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DIT:Students Union

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DITSU survey raises questions

By Samantha Rowntree

A STUDENT satisfaction survey carried out for DITSU prior to the Christmas holidays highlighted the lack of knowledge (or lack of interest?) that DIT students have in the student's body.

The survey revealed that only 44% of students know the identity of DITSU Overall President, namely Vinny Dooley.

The DIT site Presidents fare slightly better in the survey with 67% being familiar to students, while their deputies only manage an average 54% recognition.

But when students were asked how satisfied they were with their Overall President, the result showed a strange discrepancy.

Nearly three-quarters of those surveyed were happy with Vinny Dooley's performance despite the fact that, as identified earlier, only 44% of students knew who he was, which is an odd finding to say the least.

Most of the students surveyed by DITSU want to see an improvement in the entertainment provided by the Students Union.

Another interesting finding in this survey reveals that most students and are relying on part time work for their main source of income rather than a grant, loan or family source.

With 63% of students relying on wages from part time work it is no source of surprise that financial constraints are forcing so many students, on a nation wide basis, to leave college.

A total of four hundred students from the approximate 28,000 students in DIT were covered by a survey, which excluded students attending DIT Rathmines and the Institute's smaller buildings.

What was clear from the survey figures conducted by Foresight Communications, was that there seemed a general decline in the figures which were favourable to the Union in relation to the 1999 survey.

Several attempts were made to contact DITSU President Vinny Dooley in relation to the survey's findings, but none were forthcoming.

Childcare course suffers gender imbalance

Only one male student in class

DIT Rathmines plays host to the BA Degree in Early Childhood Care and Education course. This three-year degree was introduced in 1999 to replace the long running certificate and diploma courses. The most remarkable fact about the course is that it has only one male student in a class of 55, demonstrating that there is a long way to go to achieve an equitable gender balance.

The course trains people to work with children from 0-7 years.

It gives a general training for people to work with children in a wide variety of settings including creches, pre-schools, special needs centres and hospitals.

There are very few men in the course but there are hopes that through career guidance and career days, more males and females will consider childcare as a profession.

The course co-ordinator Anne Fitzpatrick said that Irish third level institutes were not alone in terms of the lack of male involvement in childcare courses.

"Gender imbalance in the staffing of early years services is a huge issue not just in Ireland but internationally," she said.

For example in Norway, which has very well developed childcare services, the Government there has been trying to correct this but have only 6% male staff despite a proactive policy to recruit men.

The EU is also addressing the issue with an aim (by 2006) that 20% of staff working in the sector should be men. While the School of Social Sciences aims to have 25% mature students on their courses this has not always been achieved.

The points for the course last year were 350, five points less than the year before.

The course content is a combination of theory and practice. There are placements throughout the course starting from first year where students work one day a week and also undertake two block weeks of practical work.

There are very few men in the course but there are hopes that through career guidance more males and females will consider childcare as a profession.

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Budget offers little respite for cash strapped students

UNDER the new 'rent a room' scheme announced in the December Budget, home-owners will be able to earn up to $50 a week from renting part of their homes. This makes it an attractive scheme to first-time buyers who need help with inflated mortgages.

This in fact means that people have been given an excuse to make money out of students who have no other option than to seek affordable rented accommodation.

Homeowners, now more than ever, homeowners will advertise rooms with the aim of attracting students in order to increase their monthly income. How many students will we find sharing box rooms now many landlords will become glorified house pets? Will the student become the resident nanny? But the biggest question is how will students afford to live in student lodgings?

The accommodation crisis has affected every student at some point and the government has yet to walk the walk on the issue as an election tactic and since the DIT student Sinead Moloney, winner of the Today FM Live Room Competition, unfortunately cannot spend her winnings on rent because it's impossible for her to find somewhere suitable to rent.

"I live in Drogheda and since my win my mother and father have been looking for a place but it's impossible to find anywhere this time of year," she said.

The Union of Students in Ireland (USI) has condemned the Minister for Finance, Charlie McCreevy, for failing to address the issue of inadequate student grants in this years Budget. The USI says that over 30,000 students have been forced to leave college since the 1999 Budget. The Union believes that this figure will continue to rise because Finance Minister Charlie McCreevy has so far failed to address the issue of inadequate student grants.

After the Budget, USI President Julian de Spinae de Snin did not mince his words with Minister McCreevy. "Today's Budget is being hailed as a Budget to fight inflation. But there has been no attempt to tackle inflation for example by shelving student grants. The gap between what the grant provides and what a student needs to survive is growing and the Minister doesn't seem to care. Minister McCreevy's cop-out will inevitably lead to an even higher rate of student dropouts IntelliJ to the horizon. DIT has ever seen. With the other half lives, you might god forbid even see more and even more students broking for Christmas. The 11'St of us' are the students who will contribute a very prosperous and innovative step. Future Government policies will be in which we can assist this thriving industry.

"Your opinions and input are very important to us. students. They could be the basis for future government policies in this field. "I would like to thank the FE thread for hosting and co-sponsoring this vital forum and I wish all those who participated the success in their very prosperous e-future". Ms Christine Hickey of www.studentworld.ie believes that the new forum will be a great service to students. "The Department, with the help of is opening is a true innovative step in this very important work. The government is recognizing the importance of students and their input in shaping the e-commerce future."

The Union of Students in Ireland has condemned the Minister for Finance, Charlie McCreevy, for failing to address the issue of inadequate student grants in this years Budget.

