable and professional IT Support service since 2001 – and we're right on your doorstep!

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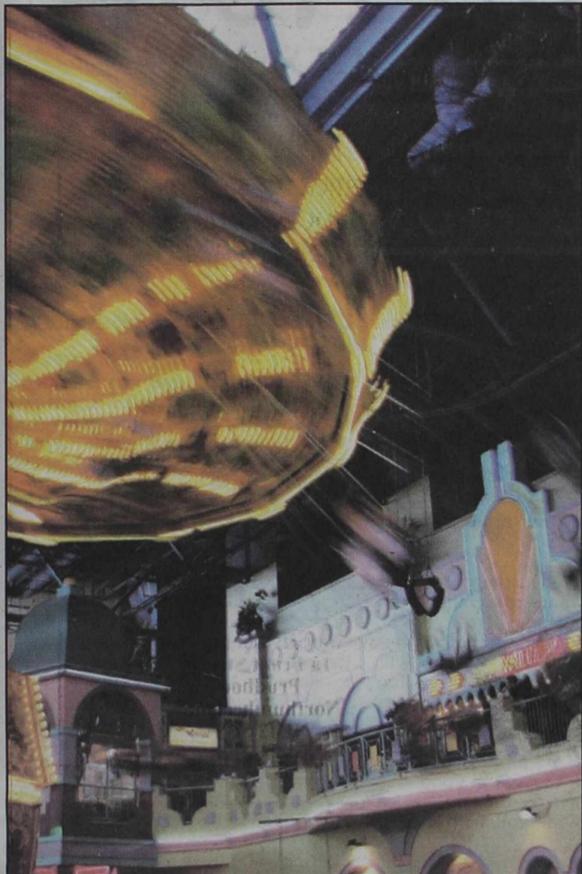


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 NO NONSENSE IT

my newcastle



Have you got a picture that epitomises Newcastle for you? It might be a favourite city view or a picture that shows your best night out with your friends for some reason. Whatever it is we want to see it! Send your snaps, along with a short description of why the photo shows 'My Newcastle' to editor.union@ncl.ac.uk. The best photo of the year could be chosen to be the front cover of next year's Alternative Prospectus!

BY ALEXANDER WILSON

"When I first came to Newcastle, I wanted to explore the city and its surrounding area. One of the places I visited was MetroLand, which is inside the MetroCentre, and Europe's largest indoor funfair. This ride drew my attention, with its bright lights and huge presence, dwarfing the shops and making them seem more intimate and human."

SUMMER WORK JOBS FAIR - TUESDAY 11TH MARCH 2008

Part Time and Vacation Work opportunities

STUDENT UNION BASEMENT, 11AM - 3.30PM

The Student Union Job Shop is holding a Part-time Work and Summer Jobs Recruitment Fair in the Student Union Basement, Newcastle University, on Tuesday 11th March 2008 from 11am - 3.30pm.

This will be a joint venture with the University of Northumbria Job Shop to follow on from the success of the Autumn Jobs Fair last October which attracted in excess of 4,500 students from both universities. Both local and national companies will be recruiting hundreds of students to work for their companies over this summer vacation. Students will have the opportunity to find part-time and summer work locally in Newcastle or apply for work elsewhere in the UK or abroad.

Types of vacancies on offer to students at the Fair, will include IT, Accountancy, Engineering, Human Resources, Contact Centre staff, Office Support, Search & Selection positions, also Summer Camp Counsellors & Staff in the USA, Bar, Waiting, Events, and Catering positions, Tele-sales, Team Managers and IT Support positions, Paid Summer Work Placements, City Council vacancies (from three different Local Authorities in the area), Business start-up advice, Paid Student Associates positions, Interpreters, Admin, Data Entry, Customer Service, Bar Staff and Restaurant Staff vacancies, Health Care / Social Care, Casual Traffic Surveyors, Event Safety Stewarding positions, Paid Team Leaders/Instructors on UK Summer Camps (accommodation & food provided & weekly wage) plus many, many, more...

Job Search Support and Careers Information will also be available on the day, as well as help and advice from the local Job Centre Plus staff on obtaining national insurance numbers, and choosing from a wide selection of vacancies available nationwide during term-time and over the vacation period.

There will also be a free raffle for the chance to win some really great prizes!

So come along on the day and find yourself a well paid, enjoyable and interesting job to add to your CV and to help pay that overdraft off!

For a full listing of companies attending on the day, please go to www.unionsociety.co.uk and click on the link for the Summer Jobs Fair.

The Part-time and Summer Jobs Fair has kindly been sponsored by:



www.campleaders.com



www.nrgplc.com



www.iamvip.co.uk

Win! A free meal at Joe's Bar and Grill

Three winners can be winned and dined if you can find a name for Joe's bull!



Photos: Joe Currin

Joe Needs Your Help!

Joe's prize bull has been in the family for years. Joe's family love him like a family member yet they still call him, "the bull."

Joe has become tired of the constant bickering on what the name should be.

Joe is asking the students of Newcastle to choose a name for him. Simply send him your suggestion and he will ask the children in the family to pick a winner.

As a thank you, he will invite the winner and their friends or family to Joe's for a slap up meal to the value of £100.

Not only that, the second and third placed entries will receive meals up to the value of £50.

To enter, e-mail your name suggestion to editor.union@ncl.ac.uk by 12pm Friday 14th March.

Don't delay - give Newcastle's most famous bull a name

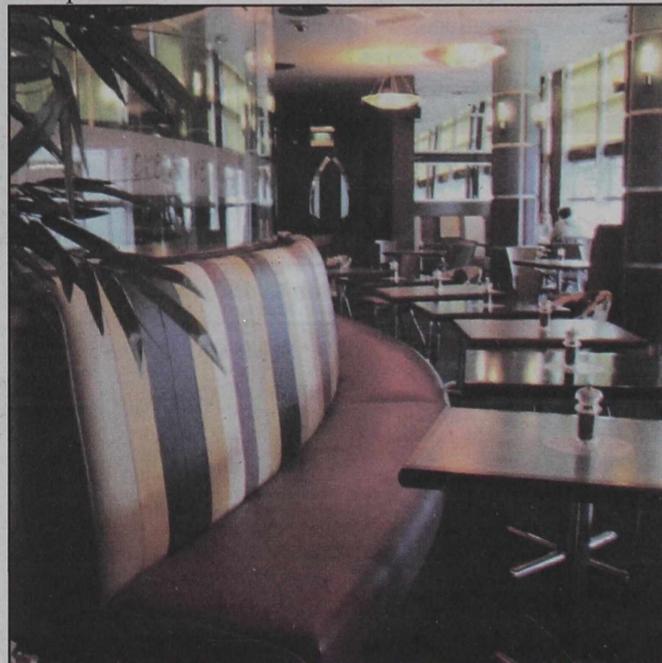
to be proud of!

Find the bull at Joe's Bar and Grill, where students receive a 20% discount with NUS Card on all food and drink, all the time!

Conveniently located near campus on Northumber-

land Road, just off Northumberland Street, Joe's offers mouthwatering burgers, fresh salads and wraps, fabulous coffees and so much more...

Joe's Bar and Grill, 12-22 Northumberland Road, 0191 230 0340



FIND ME A NAME...can you think of a name for Joe's bull?

COURIER CLASSIFIEDS
07964921116

Send in your Happy Birthday messages, general banter, dating requests and sales listings to *Courier Classifieds*. If you want to advertise for a new roommate or maybe you're looking for a room or if you've got books to sell then text us on the number above. The only cost is the text itself.

YOUR TEXTS

Pp, your like that guy in the sixth sense, your dead and you don't know it yet lol.
Ba! in a few days we will know if Mexico is a goer! remember suit for friday we are getting hammered!
Wigan wigan wigan wigan. best place ever, and best footie team!
I like my beer cold, my tv loud and my homosexuals ffflllaaaming!
Newsflash: James Chapman has been sectioned after keeping his girlfriend locked in his car for 7 days
Mark O'donnell has man boobs, Yumma Yumma Yumma
...20 pesticide reports missing-if found pls return to wilkins!
Jamie, im outing you. It's just not fair anymore.

SALES

No messages this week

DATING

Hey. i am the swd officer, what is your housemate like? i am single but looking.
Hot 22yr old well dressed bum queen seeks like minded bender with a tight hole. rob
Petit welsh rugby playing warrior seeks anything with a pulse. Soon. Please!! - Pete

BIRTHDAY TEXTS

Happy 22nd birthday Sarabobble! xxx

HOUSE HUNTING

No messages this week

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Clueless about careers? If you're in a panic about what job is for you, let *The Courier* ease your worries by looking at where Newcastle graduates are today and how you can do the same...

THIS WEEK: Restaurant Manager

Name: Anthony (Tony) Hayllar
Year of Graduation: 2001
University Subject: Bsc (hons) Ecological Resource Management
Job Title: Restaurant Manager
Company: Pizza Hut UK

What makes you employable?:

The interpersonal and team skills as well as the ability to make quick decisions with limited information - these were definitely skills that came from the course I studied!!

Best thing about your job:

I am pretty much my own boss! I report to an area manager but all the happenings within my unit are my responsibility and I thrive on this challenge!

Worst thing about your job:

Disciplining staff who do not conform to the required standards - however this is essential to make the whole team work well together

Why should someone do your job?:

Because you have freedom to be your own person and to learn by making mistakes as well as making big successes! The safety of a well known and respected organisation to back you up if there are any issues.

LIKE WHAT YOU HEAR?

Past Working History/How did you get to where you are today?:

Woolworths PLC. - Graduate Scheme; Assistant Manager 3 years; Store Manager 6 months

Describe a typical day in your job:

Start at 9am and paperwork for approx 1.5 hours then prepare for the coming day. Talking with customers and liaising with suppliers to ensure smooth running of one of the busiest takeaway outlets in the country.

What did you wish you'd known when you first left university?:

I went straight from a science based degree to work in retail so I should have learnt about business acumen whilst in my final year (I had already been offered the job by Christmas 2000)

Then let the Careers Service help you out!

What are the main skills I need to demonstrate for this job?:

- >> Good interpersonal and communication skills
- >> Commercial awareness
- >> Leadership and team building
- >> Organisation and time management skills
- >> Keeping calm in stressful situations
- >> Problem solving

Where do I find out more information about this job?:

There are comprehensive job profiles for restaurant manager available on www.prospects.ac.uk and www.learn-direct-advice.co.uk/help-with-your-career/jobprofiles/ which will give you a general overview of the typical work activities of a restaurant manager, the entry requirements, some case studies and further contacts. There is also a limited supply of the publication 'Careers in Food and Drink' available in the Careers Service which will provide you with insight into the sector.

For more information and other resources to help with your research call into the Careers Service - no appointment necessary.

How can I find vacancy/employer information?:

There are several websites that advertise restaurant manager vacancies:
>> www.caterer.com
>> www.hospitalityupdate.co.uk
>> www.hcareers.co.uk
>> www.intouchalways.co.uk (a catering recruitment agency)
Chain restaurants often have recruitment schemes advertised on their website. If there is a particular brand of restaurants you are interested in working for, it is worth visiting the company website to see what they offer.

Not all vacancies are advertised, sometimes you may need to send speculative applications to employers that interest you. These resources can help you identify possible companies:
>> North East Graduate Directory - www.careers.ncl.ac.uk/directory a database of over 600 companies in the North East
>> The Employer Information section of the Careers Service website - <http://www.careers.ncl.ac.uk/students/pages/employers.asp> has de-

tails of companies that have targeted Newcastle students and graduates

For further vacancy sources call into the Careers Service and speak to an Information Officer - no appointment necessary.

How can I find work experience in this role?:

Experience in customer service, catering, waiting tables or bartending is essential. Students often find part time work, perhaps in the Students' Union or local pubs, bars and restaurants - visit JobShop in the Union for opportunities or have a look at Thursday's Evening Chronicle for possible vacancies. Local recruitment agencies may offer part time work in the catering industry. It may be worth contacting local restaurant managers and asking to work-shadow them.

Not all work experience opportunities are advertised so you also need to consider sending speculative applications to organisations that interest you. Use the North East Graduate directory or call into the Careers Service to help you find organisations to contact.

How much will I get paid?:

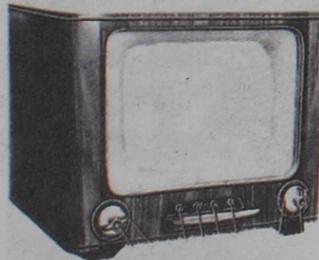
Starting salaries can be anything in the range of £16,000 - £19,000 and may possibly increase to £30,000+ within five years. (Source: Prospects)

How can the Careers Service help me?:

Our philosophy is that you can 'be what you want to be'. We have a huge range of services on offer to:
>> Help you work out what you want to do after you graduate.
>> Give you information to make informed decisions about which option to choose.
>> Give you practical experience of working or running your own business and support in starting your own business.
>> Help you find your 'dream job' or course.
>> Ensure that you market yourself professionally.

Call in and see us - we are on the 2nd Floor of Armstrong Building and are open from Mon-Thur 10:00 - 5:00, Fri 10:00 - 4:30 or visit our website www.careers.ncl.ac.uk

To get in contact with Newcastle graduates yourself, visit www.ncl.ac.uk/connections.



ON YOUR TELLY BOX

Ben Woodward

Student Classic Watch

Hollyoaks, Channel 4, 6.30pm, weeknights
Finally, in true 'oaks drawn-out style, the weird love rectangle between Nancy, Jake, Justin and Becca (RIP) reaches some sort of climax with the ensuing custody battle over Charlie (who, blonde haired and blue-eyed, was clearly never going to be the spawn of Jake).

Filling the Void

Eggheads, BBC 2, 6pm, weeknights
6pm, weeknights - there's the news, or endless repeats of Friends/Scrubs/Simpsons. Alternatively there's Eggheads, in which amazingly smug people display an amazing array of amazingly pointless trivia. Informative and ego boosting on those rare occasions you know something they don't.

Hangover Choice

Neighbours Omnibus, Five, Saturday, 12.50.
What with all the hard grafting down the library, it's often difficult catch-

ing Neighbours during the week. But thoughtful Five have seen fit to provide us with the hangover soothing balm of the weekend omnibus. Minimal attention required - you've probably seen every episode twice anyway.

For all the flat/Night in...

NME Awards 2008, Channel 4, Friday, 11.50.
Like the Brits but with worse hair. Hilarity will probably ensue what with all the allegedly cool 'alternative' types getting battered and shouting a lot. Sometimes people jump on tables, smash stuff and have to be hos-

pitalised. Mental.

Pick of the Week

Skins, E4, Monday, 10pm
After a couple of Maxxie focused episodes in which no one knows what actually happened because we couldn't stop gawping at the hotness (a bit like an hour long aero advert) this week it's Sid whose awkward teenage existence is magnified. Out of focus, storylines such as will Tony ever regain alpha male arrogant prick status, and is Chris the best character on TV ever (!!) will probably mean-der onwards.



Betsy Knows Best

"Let Betsy sort your life out"

E-mail your questions to: courier.letters@ncl.ac.uk

Cheeky Monkey

Dear Betsy,

I was recently coerced by my girlfriend into watching "The Wizard of Oz" which was a treat, I must say. As the wicked witch of the west was introduced, I became fascinated by the flying monkeys. They are just so cool. I mean, they're monkeys, but they fly. They do all her dirty work so just imagine the stuff you could get done. "Fly my pretties, fly

and get me a crate of beer, some doughnuts, a nice bloody steak and ooh, I'd like you to bring me that hot girl over there!" Where can I find one of these amazing creatures?

Love Monkey Mania

Cheeky Monkey,

We've all been there, wanted a flying monkey I

mean. If given the chance, who wouldn't grab it? Come on, admit it. I reckon ebay should be your first destination Mr Monkey Lover. It's brilliant the things you can find there: vintage clothes, film memorabilia, flying monkeys. If that fails you (which I doubt it will), head for your nearest pet shop, there's one right next to The Gate with a wide selection of goldfish so I'm sure flying monkeys would be in stock. Mad scientists might be useful contacts here. If all else fails, find a biology student, combine with a geneticist and see what you can come up with.