Dublin increased by 18 per cent, while the student grants had only increased by 5 per cent in the same period. If you happened to be one of the 17,000 students who took to the streets in the weeks before the budget it was obviously "no way to go!"

The campaign had little impact on Minister McCreevy who blatantly ignored the students' demands calling for grants to be increased to social welfare levels.

Cian O'Callaghan, USI has vowed to continue the campaign for a Minister for Finance who squandered an historic opportunity to make access to higher education a reality for everyone. Our campaign will continue until the "Government acts on this issue." De Spinae has accused the Minister of having a "tight-fisted attitude towards students, "There are no excuses for the Minister's tight-fisted attitude towards students."

The Estimates of Receipts and Expenditure for 2001 show a surplus of revenue over expenditure of almost £5.5 billion.

To increase student grants to reasonable levels would cost £258 million. This figure is in every student's pocket, a small percentage when you consider the enormous benefits such as investment in the future prosperity of the country.

"It is vital that the new independent company IE-Domain Registry Ltd forges stronger links with today's students who are tomorrow's e-commerce leaders, is Ireland's National Internet address so it is very important that today's students are fully aware of the significance of .ie in their e-commerce future."

The Minister for Public Enterprise, Mrs Mary O'Rourke TD, launching the forum also said giving students the opportunity for students to interact with her department. "We want you to tell us what you think about what we are doing and your ideas about new and innovative ways to highlight benefits, identify pit, or suggest new areas in which to ass this thriving industry."

"Your opinions and input are very important to us. They could be the basis for future government policies in this field. "I would like to thank the FE thread for hosting and co-sponsoring this vital forum and I wish all those who participated the success in their very prosperous e-future".

The Union also has a lot of serious work to do this term. Our much trumpeted New Year resolutions will be brought in and we will continue to bring Seanchain na Gaeilge users new and innovative ideas. This includes getting users to recognising the value of the Irish culture for a week. With the power of the Internet, language quizzes and pages filled with traditional Irish songs, Bingo in Irish is also a very successful theme for Seanchain na Gaeilge users. The New Year resolution manages to bring together all that you did last year and move on to a new level.

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I am writing in response to the headline article in the most recent edition (Issue 10) entitled "Students' Union loses £36,000 on ball!". Firstly, as an employee of DITSU, I agree with everything the President has said and done in the aftermath of the "Spellbound" cancellation. While the main reasons for the failure of the event were bad timing and bad publicity, arguably due to poor management decisions, I feel the time for finger pointing is past. As caretakers of students money, the Union has to act on what it feels are the wishes of the students. In this case, it was felt that a Halloween Ball would help to foster a greater sense of identity amongst DIT students, who are decentralised geographically. We are all under the umbrella of DIT, yet often see ourselves as students of Aungier Street, or Mountjoy Square, as a pose to DIT Students. The results of a recent independent survey suggest that, yes, students are interested in becoming more unified socially, with to 84% of students surveyed endorising the idea of more inter DIT events.

Secondly, a "Students' Union source" got it wrong. While the President did the lion's share of the work involved, the exec were consulted on both venue and line-up, and were each given a specific job to do in the run up to the event.

Thirdly, I have to question the reasoning behind Karting Club President, Ray Nangle's comments dominating half of this article. While Mr Nangle is President of one of DIT's biggest clubs, I feel he lacks the specific knowledge of the Students' Union required to make such sweeping statements as "it's a joke". I don't know where he got his figures regarding advertising, but I do know that they are inaccurate. With no disrespect to Mr Nangle, he is speculating on what may, or may not have been done. Also, as President of a prominent club, he should realise that DITSU do not fund any clubs or societies, we merely facilitate them. The money comes from DIT, and is disseminated through the clubs and societies as the Social and Cultural Committees or the Sports Council sees fit.

To take up another point, DITSU are a non-profit organisation, and it was never our intention to make money off the students. While the price of tickets was higher than previous events, I still feel that it was a reasonable price for what was on offer.

While a loss of £36,000 is substantial, the Union is thankfully, and I might add, through good management, in a position to absorb this loss without there being any affect on the services we provide to students. Mr Nangle goes on to say, "if any other managing director lost £36,000 they would be gone", as if the Union is there for the protection of the students, it must be noted that we operate in a business environment, and as such, risks must sometimes be taken. I feel the President has acted very professionally in the aftermath of this event to minimise the loss sustained.

In summation, I would like to say that while the reporting of this loss was certainly regrettable, I feel that students had a right to know about it, the way the article was worded was more like an editorial, and appeared to focus more on emotion than on fact. While printing this letter would certainly go some way alleviating the damage and potential damage your front page headline has caused, I suggest that in future you remember that the Union is not here to rip off students, and all decisions are taken with the best interests of all DIT students in mind.

Yours Sincerely,

Will Nelson
Deputy President
DITSU, Kevin Street

By Samantha Rowntree

DIT student wins ‘live rent free’ competition

Imagine being able to live rent free for a year. The thought of not having to hand over inordinate amounts of rent money to a landlord week after week is very appealing especially for cash strapped students.

First year journalism student in DIT, Aungier Street, Sinead Moloney couldn't believe her luck when she was one of four winners of the 'Live Rent Free for a Year' competition.

Sinead was at home getting ready for a night out when she received a phone call from Today FM. Little did she know that Tom Dunne of the 'Pet Sounds' show was going to tell her she’d won £3,000. Sinead says, "I was really shocked, it was brilliant!"

However, despite her win Sinead who hails from Drogheda still hasn’t been able to find anywhere to rent in Dublin.