Love Betsy

Tree Huggers Short Straw

Dear Betsy,

I only came to university this year, I chose Newcastle because I heard its social life far excelled any other, however, 6 months later and I have yet to establish where the nearest Tree Grabbing Association (TGA) is. I'm sure you're familiar with our group. We are charity workers in one sense, united by our superior noses, we come together to find dirty and smelly children who need a good wash to get their lives back on track. We have found in the past that they tend to hide in trees but we have yet to discover why. In an effort to cause as little distress as possible, we dress up as cats as we feel these are friendly animals.

Love the Kindly Kitten

KK,

Er, I have to say, I am really quite disturbed by this. Why do you take it upon yourselves to wash children? What an odd hobby. I think you might be a little misguided by calling yourselves a charity, perhaps you should just stick to 'association'. As far as locating your nearest base and place of operations, I think your best bet is to get in touch with Scott Adams, our Activities Officer in the Union. He seems like a well informed sort of chap and has a lovely selection of kilts.

Love Betsy

Dear Betsy,

I always seem to be "that kid". You know what I mean; I'm the kid who leaves the toilet with loo roll still stuck to his shoe, or the one that gets ID-ed when everyone else walks straight in. I'm the kid who gets a penis drawn on his face when he falls asleep and the one that trips up and tumbles down the stairs in front of a hot lass. My mates all take the piss and think it's hilarious but I don't think they realise how it's affecting me. Sometimes I feel like crying myself to sleep.

Love "That Kid"

Hey there,

You really are the butt of every joke, hey? I wonder why you're the victim? Can you think of anything that might single you out? Goofiness? Odd names? Think of it this way, if you weren't being picked on, someone else would be so you're saving them from this humiliation. If that doesn't help you sleep at night, might I suggest revenge? Nothing says vengeance like getting "friends" plastered, whacking out the permanent marker, the shaving foam and leaving them tied in uncompromising positions.

Love Betsy

LESSONS LEARNED

what I wish I'd known

Sam Parker

...The folks aren't so bad after all

AT SOME sullen point in our adolescence I'm sure we all shared a similar fantasy: what if I'm really adopted?

My biological parents - not those ignorant bastards downstairs - might be liberal geniuses making masterpieces in a studio somewhere in Montmartre, or a team of ecowarriors bottle feeding lion cubs in the Congo, or Andre Agassi and Steffi Graf...

Alas for me the fantasy was always quashed under foot: my own foot, that is, as the toes on each are divided equally between a broad knobble identical to my mother's and an arching hook identical to my father's. I wear proof of my DNA on the ends of my size 14 U-boats that pitter-patter 'yu-mum yu-dad, yu-mum yu-dad' as I walk down the street.

Still, being at university seems to have been as much about reconciling me with my past as with my future, as much about giving me the space to come to terms with the 'rents as giving me the gumption to start planning a life without them.

The first thing you realise after getting away to uni is how wonderful it is to not see them all of the time, not to have them around to put limitations on what you can do and when.

The second thing you realise is that your mum must have been doing a hell of a lot of tidying up back there, cos this place looks like a freaking bomb's been dropped and it's only the third day in (not to employ crude and outdated gender stereotypes here: it may well have been your dad who washed the curtains and moved the dirty plates, but by the end I only lived with my dear mum and I'm pretty sure my dad's gaff resembled the average Ricky Road flat anyway).

They say an atheist is only truly tested in his or her belief when the axe is about to swing; the theory that, in the end, we all pray to something. I think the extent to which we have become independent from our parents is similarly tested: it's when you're getting court threats from the credit card companies, or you've gotten someone pregnant, or you've accidentally mowed down your tutor on your way to your dissertation meeting that you suddenly find yourself phoning 'home' for help. When the shit really hits the fan, you want the people who dealt with your shit in the first place.

For their part, my mother's dotting optimism and my father's world-weary pragmatism have both served me well as I've spent three years trying to fashion a life for myself: from the shaky bit in first year when I thought I might have to drop out to change my course, to the nerves that went with putting the first pieces of a magazine together, to the present day anxiety of not knowing what's going to happen after graduation. Their lives were very different to mine at twenty-two - harder, more responsible - but they advise me, as best they can.

Their reward is to watch me gradually turn into a version of them: procreation, the ultimate vanity project. I am approaching an average sneezing fit of eleven at-shoos, just like my old man, and I have obsessive-compulsions that stop a yard shy of making me a weirdo, just like my old ma.

I value politeness, am vigilant in wearing seatbelts and insisting others wear theirs, will try anything once and still can't grow a beard. I imitate my father's easy charm, and my mother's resilient romanticism.

I am, I have discovered, the compound of their strengths and weaknesses, the composite of their quirks: the chemical reaction in the crucible of their love and the marriage between them that worked.

Now, if those adoption papers were to turn up, I'd probably just want to throw them away. Who could be bothered to come around to a whole new set of parents, after how long it took the first time? Unless, of course, my real parents are millionaires. Or movie stars. Or player scouts for Real Madrid...



Courier in the Kitchen

Have a go at our easy recipes which aim to break the 'beans on toast' student stereotype and get you into the kitchen!

THIS WEEK: Mini Fairy Cakes

Makes approx. 20 small cakes

Ingredients

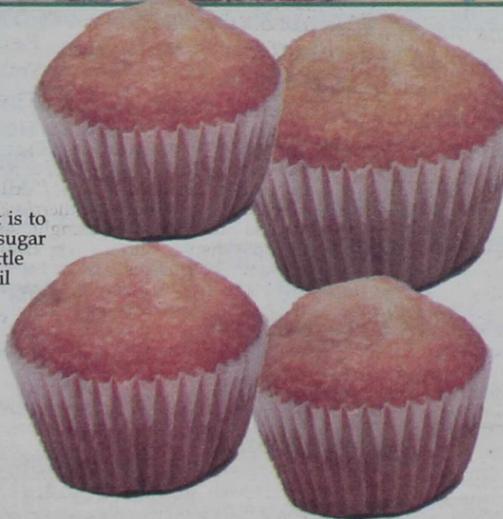
- 125g softened butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 125g self-raising flour
- 2 eggs
- 125g caster sugar
- 2 tablespoon milk
- Icing sugar
- Fairy cake cases

1. Preheat the oven to 190C
2. Beat the butter and sugar in a bowl until soft

3. Beat the eggs and then add them to the butter and sugar gradually and then beat in the vanilla extract, too
4. Gradually sift the majority of the flour into the mixture and make sure it is folded well
5. Add the milk and then the rest of the flour
6. Spoon the mixture into the paper cases and bake in the oven for 10-12 minutes
7. Allow to cool

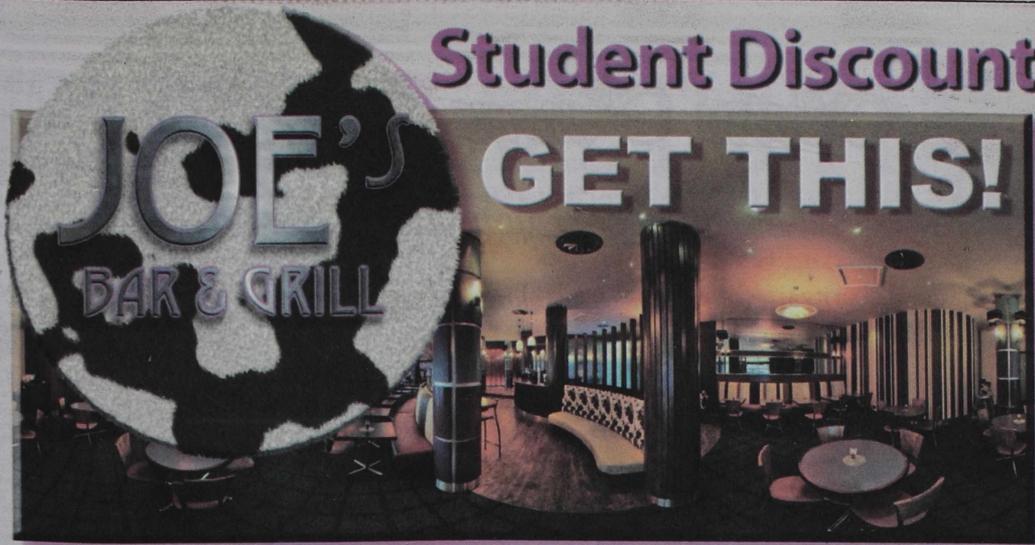
8. For the topping you can try virtually anything (try the internet for some different ideas) but

the simplest is to mix icing sugar with a little water until the icing consistency is reached. Try add a flavour or colour!