She and a friend had been looking for somewhere to live but as it’s so late in the year they’ve given up little hope of finding anywhere. Since the win Sinead has quit her part time job and is enjoying her money. Entrants had to 'out' themselves from the competition by naming the one song they’re most embarrassed to love.

Unashamed, Sinead won one of the prizes for her personal favourite of the sing-along classic ‘The Sound of Music’.

By Samantha Rowntree

Chemistry Competition

This may be your last chance to enter the ‘Chemistry on the Web’ competition, as the closing date of March 15 approaches.

This competition is designed to encourage students with an interest in IT to utilise their skills to facilitate the understanding of chemistry.

The total prize fund of £1,100 could come in very handy!

All entries will be judged on information content, presentation, creativity, innovation and initiative.

To check out some of last year’s entries check out the chemistry website for DIT. For rules and further information visit http://www.dit.ie/chemistry/index.html

Send all entries to Dr. Patricia Emms, Dublin Institute of Technology, Kevin Street, Dublin 8. (01) 4024780

Letter to the Editor
A new approach required by all

THE results of a DITSU survey should be making Overall President Vinny Dooley very worried, as indeed it should all involved in the entire operation of the Union in DIT.

However, that such a position can prove troublesome and even the best captain cannot help a team when stuck in murky waters. But one of the main drawbacks of standing for high office is to stand up to the dissenting voices and try and fulfil one's obligations.

But the buzz words of 'accountability' and 'transparency' are as relevant to student politics as they are in the 'real' world, dare I say it.

While this editorial could be viewed as a slight on the efforts of Vinny Dooley, the fact is that the DIT Independent has not been greatly assisted by the President since we resumed publishing at the start of the college year.

After all, this paper carries the logo of the Students' Union, the section editors and myself are paid by DITSU, so one could assume that the Union's top officer would be more forthcoming with information when queries are raised.

This would prove a more satisfying conclusion for all involved in the newspaper, especially given the accountability and "straight up" attitude that student politicians require when it comes to answering the difficult question. But it would not be fair to mention the need for improvements within DIT without mentioning the difficulties that students have experienced regarding the provision of adequate facilities, as outlined elsewhere in this issue.

But it is when one examines the absence of cloak rooms, lockers, playing pitches, etc - amenities that virtually every other third level body which compares with DIT in terms of student numbers possess, that one can see how ill-equipped we are in this institute when it comes to basic requirements.

The Phase Two development at Aungier Street is encouraging, as plans so long spoken of on paper are becoming a reality. Grange gorman cannot leap quick enough from the pages of the planning books. To act, and not to speak of action, would be a useful motto for all of us this year.

It is the policy of the DIT Independent to correct any inaccuracies as soon as they occur. An corrections or clarifications will be published in this newspaper. It is also the policy of the DIT Independent to offer the right of reply to any person who feels aggrieved by comment or opinion contained within. Please forward any such comments in writing to the Editor. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the policies of the Students’ Union.

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Alumni enjoy Christmas bash

Pictured at the recent DIT Alumni Association's Homecoming Reception from left to right: Peter Hillick (Mountjoy Square Class of '89), home from New York, Ursula Kerrigan (Cathal Brugha Street Class of '90) home from London and Ciaran Walsh (Aungier Street Class of '99) at the DIT Alumni Association's Homecoming Reception in the Richmond Hotel, Rathmines.

Despite the ever-deepening carpet of snow, which might have served to disrupt the least dedicated, DIT Alumni, current and past, and members of staff gathered in the DIT Photography and Digital Imaging Studio in Temple Bar on the frosty night that was the 28th of December.

This was the second Annual Homecoming Reception of DIT Alumni with its aim being to provide a meeting point where former students of the college might particularly those returning from abroad, can renew friendships with classmates and DIT staff.

Mulled wine, cocktail sausages and mince pies warmed up the frostbitten attendees at the post-Christmas reception.

Jazz music provided by the silklen sounds of Chatham Row alumni and friends added to the festive atmosphere.

In all attendance spoke of their anticipation of the next such gathering, which cannot come quickly enough!
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ALL SHOPS ARE OPEN FROM 8.30 A.M TIL LATE
By Samantha Rowntree

FROM October 2002, Aungier Street, DIT is expected to house all Business Faculty Programmes to become the largest business school in Ireland. The Faculty will provide education for over 5,000 students at all levels of study.

The first phase of the Aungier Street development was completed in September 1994, which relocated the former College of Commerce in Rathmines to Aungier Street.

The second phase of the DIT masterplan will extend teaching facilities, bringing Accountancy, Business Studies and Marketing together on the one site.

Autumn 2000 saw the beginning of this second phase of the Aungier Street development.

The new 12,700 square metre building will incorporate extensive Information Technology facilities, lecture theatres, classrooms, staff offices, a new library and a restaurant, as well as extending the student social/recreational area on campus.

At the signing of the Phase Two development, the Minister for Education and Science, Dr Michael Woods, officially brought the various Schools of the Faculty together on one site; the Institute will benefit from economies of scale in terms of class sizes and avail of the academic synergies and potential for development of existing and new programmes.

In explaining the Government’s commitment to developing third level education to international top class standards, Dr Woods said, “the Government recently announced details of £5.35 billion to be spent on education as part of the National Development Plan (2000-2006), of which approximately £1.6 billion is for educational infrastructure.”

The DIT’s Faculty of Business director Paul O’Sullivan is delighted with the new development which will bring all business courses under one roof for the first time: “The new library and IT centre is a tremendous resource for DIT students, right in the heart of Dublin’s business district,” he said.