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>> HOCKEY WOMEN CRASH OUT OF BUSA TROPHY
 >> WOMEN'S FENCING THROUGH TO SEMI-FINALS
 >> CHEEKY LADIES AND AGRICS REACH INTRA MURAL CUP FINAL

Auld enemies meet again

■ Sports Editor **DAVID COVERDALE** previews Sunday's inaugural charity Calcutta Cup at Druid Park



MURRAYFIELD is not the only ground to be hosting England and Scotland this weekend, as the day after the all important Six Nations clash, Druid Park hosts Newcastle University's inaugural Calcutta Cup.

The event sees the best English and Scottish players from Newcastle's thriving Intra Mural league battle against each other in true Auld Enemy fashion.

Fans can expect a day of entertainment at Druid Park, including cheerleaders, a kicking competition and a raffle draw, with all proceeds going towards the Matt Hampson charity.

The programme of events gets underway at 5pm prior to the big kick-off at 6pm. Following the game and presentations, the event continues at Stereo night club where the grand raffle will be drawn. With a star prize of a signed Newcastle Falcons shirt on offer, the event would seem to be unmissable.

"The concept was devised after an evening in the pub with a number of Intra Mural playing Scots," co-organisers Melvin Byres and Malky Loudon recall.

Melvin said, "Someone made a mention of how Scots abroad have

often taken on the host nation of their respective rugby club or organisation, whether it be in Dubai, South Africa, Hong Kong or Australia. After a few more drinks, and a bit of bravado, someone

else made the point that there are enough decent Scots playing in the Newcastle Intra Mural League to take on the English boys; the rest, as they say, is history!"

The event promises to be a real feast



The best Intra Mural rugby players from both Scotland and England take to the field on Sunday to raise money for the Matt Hampson trust.

of rugby, with players from cup finalists Cheeky Ladies and Agrics taking part, as well as team members of Crayola, Engines and Titans amongst others.

Players to keep an eye out for at Druid Park on Sunday include England's Chiko Esri on the wing and James Snow at fullback. The Scots will be hoping that the likes of Alex Henderson at scrum half and Michael Page at second row can play to their potential if they are to run out victorious.

The Calcutta Cup is raising money for a trust set up by Matt Hampson, the former English rugby union prop who became quadriplegic after a scrummaging practice accident for England under 21 in 2005. Since his accident, Matt's intention has been to help and support spinally injured people and become heavily involved in publicising research into spinal injuries.

With free entry for all, Byres and Loudon are urging fans to come out to Druid Park on Sunday (next to Callerton Parkway Metro) to support such a worthy cause.

For more information on the charity, please visit www.matthampson.co.uk

TOON WATCH

BY JAMES PARKER

Retail Therapy

Newcastle manager Kevin Keegan is confident he will be handed a lucrative summer transfer kitty as he bids to strengthen his struggling squad. Keegan has yet to record a victory as Magpies boss since returning for his second stint in the St James' Park hot-seat in January. And that lowly run of form has seen Newcastle slump into relegation danger as they sit in 13th position in the Premier League and only six points clear of the drop zone. Keegan recognises he needs to bring up to five new faces to Tyneside to bolster his ranks and says he has been promised money to spend by Newcastle owner Mike Ashley. "But the first thing I need to do is get to 40 points and make sure we're in the Premier League. That's still there to be done. Then I've got to go and get the three, four or five players that are hopefully going to turn this place around. I've got a small squad. There are so few options within this squad." Predictions on who should be bought in are divided, no surprise there then. And with the only transfer activity in January coming in the shape of Dennis Wise, don't get your hopes up too high of anything spectacular happening. Rumour of Ashley possibly selling the club hasn't helped the stability of the side either. Riddled with problems, injury and frustration; welcome to the life of your average Toon supporter.

Red Card

Newcastle Falcons centre Joe Shaw will become the first ever rugby player to be inducted into the Show Racism the Red Card Hall of Fame. The 28-year-old will receive his award at half-time during last Friday's Guinness Premiership tie between the Falcons and London Wasps. Deputy leader of Newcastle City Council, Cllr David Faulkner, along with long time supporter of the charity Don Cowper, presented Shaw with a specially-commissioned trophy to thank him for his fantastic work as an ambassador for the anti-racism campaign. The North Tyneside based educational charity, Show Racism the Red Card, is now in its 12th year, and in 2004 decided to honour long-standing patrons and supporters with Hall of Fame awards. Ged Grebby, Show Racism the Red Card Project Co-ordinator, said: "This is an award for Joe Shaw's support for our campaign over a number of years now. It is fantastic to see sporting heroes like Joe using their status as role models in a positive way, and helping us to educate young people about the dangers of racism. Our campaign is only possible thanks to the contributions of people like Joe. He has been a great ambassador for here in England, and it has been an honour to work with him." Shaw has won the Falcons Community award for the last four seasons in succession, due to his tireless work helping grass roots rugby in the North East.

Dates for your Diary

Newcastle United, against Fulham. Saturday 22nd March 3pm.
 Newcastle Falcons, against Bristol Rugby. Sunday 16th March 3pm.
 Newcastle Eagles, against Scottish Rocks. Friday 7th March 7.30pm.

So long Suze

■ The Union bids farewell to living legend Susan Leach

Lydia Oxenham
 AU President

AFTER SIX YEARS of loyal service to our clubs and societies, Susan Leach is leaving this Thursday to start a new job at Barnwell Primary School, Washington. This is a devastating blow to all in the Activities Centre, having become an integral part of all things activities-based in the Union Society.

Susan is essentially the heart of student clubs and societies here at Newcastle, and is undoubtedly responsible for keeping everything running smoothly and the officers in line!

AU committee members will particularly feel the blow; Susan is a fountain of knowledge and experience when it comes to answering BUSA queries, claim form enquiries and sweet-talking the opposition to avoid crucial walkovers.

Susan came to the Union in 2002, and soon became a firm favourite for all those involved in clubs and societies. You can be guaranteed that as soon as you walk into the office you will be greeted with a beaming smile and an 'alreet pet?!' before ably assisting in any way she can.

Over the years Susan has worked

closely with six AU Officers/Presidents, watched Stan Calvert migrate back and forth between ourselves and the Poly and has been kept amused by the vast quantity of Thursday hangovers she has seen unfold! The words 'patience of a saint' definitely spring to mind when it comes to describing our Suze.

On a personal level, I will miss Susan incredibly. She has been pivotal in getting me up to speed with my role and keeps me sane in the chaos that is the Activities Centre.

Susan works incredibly hard behind the scenes for both clubs and societies, and doesn't get enough credit for her efforts. I am honestly not sure how we will survive without her.

If anyone wants to say goodbye and wish Susan good luck, the Activities staff are hosting a night out to Blu Bambu this Wednesday, via the Quayside. Please see myself or James Storey for details. We will also be having a buffet on her last day (Thursday) between 12-2pm - all are welcome to say their final farewells.

Quotes from those who love Suze:

Rich McCartney, Rugby Club Captain



'Susan has done a fantastic job for the Rugby Club and all AU clubs over the years she has been here. She will be sorely missed and the AU is losing a prize asset. The Rugby Club wishes her all the best for the future and a great deal of thanks.'

Mike Shkurka, Men's Hockey President

'Susan really is one in a million, I honestly don't know how we'll cope when she's gone. Whoever takes her job really will have big shoes to fill. She is also a real MILF!'

Jonny Gough, former Men's Football Treasurer

'Whenever we went out and told her we'd had a good night, she always said it couldn't have been as

good as when she went to Baja. I swear she's never been to Baja!'

Kevin Davey, Rugby League Secretary

'Despite spending most of her time with moronic sabbatical officers, she is a genuine fox in the box and has made administrating BUSA matches a great pleasure.'

James Storey, Activities Development Co-ordinator

'Working with wor Suze has been a pleasure and a privilege and her departure will leave an unfillable gap in my life, and the lives of all who have had the joy to have known her. We wish her well for the future and hope she keeps in touch. Ta for the good times like pet...'

INTRA MURAL RUGBY SEMI-FINALS

Cheeky Monkeys

■ Holders hold on to pass tough Tactics test

INTRA MURAL RUGBY CUP

CHEEKY LADIES	13
GORILLA TACTICS	12

Pip Davey

IN A TENSE semi-final battle at Heaton, it was the Cup holders Cheeky Ladies who edged through to another final, beating Gorilla Tactics 13-12. They will now face Agrics

in the final on Wednesday, as they look to reclaim their trophy.

It was the Gorillas who got off to the better start, doing what they do best, holding the ball in the pack and rumbling up the field. Cheeky Ladies found themselves on the back foot and on their own line for much of the first twenty minutes trying to soak up the dominant forward play by Tactics.

With the Ladies struggling to get a decent foothold in the game and get up the field, it was left to James Snow to make a decent break up to the half-way line, finally giving the Cheeky

Ladies the platform they needed in the game.

From this a backs move could be performed, which consisted of a line back inside from Will Jeffs that exposed a gap to which he burst straight through and ran in an awesome try. Jamie Johnstone tucked away the conversion to put the Ladies 7-0 up.

Again, the Gorillas came back at Cheeky Ladies with yet more dominant forward play, which the Ladies struggled to deal with and they scored an inevitable try, utilising the short side from a few metres out



Photo: Chris Kay

OUT OF LINE... Gorillas narrowly miss out on shock cup final place

Photo: Chris Kay



which was converted with a fantastic kick.

After halftime the Cheeky Ladies were less manic. They pulled together and managed to start soaking up the Tactics forward play which had been the best element of their game in the first half. This led to the two sides almost cancelling each other out in everything that they did.

With this came deterioration in the weather, coinciding with the standard of play on the field dropping. However, it was the Ladies who got back in front, as Jamie Johnstone proved as ever reliable by kicking a couple of penalties to give Cheeky Ladies a vital 13-7 lead.

This lead was not to last for long though, as Gorilla Tactics provided the crowd at Heaton with the highlight of the second half; a superb try put together by a good string of passes to make the score 13-12. Tactics could not complete the conversion, and so it was the 2007 Cup winners who held a one point advantage going into the final stages of this pulsating semi-final.

The narrow score line saw an improvement in the standard of play, as both teams went close to a place in the final. Olu Adeosun had a try dubiously disallowed to keep the game on a knife edge.

The standard of play continued to peak towards the end of the match even though vital Cheeky Ladies back, Will Jeffs, had to be taken to casualty after receiving an accidental knee to the nose in a fair challenge. This sparked fears that his budding modelling career had been cruelly ended early.

The Ladies gathered themselves from Jeffs' injury and managed to hold firm until the final whistle sounded to bring a halt to an enthralling encounter and a 13-12 win for Cheeky Ladies. Accolades have to be given to the Ladies' pack for dealing with such a strong pack fielded by the Tactics.

Credit also to Jamie Johnstone, with his accurate boot proving the difference between the two teams and a place in the Intra Mural Cup Final.

Armstrong's Cup dreams croppped

■ Agrics plough their way through heated semi-final

INTRA MURAL RUGBY CUP

AGRICS	15
ARMSTRONG	0

Steven Impey

AGRICS are looking forward to a Cup final date at Heaton on Wednesday, after defeating Armstrong in a low scoring but fiery encounter.

Due to icy pitches the week previous, this eagerly awaited semi-final clash had to be put on hold. Last Wednesday however, the freezing weather had gone, and the game itself proved to be one heated affair.

All anticipation, nerves and anxiety that a Cup semi-final brings were instantly forgotten as Agrics finally came out to face Armstrong at Co-

chrane Park.

It was Armstrong who started the stronger side with early pressure in the Agrics' 22. With a penalty awarded for the killing of the ball at the breakdown as a result, it suggested that Armstrong's pack would dominate and that Agrics would inevitably perish.

Armstrong chose sensibly to go for goal, but in hindsight made a vital error as they watched their kick regrettably whistle past the posts. Pressure weakened, and although this missed opportunity to get on the scoreboard occurred so early on to have any real influence on the game, you could not help but think that Agrics had been handed a huge psychological boost.

Agrics compiled some good possession of their own and it was ironically their forwards, so poor to start with, who were pulling the strings at the set-piece. This was thus taken advantage of as Agrics chose to push a kickable penalty into the corner;

their ambition deservedly rewarded as Andrew Weatherspoon emerged the try-scorer from a well-worked lineout driven over the line.

Now we had a game on our hands. Hard tackling gave onlookers a reason to jeer and with tempers flaring on the field you could see that this game meant a great deal. So much weight had been placed on every one player's shoulders that any small incident against either side was blown into absolute outrage.

This was somewhat influential in itself, as it was the team who were more composed and overcame this pressure that succeeded. Agrics' full-back Crawford Mackay showed this in abundance with a solid performance as any, covering well and kicking with great precision.

Agrics would absorb any pressure Armstrong had to offer and although they occasionally had to take a step back, they would take two forward in response.

Then, ten minutes before the break, Armstrong experienced some déjà vu, as once again Agrics took another well-worked lineout and drove the ball over; prop Johnny Scholey the scorer this time to put his side 10-0 up.

The second half saw Armstrong come out fighting. With some better passages of play and stand-off Richard Roberts finding gaps in Agrics' defence, they almost found themselves back in the game. But 'almosts' don't win matches and before long Agrics were finding their feet again.

However, it was Armstrong again who had the next best opportunity in the match. A poorly executed cross-field kick saw Armstrong running on the break to what should have been a gifted try. Unbelievably though, the two-on-one wasn't finished as Armstrong's 15 decided to take on his opposing position himself, killing any chance of putting his winger in. Simple rugby played at its very worst.

Missed opportunities were definitely not needed at this point and although possession in the second half was more evenly distributed between the teams, it was the experienced kicking from Agrics that put them in the positions that they could capitalise on.

And it was Agrics who sealed victory when yet another line-out won on the Armstrong's five metre line saw Agrics push over for another identical try. Christopher Dickinson the scorer showed what this meant with his uncontrollable ecstasy for putting Armstrong out of reach.

The final whistle indicated the end of a very hot headed encounter that saw Agrics finish triumphant at 15-0. Although they have to be commended for keeping Armstrong off the scoresheet, Agrics know they will face a much more difficult task against the mighty Cheeky Ladies on Wednesday.

INTRA MURAL FOOTBALL

Elders flowers at last for Leazes

INTRA MURAL FOOTBALL DIVISION ONE

HENDERSON HALL	1
CASTLE LEAZES	3

Ed Elliot

CASTLE LEAZES produced one of their most confident displays of the season to end a dismal run of results with a much needed win over fellow strugglers Henderson Hall. Intra Mural's answer to Jan Koller, Anthony Elders, was the hero of the day with two goals, ending his barren spell.

ren spell.

Despite missing star man, Ben 'I want to play upfront' Stephenson, Leazes started brightly and went ahead as early as the third minute. An optimistic cross-field ball into the box was seized upon by Wilkinson. The fiery striker did well to hold off two Henderson defenders before slotting the ball under the body of the advancing keeper for his first goal for the club.

Henderson looked like a side short of confidence and despite having the majority of the first half possession, found it difficult to create any real goal-scoring chances - the Leazes defence restricting them to shots from range.

In spite of this, Henderson did manage to level the scores shortly before half-time, with Scott Cowley continuing to be a thorn in the side of the Leazes' defence. An innocuous ball down the right hand channel resulted in a three on three situation. Rishton in the Leazes goal did well to save the initial effort but could only parry the ball to the feet of Cowley. Despite the best efforts of Charlie 'Egghead' Morgan, the diminutive fox-in-the-box made no mistake from six yards for his second goal in as many games against 'The Castlemen'.