Currently, the faculty is spread over several campuses but this expansion will provide for a totally integrated business centre in Aungier Street.” Commenting on the expansion, Peter Darning, President of Aungier Street Student Union spoke of the changing face of the Institute.

"It’s definitely a landmark for DIT’s commitment to information technology, both as a discipline and as a learning tool. Our graduates are spearheading growth in the e-business sector.

This means the prospects and opportunities for graduates are enormous.

Some graduates are now entering the marketplace with an annual salary of £26,000 to begin their careers with.

“We ensure that our students, who are future employ­ers by maintaining quality and currency in a rapidly changing business environment,” added Mr Sullivan.

Good prospects in research programme

By Samantha Rowntree

A NEW programme called Prospect was recently launched, bringing together DIT and two of the country’s major business bodies.

This six month programme has been initiated with the support from Docklands Innovation and Enterprise Ireland to help researchers in third level institutions commercialise their research.

The programme runs over a six-month period from January to June. Interactive workshops are held at weekends to accommodate the regular work schedule.

The workshops deal with commercial issues and are supported by a panel of experienced mentors and consultants.

Under the terms of the scheme, there are several options for commercialising research available for example you may be interested in setting up a campus company either on your own or with a partner, or you may wish to patent your research.

This will enable students to obtain a license to sell technology research to a company outside your company.

The programme team, based at Docklands Innovation Park in Dublin city centre, has had much experience in supporting the start-up and growth of Irish companies, through practical and innovative programmes.

Support from leading firms of commercially experienced business counselors and trainers, the team has been successful in launching over 30 businesses annually and supports a network of about 300 companies.

This programme is part of the

Project Development Centre (PDC), an effective resource centre for entrepreneurs providing them with support and training through the start-up and growth phases of their business development.

Initiated by the DIT, the Centre’s aim has been to assist entrepreneurs in the areas of innovation, product development and enterprise creation, through a variety of events, in a rapidly changing resource centre of the pool of highly skilled graduates.

The Centre operates under the Dublin Institute of Technology. The Project Development Centre Director, Rea O’Neill has been a full-time lecturer with the Dublin Institute of Technology.

He currently holds the position of Industrial Liaison Officer in the Dublin Institute of Technology and is responsible for college-industry cooperation programmes.

He is also chairman of the Bolton Trust and is a Director of Castle Hill Fund Management Ltd. which operates the Small Enterprise Seed Fund. He has been extensively involved as an adviser to small business for almost fifteen years.

The PDC method is one of facilitation. Through this process, the entrepreneurs are helped to draw from their collective experiences, focus on priorities and apply their skills in a way that allows them to confidently take key decisions in their businesses.

Since 1991 the Centre has run its renowned Enterprise Development Programme.

From October 2002, Aungier Street, DIT is expected to house all Business Faculty Programmes to become the largest business school in Ireland.

This is a one-year support and management development programme which helps graduate entrepreneurs start-up and run their own businesses.

The programme offers participants, office space and facilities, advice and counselling, financial support, management development training, access to an enterprise network and access to DIT resources and expertise.

The Fast Growth Programme tends to the very specific needs of Ireland’s small growing businesses. Built on a number of successful company development models including the Centre’s own, the Fast Growth Programme is a three-phased support system.

It involves interactive workshops, individual training and investment counselling and assistance, in order to facilitate the company’s safe and successful growth.

The Small Enterprise Seed Fund, a Designated Business Expansion Scheme Fund was initiated in 1995 in order to create a source of equity funding for small companies.

The Project Development Centre Network in conjunction with the Bolton Trust promotes the Fund.

Apart from this new Prosper programme, the Project Development Centre is also involved in a number of other activities including student exchanges and work placements programmes.

For further details contact: (01) 2401300 or e-mail:info@pdc.ie

Dockland students awarded scholarships

Under the auspices of the Dublin Docklands Development Authority, students from the Docklands area of Dublin have received 13 scholarships to date to support students in the areas of DIT, and NCI. This has increased to 18 this year to take in a variety of course and institutions.

The Minister for Education and Science, Dr Michael Woods, hailed the Dublin Docklands Development Authority (DDDA) as a life-long learning provider, in an area that is plagued by high unemployment at the Third Level Scholarship Scheme Awards.

He found the DDDA to be “working successfully” to tackle the social and educational disadvantage experienced by young Dockland students.

Plans are afoot to introduce a mentoring system for Junior and Leaving Certificate students, where a school pupil from the area is encouraged on a yearly basis to sample life at university.

In addition to this, each of the five higher education institutions sponsored young Dockland students to attend a university campus weekend.

The last three summers has seen a total of almost 100 young people from the area attend this programme. The DDDA’s plan is to finalise the establishment of a third level campus for 2002 students, within the international Financial Services Centre for the academic year starting 2002.
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Mark Browne, Bank of Ireland, 34 College Green or phone 679 3777

Bank of Ireland
Forget Paris? Pas de chance

By Natasha Reid

Forget Paris, the movie was titled - not a chance! I can still smell the fresh chocolate croissants and see the fallen autumn leaves that dotted Champs Elysees last September.

While France's capital is famous for its breathtaking beauty, no photograph or film footage can compare with the real thing. Yours truly went on a three-day trip to the city by the Seine. I didn't think a city could be as beautiful as Paris.

I stayed on for a week, because a weekend just isn't long enough to do justice to the City of Light. It seems a shame to conduct business in this charming town, which began as a village on an island on the Seine many centuries ago. Walking down any boulevard in Paris, a person would imagine that the whole city was designed and built to be admired and adored.

Every amenity is available to tourists, right from complimentary maps on arrival, to cafés and restaurants on every street corner. What more does a holidaymaker want after a long day sightseeing, than an exquisite French meal and a few foreign beverages, all served up by a cute Parisian? As for the myth that only the rich could afford to enjoy Paris - it's just a matter of shopping around. Of course, a cup of coffee could easily cost up to £90. I stayed at a two-star hotel to choose from, ranging from modest one stars, to the other, with trucks running in every direction. Even the stations were entertaining, with shops, restaurants and sometimes orchestras playing.

Once settled, the Arc de Triomphe was my first stop, but I'd advise others to leave it until last. After climbing hundreds of steps, I was barely able to walk for the rest of the holiday. It was worth the pain. The Arc itself is magnificent, but the view from the top is breathtaking. The sense of being in the centre of Paris is awesome, but no matter where I stood in Paris, it seemed the city had been built around that spot, it is so well planned.

The Champs Elysees and the Tuileries Gardens lead to the Louvre museum. It is impossible to walk down the Champs Elysees without venturing into some massive designer store, where bottles of perfume, five feet high can be purchased for thousands of Francs. Of course, it's the pavement cafes that gives this street its famed Paris charm. In the Louvre, don't expect to see every art piece. The huge museum holds 16 kilometres of gallery, and yes, the Mona Lisa is a bit of a disappointment. Next stop, Tour L'Eiffel. This 1,000 ft tall structure is visible for miles around, and the entire city can be seen from the top. The second half of a day should be devoted to this monument; that way, it can be seen in full. Another outing best left until dusk is the Seine cruise in a bateau mouche. Don't go to Paris without indulging. Yet again, it feels like Paris was built along the river for viewing pleasure purposes, where every building is a masterpiece. Elaborately decorated statues grace their roofs and gardens. Even the bridges are an exhibition, with a story behind each one. On the island, Ile de la Cite, stands the Gothic Notre Dame Cathedral, which alone, is worth going to Paris to see.

Of course, no trip to France would be complete without a day in Eurodisney! It's about 50 miles away, but is accessible from any Metro station and takes under an hour by train.

Paris is the type of place people visit for a few days, but feel they were destined to live in. With Valentine's Day coming up, the City of Love beckons. There's no excuse not to go, folks - Bon Voyage!
J1 - 2001

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Star Wars Episode II: 18 months to go

Firstly, an admission: I loved Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace. It may have been the end product of a script with more holes than a block of Edam, but I didn’t go to the film expecting to see Shakespeare, whom George Lucas has been sometimes ludicrously compared to.

The second episode of the new trilogy which simply remains entitled Star Wars: Episode II, is in its final months of production, but a sense of anti-climax is increasingly hard to avoid when one trawls through the many websites devoted to the franchise.

With summer 2002 pencilled in by Lucas as a release date, the boffins at Industrial Light & Magic (ILM) have many websites devoted to the sense of anti-climax is increasingly hard to avoid when one trawls through the many websites devoted to the franchise.

Anakin Skywalker, played by Hayden Christensen, vists one of Coruscant's hotspots in Star Wars: Episode II

Anakin Skywarker, played by Hayden Christensen, visits one of Coruscant's hotspots in Star Wars: Episode II

IT's proving difficult to wait for more lightsaber wielding action from the bearded Ewan McGregor, Natalie Portman looking like a knockout and the reappearance of Mandalorian battle armour a la Fett. Better start counting stormtroopers in my sleep.

The famous Mandalorian battle armour, worn by Boba Fett in the original trilogy, will be donned by Temura Morrison who will play the role of Boba's father, Jango.
Holistic health is one alternative way to prevent illness and maintain health as well as health restoration and cure.

At the heart of holistic health, is the belief in patients' own power to heal themselves. Practitioners help activate the patient's own healing powers. Some of the holistic health treatments available include:

- Homeopathy affects cure through small, individually prescribed quantities of specially prepared natural remedies capable of stimulating deep healing responses without the worrying toxicity of conventional medicines.
- Acupuncture originated in China more than 3,000 years ago. It is a complex medical system that involves the insertion of fine pre-sterilised needles at predetermined points on the surface of the body, activating the patient's healing energy.
- Reflexology & reiki and reflexology

Some quick thinking and a persuasive personality means that your good humour is even more effective now.

**Acupuncture (right), reflexology (centre) and various forms of alternative medicine** are one way to prevent illness and maintain health.

Our DIT astrologer predicts what the month ahead holds in store for students everywhere.

**Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 20)**

The New Year is not shap­ing up to what it is supposed to be. Things aren't quite going as planned and this is more than likely down to the entry of that troublesome duo, Mars and Neptune, into your main house of affairs.

The best advice the stars can offer you is to throw away those ridiculous New Year's resolutions and wiggle it out.

Your natural charm and persuasive personality means everything will be going your sweet way by the end of the month.

**Destiny is a silver car.**

**Taurus (Apr 21 - May 20)**

The New Year is a great time for taking stock and evaluating your direction, be it a career move or a change of lifestyle. Whatever you decide to do now will come true as Venus collides with your main house of affairs.

You can expect to begin laying the foundations for your future, so guard this opportunity like a fox in the henhouse.

A minor mishap will set you back mid-month but some quick thinking and a dollop or two of the Taurus charm will have you back on your feet in no time.

**Destiny begins with the letter T.**

**Gemini (May 21 - June 20)**

Mercury moves into inspi­ational Aquarius this month and has you bursting with ideas. This is great news.