Leazes pushed on after the break and regained the lead midway through the second half as a result of a training ground corner routine.

Forrest's low delivery from the left-wing found the feet of Charlie Bromley-Martin who in turn flicked the ball across goal for Elders to stick out a gangly right leg and finish superbly from two yards.

Elders extended Leazes' lead shortly after with his second goal of the afternoon. An outrageous fifty yard through ball from full-back Charlie Morgan sent the six foot five inch goal-machine scampering down the right wing. Elders did well to dispose the Henderson defender attempting to shield the ball out of play, before displaying all of his killer instinct with a cool finish from a tight angle, evoking memories of a youthful Andy Booth.

Henderson were forced to push on in an attempt to get back into the game and as a result were leaving gaping holes in their back four that Leazes looked to take advantage of on the break. Arthurs, Wilkinson and three-in-a-bed superstar Cathal McElhinney were all guilty of wasting good opportunities to kill the game off.

In the end, Leazes had to settle for just the three goals as they brought on the temperamental Jonny 'Mischief' Dimmock for the final five minutes to shore up their defence. The result helps relieve Leazes of their relegation worries whilst condemning last season's champions Henderson to Division Two football next season.

Satch snatch

Patel goal enough to send Barca top

INTRA MURAL FOOTBALL DIVISION ONE

BARCA-LAW-NA	1
THE HURRICANES	0

Andrew Murray

WITH the big game between Garnett A and Real Ma-Dividend called off, Barca-Law-Na climbed back to the top of the table after edging past relegation contenders, The Hurricanes.

There was no referee for the top of the table clash because of injury, and with the game subsequently postponed, Barca took full advantage with a nervous 1-0 win.

Both sides started brightly with some good passing football, but windy conditions inevitably made that final ball hard to find. The Hurricanes also went close early on with a shot from close range that went narrowly wide of Hunters' goal.

It was Barca though that broke the deadlock after good play down the left hand side from Morris and McGee saw the latter loft a ball up to Murray, who laid it into space for Patel. The striker latched on to the ball and dispatched a well placed powerful drive from outside the area right



ON THE ATTACK... Barca struggle to break down stubborn Hurricanes defence

Photo: Chris Kay



Photo: Chris Kay

into the bottom corner of the net, leaving the keeper with no chance.

Barca continued to press with Mitchell and McKee working hard on the right flank to create openings and get balls into the box. Woodcock and Wightman both saw shots blocked as they kept applying pressure, but without testing the keeper.

One seemingly valid shout for a penalty also fell on deaf ears, after the ball appeared to strike the Hurricanes defender on the arm, meaning that the score at half time stayed at 1-0.

The highlight of the second half perhaps came from an amusing tiff between two members of The Hurricanes back line regarding which one

of them was allowed to give instructions to the other. Nevertheless, The Hurricanes worked hard in search of an equalizer.

They came close when the ball was loose in the box following a corner and two shots were sent goal wards but blocked en route before eventually being cleared.

Chances were now arising at both ends; Barca's Woodcock had a shot fly narrowly wide and McKee and Murray blazed over the bar. Patel was also working the channels well to run onto through balls and try to kill the game off for Barca with the important second goal.

They thought this had come, when the ref blew for a foul in the box on

Patel, but an inexplicable decision of an indirect free kick in the area left Barca unable to convert, as Wightman could only blast the shot into Hurricanes' formidable eight-man wall.

Barca's inability to kill off the game though did not come back to punish them, as a solid defensive display from Agnew and Butterworth kept 1-0 as a winning score line, and temporarily at least Barca are back in the title contention.

However, with Ma-Dividend and Garnett now each having three games in hand on them, it would still take some seriously favourable results elsewhere to see the table stay this way come the end of the season.

What the ref is going on?

COMMENT

Richard Park

WHAT IS IT about the lack of organisation for Intra Mural sports after Christmas?

It seems to become a victim of what

I call post-Christmas dinner syndrome. A feeling of sheer lethargy. A feeling between the idle half-light of sleep and the droning sounds of Only Fools and Horses re-runs on the TV. A feeling when you simply say to yourself, "I can't be arsed doing anything...ever."

Ok maybe I'm exaggerating just a little bit, but hear me out. Picture the

scene. Top of the table clash, Division One football. Real Ma-Dividend are kitted out in bright shining green; sparkling, eager to play. Garnett arrive on the pitch in unison; buoyant after their captain had probably just given the team talk of a lifetime. The scene was set.

The battle of the Intra Mural giants was about to commence. Just a sec-

ond though, isn't there something missing? Oh yeah, it's only the referee. Yet this happens so often after Christmas in the Intra Mural football league, that I doubt it was a shock to the system to either team.

We still expect better, especially in the big games. The crop of Intra Mural football may well lack the cream of BUSA, nevertheless, this lack of urgency in organisation only makes participants feel insignificant.

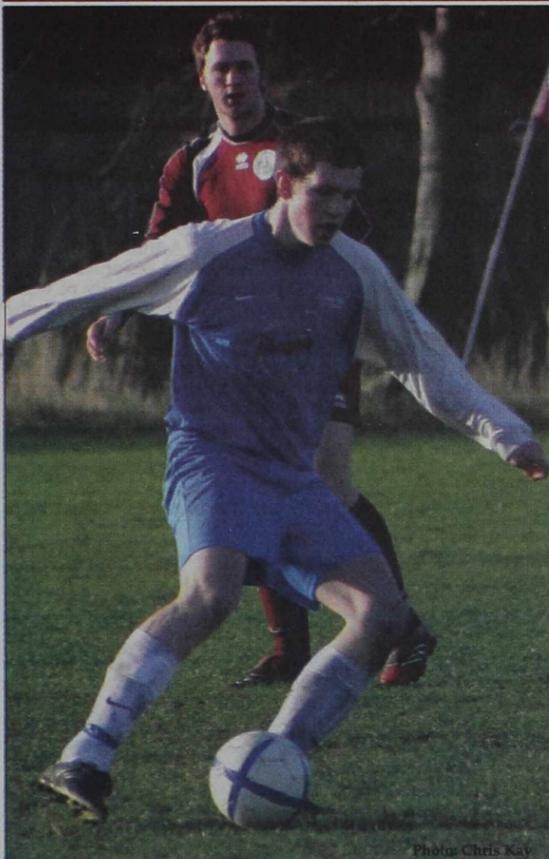
So we begin to ask ourselves over and over again, what are we paying for? Referees? I'm sure every team has a sob story this year describing

how their only sub had to do ref and all he got was a bagful of abuse.

Pitches? Well yes, but why are we forced to use the smallest pitch at Longbenton when there is no one playing on the two biggest? So many questions need to be answered because all these things are simply hindering the experience the Intra Mural game provides.

So we urge the Sports Centre to wake from its Christmas slumber before the end of term, and to provide value for the money paid by hundreds of Intra Mural lovers.

BUSA MATCH REPORTS



Judgement Day

Royals prepare to play York, after BUSA order relegation play-off for firsts

MEN'S FOOTBALL 1STS

Jamie Gavin

THE FUTURE of the men's football club hangs in the balance after BUSA ordered the first team to contest a relegation play-off.

The Royals, who thought they had secured survival in BUSA Northern Conference 2B on the final day of the regular season, must now face York firsts on Wednesday in a winner takes all game. Defeat would be unthinkable for a Newcastle side, whose place in a high BUSA league is of paramount importance to a club entering a new era.

The latest twist in what has been a roller coaster season for the club, occurred after BUSA officials convened last week. The old fashioned system gives them the power to decide who is ultimately promoted and relegated.

As BUSA rules state, 'the fifth place team may be required to take place in a relegation play-off'. In reality this is a rarity and with Newcastle seemingly comfortable in fifth place, a play-off appeared out of the question.

However, the Royals were left shocked

last week as news filtered through about the ruling and the subsequent one-off game. "We have to accept BUSA's decision," explained club captain, Paddy Paisley. "Irrespective of the politics of the situation we must go out and win the game."

Bad decisions have haunted the Royals already this season. Had Paisley's effort at Durham on the final day stood, having been clearly over the goal-line, Newcastle would be sitting fourth in the table and clear of any possible relegation scandal.

Now, having apparently escaped the dark cloud of relegation that day in Durham, the Royals are once again thrust underneath it, with the only conceivable silver lining being a win on Wednesday afternoon.

"Nothing else will do," said the ever-positive Paisley. "There's a lot of pressure involved but as footballers we want to play in big games like this. It's our cup final and we look forward to it."

They now face a confident York side who finished nine points clear at the top of BUSA Northern Conference 3B. The Yorkshire side have dropped just four points in their campaign and will head into Wednesday's clash on the back of reaching the quarter finals in the BUSA Plate.

Nevertheless, the Royals also have reason to be confident. A successful second half of their BUSA season, coupled with a magnif-

icent Stan Calvert victory, gives Newcastle reason for optimism.

In a season plagued by injury, key players such as wingers Ed Crockett and Dave Beattie, defender Sam Newton and captain, Paisley should all be fully fit and available for selection. Recent training sessions have been encouraging and there is an optimistic mood in the camp, although no one is ignoring the enormity of Wednesday's game.

"Survival is crucial to reflect the changes that have been made at the club," added Paisley. "We need to stay up and build for next year."

Newcastle will enjoy home advantage in the familiar surroundings of Cochrane Park. They now hope to cement it in a game that must be decided on the day and could potentially extend beyond the 90 minute mark. If their BUSA campaign so far is anything to go by, late drama can be expected and this could well be in the form of extra-time and penalties if required.

Whilst the reasons behind BUSA's decision may be in doubt, what is clear are the consequences the result entails. In a season that has already had as many twists and turns as your average series of Prison Break, the Royals will hope they can escape relegation in what will be the biggest game in their recent history.

Brookes hit five as thirds crash out

WOMEN'S HOCKEY 3RDS

NEWCASTLE	2
OXFORD BROOKES	5

Claire Gunn

NEWCASTLE THIRDS began the feast of knockout hockey at Longbenton last Wednesday, but a 5-2 defeat to Oxford Brookes put an end to their BUSA Plate dreams.

Going into the match, both teams had unbeaten BUSA records to retain, while a place in the Plate semi-finals was at stake. With Brookes having scored 60 goals so far this season, and conceded only two, Newcastle knew they would have to put on an impressive show to match their visitors.

With the benefit of the home pitch, the underdogs got stuck in from the first whistle. Captain Rach Little was straight onto the Oxford midfield, winning the ball to show the opposition that this match was not going to be such an easy ride.

However, an early short corner won by Brookes saw their fierce number five fire

away a shot to give them an early lead.

Not to be downhearted, Newcastle continued to fight with Maeva McNally breaking away on the right. This led to an excellent one-two between Vicky Balmer and Sarah Sturgeon before Sturgeon out witted the keeper to bring the scores back level.

Surprised at the level of play by the home side, Oxford began to get flustered. Infact the Royals could have gone in front as McNally won another short corner which was just missed by Balmer.

This second attack woke the opposition up though and a straight strike at a following penalty corner saw Oxford pellet the ball into the backboard to take the lead again.

Straight back on the attack, exceptional teamwork from defenders Kate Campbell and Harriet Godwin kept the Brookes girls at bay.

With the half time whistle approaching, Newcastle were desperate to keep Oxford out, but a slip up in the 'D' saw an unfortunate goal sneak in, and Brookes had a two goal cushion for the first time in the match.

As the second half began, two short corners were won by the opposition in quick succession and saw the Brookes striker fire the ball into the net with perfect precision each time to take Oxford into an unassail-

able 5-1 lead.

Newcastle did not give in however. Man of the match, Alex Reid, was onto the away side at every opportunity in the centre, feeding the ball wide to the ever ready midfield.

Holly Munro made some excellent tackles on the right, pressuring the opposition to make unwitting mistakes. This gave the Royals a break, and with excellent passing from Sturgeon, Little was in the perfect position to stroke the ball past the 'keeper on the right post.

This was to be only a consolation though as the final whistle blew to bring the game to a close at 5-2.

Club Captain, Kat Basford spoke highly of the third team after the game saying, "I was extremely impressed with the sheer determination right up to the final whistle.

"They've had such an amazing season and to gain a score like this against a first team shows how well they have done and they all deserve to be very proud of what they've achieved."

Little, who has led her team with spirit and charisma this season said, "If we'd had a bit more luck, it would have been a different story. We still have a lot to be proud of this season, the team have been fantastic and will be even stronger next year."



Photo: Chris Brown

Fencers through to semis

WOMEN'S FENCING

NEWCASTLE	127
U.C.L.	106

Christie Waddington

HAVING BEEN knocked out at the quarter-final stage in the last two years by Oxford and Cambridge, Newcastle's women fencers secured victory over UCL on Wednesday, to reach a well deserved place in the BUSA semi-finals at the third time of asking.

UCL arrived two hours early with an entourage of fencers, boasting a full team of nine compared to Newcastle's five. None

of them were recognisable from previous competitions, with UCL's new look side proving to be an unknown quantity.

Newcastle lost the toss giving UCL preference over the weapon order. Luckily Newcastle's weakest weapon, foil, was chosen first. With one international épéeist, the away side had chosen épée last; Newcastle were not comfortable with the order but were keen to show their southern counterparts that it would make no difference. Foil got off to a comfortable start, with a clean 5-0 victory, and UCL's confidence crumbled like Wensleydale. Newcastle kept up the pace throughout all the bouts to win 45-38.

Newcastle's confidence soared with the commencement of the sabre, realising that UCL were

not as strong as expected. The visitors had no competitive sabreurs, and Newcastle were able to make fast work of the match, with numerous 5-0 victories. Robynne Stenner displayed fast footwork, moving up and down the piste with the smoothness of Brie. The side easily defeated their opponents, winning 45-23.

Newcastle only needed 18 hits in the épée to win overall. By this point it was obvious that the UCL frustration was increasing. Their international épéeist, Sophie Colmar, was not unbeatable, with the whole team racking up points against her. The other two members of the UCL épée squad were competent, but slow.

Both Robynne Stenner and Christie Waddington used their lightning sabre speed to surprise

their opponents with fast attacks. After only three of the nine matches, Newcastle had acquired the 18 hits needed for the victory. Newcastle's play was relaxed, allowing UCL to hit more times than they ought, but with the victory in the bag already, it didn't really matter. The home side lost the épée 37-45.

The overall score was 127-106, and the atmosphere in the sports hall was immense. All the staff congratulated Newcastle on their amazing performance. Newcastle can now boast their position as one of the top four universities for women's fencing in the UK. This is one of the fencers best ever results, proving the side worthy of their performance sport status. Along with other BUSA sports, the semi-finals and finals will be held on March 15th in Sheffield. Newcastle will be giving everything they have to the most important match of the year.

BUSA MATCH REPORTS



Photo: Stephanie Feng

Scousers steal victory

NETBALL 2NDS

NEWCASTLE	22
LIVERPOOL JM	26

Hannah Lucas

AFTER A BRILLIANT result last week, the netball seconds were in a confident mood prior to their quarter-final match of the BUSA Plate competition. With the fixture taking place at home against Liverpool John Moores 2nds, the Royals were excited at the prospect of making the semis.

However, the Liverpool team that arrived was not in fact the Liverpool second team, but a squad peppered with first team players. They should technically not have been appearing in this match and this led to the game being played under protest from Newcastle.

The Blues were not deterred however, and with the support of an enthusiastic crowd, Newcastle warmed up confidently and with great focus. The first quarter saw Newcastle produce some excellent netball, the team working together smoothly and steadily, making interceptions and blocking out the opposition. Liverpool were clearly shocked and caught on the back foot. By the end of the first quarter the Royals had amassed a comfortable lead.

After the break however, Liverpool came tearing back at Newcastle, fighting for every ball. The pressure began to take its toll with the Royals making a number of unforced errors which the Scousers were quick to capitalise on. The scores were level by the break.