The problem now is how are you going to put them into action? With a bit of careful planning and a lot of hard graft, that's how!

But take heart, as all extra effort will pay off double this month as the lucky stars favour Geminis everywhere.

Family relations improve greatly around the 24th and disagreements which were bothering you will be resolved.

**Destiny is a yellow box.**

**Cancer (June 22 - July 23)**

The Lunar Eclipse earlier this year has affected your mood greatly. All of a sudden everything seems easier than ever before. Difficulties regarding work matters will be resolved thanks to your new positive attitude.

Your good humour is even attracting a potential new romance. If in all, it is shaping up to be a pretty good month.

Good times are on the cards around the 25th but watch you don't over-exert yourself after the 27th.

**Destiny wears light blue.**

**Leo (July 24 - Aug 24)**

The New Year opened up a lot of old wounds for poor old Leo. Thank to that blasted Libra

**Lunar Eclipse** in the year, a lot of your emotional energy will be released.

But it is probably better that the problems you have been bottling up during the past 12 months are finally out in the open. Run with it. This is the year for resolving past grievances.

**Destiny is a man with light hair.**

**Virgo (Aug 24 - Sept 23)**

Lucky Virgo! This month is the time for some serious loving! Single Virgos can expect to get lucky around the 15th.

Those who are already in a relationship can expect a sweet surprise. Issues of health will become the main focus towards the end of the month when Pluto moves into Aquarius.

If you have been putting off that visit to the doctor, then now is the time to make that appointment.

**Destiny listens to an elderly.**

**Scorpio (Oct 24 - Nov 22)**

Everyone loves a fresh start and what better time to begin one, than the New Year. It is an ideal time to start new projects as Mars, Venus and the recent Lunar Eclipse all shine brightly in Scorpio this month.

Anything started around the 15th has more than a better chance of succeeding, so take full advantage of this lucky time. Matters concerned with the heart also improve greatly. All round it is a profitable and successful few weeks.

**Destiny is a forgotten photograph.**

**Sagittarius (Nov 23 - Dec 21)**

**Top Tips**

The DIT Independent recommends its readers to tread the following path during the year ahead:

1. Drink less (than 18 pints a night)
2. Go to college (before 5pm)
3. Visit the library (more than once a term)
4. Ring my mum (when I need money)
5. Use my mobile less (in class)

**Aquarius (Jan 21 - Feb 19)**

Luck arrives in this and drabs this month. You will succeed in achieving a long-held ambition around the 5th but a manipulative accomplice could claim credit elsewhere.

Copyright anything written or produced between now and then, so as to guard against such a possibility. Your intuitive powers will heighten around the 23rd. Go with your instincts at this time, as it will pay off.

**Destiny is a legal document.**

**Pisces (Feb 20 - Mar 20)**

Last year’s finances weren’t so hot. You constantly found yourself robbing Peter to pay Paul. Well, 2001 sees an end to your money problems, for this month anyway.

Cash flows in from all directions and a welcome bonus sees you living it up around the 17th.

But going on last year’s financial records, it is suggested you put some away for that rainy day. Bills have a tendency to crop up just when you have spent your last penny.

**Destiny indicates a small windfall.
film reviews

The last word in beer

Capturing solutions

Jamie Hannigan reviews the latest movie releases and those recently out on DVD and video

CAST AWAY (Cert 18, Opens January 12th)

Director Robert Zemeckis teams up with Tom Hanks for the first time since Forrest Gump six years ago. Forrest Gump, the simple story of a sweet moron who trundles through 20th century America and comes up snuffling, was showered with aw ard winning praise, including Oscars for Best Picture and Best Actor.

And a lot of people liked it. A hell of a lot of people loaded it with an almighty passion that left their insides as bitter and twisted as a dried-up prune. There will be a spot-prize for the first person who can guess which category I prune. There will be a spot-prize for the first person who can guess which category I fell into.

I have this allergy, you see, that happens every time a story occurs in my body when the saccharine levels of a film peak above a certain level and after Forrest Gump I had to be hospitalised for two weeks. Zemeckis, next film, Contact, was far more enjoyable.

Sure it had its good and down points - three people in the front row drowned during the last minute when wave after wave of untreated ichthamus gushing out of the screen like a tidal wave. But there are casualties in every film, aren't there?

Hopefully Cast Away would be cut from a different cloth. Sure, the film dawdles about for the first twenty minutes in the introduction to Hanks, character Chuck Nolan, a globe-trotting FedEx delivery man. A guy who thrives on punctuality and whose private and professional life is ruled by the clock, Chuck is on the verge of marrying long-term girlfriend Kelly (Helen Hunt).

But no sooner can he say: "I'll be right back," than the company jet plunges spectacularly into the Pacific ocean and the real story kicks in.

When most of your film concerns a single character living alone for four years, with no-one to talk to except himself, you'd better pray you get a good actor.

Hanks brings an astonishing sense of unselfconsciousness that draws you deep into his lonely existence and may well have turned in a career-best performance.

The film works so well in capturing Nolan's isolation (there is no musical score until the last act, only sound-effects) that when the time comes for him to return home, the audience is brought back to earth with a jolt.

There are precious few ways that Cast Away might have ended that would satisfy the average audience. And Zemeckis doesn't.

For the last twenty-five minutes you'll be tapping your fingers and checking your watch.

The film returns to civilisation, but you're left wondering: Why bother?

If, like me, you take regular medication to ward off the adverse effects of overweight sentimentalty, you should know that this film contains scenes of markish, emotional yearning involving Helen Hunt.

Luckily, the worse you'll go away with is a light rash.

BEAUTIFUL CREATURES (Cert 18, Released January 19th)

It's a sad thing, that every Breed is found since Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels must run the risk of being laughed off it clumsily. Wenz and Lynch are appealing enough, but we are told next to nothing about their past, and given little indication of their future.

Consequently, we don't particularly care what happens to either of them. If girls-on-top-crime-caper giga-boat your foot, you'd be well advised to check out the marvellous Bound instead.

UNDER SUSPICION (Cert 18, Opens February)

Under Suspicion could have had two hours of Morgan Freeman and Gene Hackman just starring each other off at each other, and still it would have been compelling cinema.

With actors of this calibre, the script could be the most inane, derivative schlock churned out by the lowest of Hollywood hacks and would nonetheless be able to raise the hairs on the back of your neck.

The fact that Messrs Freeman and Hackman are credited as executive producers should be enough to put your mind at ease, though. Based on the French Film Garde a Vue which in turn was based on English novel Brainwash, Under Suspicion takes place over the course of one intense night in Porto Rico. Prominent lawyer Henry Heurst (Gene Hackman) drops into the local police station to clarify a statement for Captian Victor Benezet (Morgan Freeman).

The previous day, Heurst had come across the body of a young girl - the second such victim inside of a month.

What starts out as a few routine questions turns into a long hours of questioning, as Heurst's stories start changing under pressure. His car was seen in the slum area where the first victim was found.

His private life is in shambles and his much-younger wife doesn't, seem interested in defending him. Benezet's private life is in no great shape either and Heurst raises the suspicion that his own interrogation may be the result of the other man trying to jockey a promotion.

Director Stephen Hopkins is exactly the man to direct the film. He bet the whole of his career on the release of Snappy A Great Caper which in turn was a film-relationships, the fatal attraction that his own interrogation may be the result of the other man trying to jockey a promotion.

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Become a Detective
For
DIT Independent

Give us a call
if you have an
interesting story
or photograph

And Stay
Clued Into College
Ray Nangle is a busy man. As President of the DIT Karting Club, which won the DIT Club of the Year last April, the profile of the club, coupled with impressive financial backing looks like making 2001 another year to remember for the success story of the college’s sporting outfits.

“We have done since I founded the club is ensure that everybody that joins DIT Karting is treated the same,” Nangle told the DIT Independent.

“If we had 600 odd people sign up, but only 300 went racing. So at the club’s AGM in May last year we launched a membership card scheme with a £2 subscription fee to cover that only dedicated members would join the club.

“This was a great success with membership fees raising just over £2000 with 1045 members joining the club.”

The £2 subscription means that DIT Karting is the only college club to charge for membership, but Ray Nangle believes that this has served well needed finances and simply help the club to fulfill all its ambitions.

“What this has allowed us to do is to maintain a balance between the ordinary driver and the elite group of drivers,” he said. “We still have a decent balance and I’m very happy with that.”

The success of the club over the last year has been exceptional by any stretch of the imagination. The DIT team won:

* The Munster Inter-varsities title.
* The Connacht Inter-varsities championship.
* The All Ireland Inter-varsities crown amongst stiff competition during the 1999/2000 season, and
* The DIT Club of the Year.

Another notable success was the participation, in varying degrees, of all 685 members during the year. “A great club is a club that can win championships and facilitate its ordinary members throughout the year,” said current Chairman Simon Clarke.

With over a thousand members this year, the club has seen almost 70% of the signatories participate in the various races that the club has run to date.

Over 100 members turned out for a great day’s racing at this year’s Sportday, which got the new season off to a great start.

Nangle has secured excellent funding, which has aided the club immeasurably and should see the club’s All-Ireland Champion team to compete in the English Grand Prix at the famed Silverstone circuit in April, as well as an event in Wales.

“My club has a great drive and the way they have done it is through the sponsorship that we have been able to secure,” Nangle commented.

“We bought a Formula B kart, which is capable of speeds in excess of 100 miles per hour, and last year we sponsored Paul Taylor in the Irish Motorsport Formula A Championship.

“This is a serious piece of machinery and we’re hoping that we can sponsor someone for this summer’s championships.”

The only way, it seems, is up for DIT Karting Club and their trip across the Irish Sea next April brings with it the prospect of more laurel wearing and great nights of celebration.

“The English championship gives us the chance to represent Ireland, an honour that no other DIT club can aspire to. We’ve done it because we’re All Ireland champions and we don’t want to pass up an opportunity to represent our country.”

Nangle said that the Sports Council simply did not have the funding to meet the club’s wishes, which makes the extensive financial backing all the more welcome. When it comes to that, I don’t think we’re in the same category as any other club,” Ray commented.

“This year, we’ve secured sponsorship from the Bank of Ireland, Planet Murphy’s, Heineken and we’re currently in negotiations with Eirecct, who will come in with sponsorship money if we go to England, which we should do.

“We had a Christmas party at Planet Murphy’s which was a huge success and raised almost £5000. “The trip to England should be well covered by the success of the Christmas event alone. “While in England, DIT’s track representatives will pay a visit to the Jordan Formula 1 Motorhome, the hub of Eddie Jordan’s racing empire.

Another of the club’s ambitions is to become a 12-month a year organisation whose activities would not be confined to the third level calendar.