Liverpool were starting to find holes in the

Newcastle defence. Despite the great efforts of Sarah Bruce and Rochelle Quigley in the defensive circle, Liverpool were beginning to convert more and more chances.

At the opposite end, the Royals attack were struggling to get the ball into the circle. Ellie Hatt was having a particularly difficult time of it, receiving a rough ride from both the Liverpool defenders. The third quarter saw Newcastle lose concentration, and despite great performances from Sarah Ashworth at centre and Hannah Lucas at Wing Attack (man of the match), Liverpool began to build on their lead.

At 3/4 time the team were clearly shaken at losing their grip on the score line. After some inspirational words from coach, club captain and supporters alike, the Blues returned to the court ready to fight to the last whistle. The confidence was back and began to flow through the team, with interceptions being made all over the court.

Shooters Fran Terrace and Ellie Hatt also played with greater confidence, Terrace in particular holding her ground against an aggressive and dirty defence. In the end, the lead which Newcastle allowed Liverpool to create in the third quarter proved to be decisive. Newcastle could simply not claw back the four goal deficit.

Ultimately it was a great game from Newcastle who fought hard from start to finish. Unfortunately unforced errors proved to be their downfall, with Newcastle losing the game rather than Liverpool winning it.

The game has been appealed, but even if this is not successful, the girls can still look back on a successful season in which promotion was gained.

Rowers continue impressive form in Nottingham heats

ROWING

Dan Cupit

NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY travelled down to Nottingham at the weekend for BUSA Head. The club was looking to build on previous early season performances.

Seven members of the club were selected for Great Britain trials aiming for places in boats at the U23 World Championships and the World University Championships. A clean sweep of the Stan Calvert cup meant that crews had some race practice and would look to transfer this form against university crews from all around the country.

The challenging course of 5km for seniors and 3k for novices was made even more difficult by blustery conditions on the day.

The senior men's quad of Andrew Corrigan, Fred Gill, Dan Cupit and Mason Durant came second in a very close race, finishing just 1 second behind Durham. The men's coxed 4 finished 4th in a competitive field. The men's VIII came third, an improvement of two places on the previous year.

The women's squad had been looking for a good weekend in the build up for Women's

Head of the River this week in London. The women's VIII finished in 4th place just 5 seconds behind 2nd place, with North East rivals Durham taking the honours. The women's quad finished in 3rd place, and the coxed 4 finished 7th.

Both novice squads took to the water in what was their first BUSA event and their first chance to see their competition for the year. Both novice squads were in very competitive fields and faced some crews that, while technically Novices, had much more rowing experience than the Newcastle crews which began rowing this year.

The Novice men had been looking to build on impressive performances at Tyne Head and Stan Calvert. They finished in a promising 4th place just seconds behind the eventual winners.

The Novice women's 8 finished in 10th place in a large field of 24 university entries.

Both Novice squads now have some race experience and have a good platform to build on, with BUSA regatta their next opportunity to race these universities over a shorter distance of 2km.

Newcastle University finished second in the medals table with one silver and two bronze medals and increased its points tally from the previous years.



ROWING TO GLORY... Members of the Newcastle squad are celebrating GB call ups.

ACTION SHOT... Newcastle shoot down tough opposition in march to final



Photo: Chris Brown

False economy as Newcastle storm to BUSA final berth

WOMEN'S BADMINTON

NEWCASTLE	6
L.S.E	2

Thomas Huggon

TOUGH OPPOSITION was expected in the semi-final of the Trophy for the Newcastle Ladies, and that is what LSE provided in what proved to be a difficult test.

Fresh from her victory in the BUSA ladies singles, LSE's Malaysian Mellien Chew Superstar proved to be on devastating form, defeating both Laura Walsh and Tiffany Liang in their respective singles matches. Liang had a good second end against the Malaysian taking an impressive ten points, but it seemed from the start that LSE's

were on course for victory.

The doubles matches told a different story; Kat Stoker and Lucy Dixon took their matches against LSE's 2nd pair 21-11 and 21-7. Dixon's smashing prowess and Stoker's touch at the net proved vital.

The result was similar when Maddie Harrison and Kirstin Miller took to the stage, winning against the LSE 2nd pair 21-10, 21-10. And when Harrison and Miller played their second match, although challenged slightly more, they were able to win 21-15, 21-18. Harrison's Ox-like strength and Miller's cunning were the key attributes here.

Laura Walsh provided great entertainment to the multitude of fans gathered at Claremont Road. In her second singles match she disheartened Aditi Barmecha, winning 21-14, 21-9. Liang beat the same opposition in three ends after tiring Barmecha in the first game then cruising through the next two games 21-10, 21-16.

The Final fixtures included a grudge match with Candy Sue and her partner Lucy Dixon and Kat Stoker with Dixon offering a drink to anyone that pinged the LSE captain. This match was won 21-10, 21-12. Harrison and Miller then beat LSE's 2nd pair easily in two games, to end the match 6-2.

The Women's 1sts now progress to the Final of the Trophy Competition to be held in Sheffield on the 16th March.

The men's 2nd team progressed to the final of the Plate, a match that will be held next week versus either UCL or Keele. Great singles performances came from James Ashdown and Adam Attaheri, while two doubles wins for the new partnership of James Evans and Andy Brown consolidated the result. James Robson and Conrad Nanda produced only one win as second doubles pair, but showed strength in the game they won.

What a Brummer

■ Birmingham end Newcastle's BUSA Trophy hopes



WOMEN'S HOCKEY 1STS

NEWCASTLE	1
BIRMINGHAM	3

Claire Gunn

NEWCASTLE CRASHED out of the BUSA Trophy on Wednesday with a disappointing 3-1 semi-final defeat to Birmingham. It was always going to be a difficult task against the side who finished 3rd in Midlands Conference 1A, and so it proved, with the Royals unable to claw their way back after going three goals down.

Members of the University hockey club turned out en masse to support the ladies in their campaign for BUSA glory, but with the thirds losing earlier in the day, the pressure was all on the first team to keep Newcastle

hockey in the BUSA running. The notoriously strong Birmingham side turned up with plenty of supporters, but nothing to compare with the Newcastle fans hoping to see their side reach the final.

The game did not get off to a good start for Newcastle though, with the away side shocking the Royals with a quick fire goal. Nevertheless though, Newcastle were playing well in the early stages.

Some exceptional ball pace and passing round the back from Rosie Innes and Becca Harrison allowed Tori Harries and Jojo Gwynne-Jones to demonstrate some of their fantastic skills, outwitting the ladies in red to offer Jos Plummer and Jenny Simms some early attacks.

Simms' constant runs up front kept close pressure on the defence while Gwynne-Jones never gave in as she used her reaction and reach to let nothing slip past her.

However, the away side were al-

ways looking dangerous and a Birmingham break and some precision passing in the 'D' offered an open goal. There was little the Royals could do as the opposition took their lead to 2-0.

Taking control from the back the home side picked up their game. A speedy run from Simms was blocked out by Birmingham's solid defence.

Despite their bright moments though, the Reds were never unsettled and they picked up their third goal soon after to put them into a seemingly unassailable 3-0 lead.

As the Trophy drifted further from Newcastle's grasp the girls continued to fight hard and were eventually rewarded with a consolation, as the infamous 'Plummer reverse stick strike' put the underdogs on the scoreboard.

The final minutes of the game saw Newcastle take on a more attacking role. Innes' silky stick skills confused the Midlands outfit, and allowed the

Royals to push up as they exerted pressure on Birmingham in the closing stages.

It was too little too late though for Newcastle and the final whistle sounded on a hard fought game and the end of the Royals' season.

Speaking after the match, Newcastle's skipper Dawn Logan felt her team could have got back into the game. She said, "We didn't lose, we just ran out of time," an example of the positive mindset that has inspired the women's hockey club throughout the season.

Kat Besford was another who was proud of her side's efforts, on a day that demonstrated the admirable atmosphere of the Uni hockey club, saying, "After a gruelling season the firsts showed an amazing team effort and did the club proud."

Despite the result, Newcastle can be pleased with their achievements this season and will be hoping to build on this next year.

>> Intra Mural Rugby



24

>> Women's Fencing



26

>> Netball



27

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