“We’re completely financing this ourselves,” said Nangle. “We applied for £13,500 in funds from the DIT Sports Council at the start of the year, but we received £5000 less than that, which was a little disappointing. But we’re determined to make this our highest light of the year and we really want to make a big success of this.

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**Into the West**

**DIT Mountaineering Club's Ruth Phillips reflects on a December outing to the Burren, which provided as much downing as it did climbing!**

I t was late on Friday evening, December 1, as the trusty coach (pay careful attention to the time of departure - drinking driver was most accommodated) meandered out westwards into the setting sun. At least, I am sure it would have been a glorious sunset if it hadn't been bucketing down in torrents.

At least the canoeists were unaffected by the possibility of a very wet weekend.

Kevin Street Mountaineering Club was off down to the Burren for a weekend - and the Canoe Club was coming too just for the ride.

The Caving Club was represented by a jolly fellow called Malcolm, who was determined to coax people underground somehow. His job is by no means an easy one. "Hey why don't we go caving this morning?" he announced.

"We get to crawl down this really cool dark passage on our knees and then turn around and crawl back again - and we might even have to do that thing where we put our heads right under the freezing water and squeeze through a really low tunnel." You get the picture.

Mr Coach Driver was well in with us by now and joined us in getting basically hammered.

...for climbing in Ireland because of the variety of routes ranging from easy to Grade E4 (or "What the Hell am I doing Up Here" level).

We were lucky enough to have Wil Roeck (seriously that is his name) to instruct us over the two days.

This is of particular benefit when it comes to demonstrating setting up good belays - the method by which a climber is fastened to a rope to prevent injury in the case of a fall.

On Saturday morning we went (predictably) to the pub.

"Try telling them in Doolin that in Dublin we queue for 40 minutes at the weekend outside one of the trendy new bars only to have the primate of a bouncer (whose ear-piece gives him immediate superiority) telling you your shoes are wrong."

"This time we caught her - and thanks to such demonstrations there will be no next time. That evening it was back to Dublin in a coach that limped eastwards.

The rain lashed down and Mr Driver only laughed as he was forced to stop every few miles to wipe the windscreen.

Thanks to Brian's enthusiastic self-driving lessons the wipers were broken. The toilet was also out of use due to its abuse on the journey down.

Now it's back to climbing our indoor wall until after Christmas when we shall load the ice picks and crampons for a trip to Everest - or failing that, possibly County Wicklow. To the Sugar Loaf and beyond!

**Anyone for caving?**

Our motley crew take a breather.
A shot from the Irish Nationals (Foil) tournament 1999

Richard Noonan of DIT Fencing takes us on a tour of the club's history and offers a beginner's guide to the sport

By Alan Martin, DIT Judo Club Coach

DIT's Judo club is comprised of 18 students at present, a number which has risen as high as 30 at times. We operate on a lecture basis and our first began our lectures in September 1997.

The class is made up of more nationalities than an average Premiership football team (1), including French, German, Italian, Brazilian, Hong Kong, Kuwait, Lithuanian, Belarussian, Moldovan, English and of course Irish.

Not all of our members can speak English, so training sessions can sometimes be like attending a UN delegates' conference. Despite the language barrier, we all get along fine.

The DIT Judo club is composed of 18 students at present, which has risen as high as 30 at times. The club's first coach was Patrick Duffy. It is now a fully integrated DIT club, open to students from all the colleges.

From a competitive point of view we do quite well, regularly finishing in the top three in the various team competitions during the year.

On an individual basis we also do quite well, winning events in both beginner and advanced competitions. The sport of fencing is not well known.

The non-fencers of the world don't know what it is all about, or what you need, or even if it is dangerous. Well, basically it's about using a sword to hit your opponent without getting hit yourself. If you are hit, it doesn't hurt because we use a small switch built into the sword to tell you when you have hit your opponent. To try it in college all you need is a pair of runners/trainers and a pair of track/suit bottoms for ease of movement.

The college supplies all the equipment for the club's use. As regards the hazards of fencing, they are minimal. All the equipment is certified by the sports governing body, with standard equipment coming with a safety rating. Like any college activity it's about making friends and giving it a go. It's Fun!!!
A reluctant hero

Kevin Street caretaker Christy Doyle is man with a rich sporting past. Brian Healy spoke to the former Shelbourne striker about his career.

“Somebody once asked Christy if he was Irish born or not. He answered: ‘I’m Irish born, Christy Doyle is my name’,” recalls one of his former teammates. “He had a great sense of humour and was never afraid to have a good laugh.”

Some of Christy’s best memories from his career are playing for the Republic of Ireland at the 1960 FAI Cup, and his goalscoring record. He was one of the top scorers in Irish football, and is proud to have represented his country.

As for Christy, he’s busy working as a caretaker at Kevin Street and claims that he doesn’t miss the football that much and was just glad to have played alongside so many good players. When asked to name some of his favourites the names just roll off the tongue: Liam Touhy, Paddy Ambrose, Ronnie Nolan, Brendan O’Brien.

But Christy is not bitter. He was privileged enough to have played for one of the country’s top clubs at a time when the FAI league was at the height of its’ popularity, and tournaments like the FAI cup were able to capture the imagination of football fans nation-wide. “There was a terrific atmosphere”, he recalls. “There was no coverage of matches on television and if there was you’d be looking at snow pictures, so obviously we had huge attendances week in week out. That just doesn’t happen these days.”

Despite the diminishing popularity of domestic football Christy still keeps a keen eye on his former club, who are currently sitting at the top of the Premier League. He believes that the standard of the football today is very high and is glad to see many of his former teammates still maintaining an active role in the league.

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