Student fees to bail out SU shops

by Jim McGrath
Chief News Editor

DIT's shops and Mountjoy Square's canteen are to re-open in the coming weeks after over a month of inactivity with no explanation why.

The company set up to run the shops, DITSU Trading Ltd, is currently securing a loan from the college, amounting to half a million euro to avoid going into liquidation. This company, which did not have to pay rent or electricity, amassed debts in the region of 300,000 euro.

Meanwhile company workers have been left without income and unable to avail of social welfare as they are still employed by the company.

The DIT Independent understands that workers in extreme cases have had to go to money lenders in order to make ends meet.

Student union president, Jarlath Molloy said: "It's very unfortunate this had to happen and we apologise to all the staff involved. Our priority has been to solve the situation".

The ailing company will now have to be bailed out by our capitation fee. Between 400,000 and half a million euro will come from student services fund to get the company up and running. This money will then be repaid within ten years using the funds from the student union pool tables. According to Jarlath Molloy, "the college realise it's an important service to students and there is an agreement in principle to resolve the situation." DIT President, Brian Norton said "we're very concerned that services be restored as soon as possible".

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How it all went wrong

President's Voice

Hi, welcome to (or back to) college and the DIT Students’ Union!

If this is your first year in DIT, congratulations on making a great choice! It’s a great achievement to get into college, but it can also be daunting at first, we’ve all been through it! For everyone else, glad you all made it back after the summer holidays.

My name is Jarlath Molloy and I was elected last March, as President of the DIT Students’ Union for 2004/2005. I’m 23 years old and from Newgrange, Co. Meath. I’ve just graduated with a BSc (Hons) in Physics and Physics Technology.

As President of the Students’ Union, I am the main representative of all DIT students. I deal with student issues internally in the DIT Students’ Union, within DIT and externally with the Government and other external bodies & agencies.

The new DIT Students’ Union website (www.ditsu.ie) was launched at the first SU Governing Council meeting on 14th October in DIT Cathal Brugha Street. We haven’t finished uploading all the content, so keep checking for regular updates, news, information, clubs, socs and other SU events.

Normally, an associated company of the DIT Students’ Union operates shop services & one canteen service on campus. However, this company has experienced trading difficulties in the recent past. All concerned are working very hard to resolve the situation, and you will be kept informed about developments in this area.

If you ever have a problem drop into us or give us a call and we’ll do our best to help you; you’re not on your own.

Enjoy the year.

Jarlath

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continued from page one

THE dreadful situation for the company is being blamed on a number of one-off factors and its lack of business capital. The company has been struggling for a number of years. In 2002 DITSU Trading Ltd. declared losses of 62,650 euro followed by a 41,336 euro loss in 2003.

One former director admitted to the DIT Independent that they did not always know how much they were spending: “We went through a stage where we didn’t keep an eye on our expenditure. We just didn’t have the staff to do that job. We then spent money to bring someone in to do that. It’s ironic we had spend more money to find out we were losing money”. Also the company had to start paying their manager from its own funds after 2001. Previous to that the manager’s wages were paid for out of the capituation fee. They also could not borrow money from banks under their own rules.

There were also political difficulties with DITSU Trading Ltd. never had a formal agreement with DIT out of which it was operating. DIT continues not deal directly with that company. The loan that is currently being negotiated from the college is being done through DITSU Ltd. A separate company set up by the student union funded by the student capituation fee. DITSU Trading Ltd. tried to reach a formal agreement with DIT but got nowhere.

Nick Reilly, management consultant with DITSU said the problem with the company was lack of capital. “This was the fundamental problem with the company. When you don’t have capital, you are always going to be fighting when it comes to expansion. It couldn’t cope with the normal shocks that happen to businesses.”

Workers left in limbo

by Aimee Vickers

DITSU Trading staff have been left with no pay for over seven weeks. Aungier Street Shop Manager Marcella Keane said that “We’ve been left in limbo, with no pay and we haven’t been able to sign on”.

Student Union shop staff were shocked and angry when they returned to work for the new semester only to discover that DITSU Trading ceased operations on September 3rd.

Workers were left without answers and SIPTU representative Chris Rowland condemned the behaviour of the company. He expressed her concerns that DITSU Trading Ltd. has not been forthcoming with information. She stated “I am seriously concerned about the delay in negotiations to finalise the necessary arrangements for a Rescue Plan”.

In relation to a ‘Rescue Plan’ for the troubled company Ms Rowland added “I'm sure the students' union will be involved in the restructuring of the company. It is essential the union is involved from the beginning.”

Student Union's Richard Keane said “We're seriously concerned about the situation. We're not sure what the future holds for the workers. It's a worrying time for everyone involved.”

Workers were granted temporary access to figures, balance sheets or Profit and Loss accounts. Access to this information would have to be a priority for the future. The workers are not going to be as trusting in the future.

Patrick Fleming, SIPTU, said that the situation has become so critical that workers are not going to be as trusting in the future.

DITSU Trading Ltd. engaged in a number of expansion projects. 44,000 euro was spent on equipment for the canteen in Mountjoy square which quickly depreciated. A similar figure was spent developing both the Aungier St. and Mountjoy square shops. Legal costs and increased wages are also being blamed. DITSU Trading Ltd. will also have to be restructured.

Prices are now set to increase when the shops do re-open for business, according to Mr. Reilly. At the time of going to print the negotiations are ongoing to resolve the issue but a positive resolution is expected and the shops are to be re-opened quickly after.

DITSU Trading facts

-1994 the DIT Students' Union formed a second limited company, DITSU Trading Limited to supervise the commercial activities that had been previously dealt with by DITSU Ltd.
-2004 DITSU Trading Ltd. became a wholly owned subsidiary company of DITSU Ltd. and a membership agreement between the two companies was signed.
-The DITSU Trading Limited Board now consists of the 3 elected officers Jarlath Molloy, Sharon Hughes and Alan Mac Stófáin.

At the moment the company have failed to come forward with an adequate explanation for the employees. Ms Rowland said “The boards of these companies are hung up on legal advice and protecting their own interests while the workers have been left hung out to dry with no access to Social Welfare”.

Another aspect to the revelations is that DIT students have been left without a valued service. Ms Rowland said “The students also needed to know about the closures but they were given no consideration”.

The workers were never informed that this situation existed.

According to Ms Rowland “They had no access to figures, balance sheets or Profit and Loss accounts. Access to this information would have to be a priority for the future. The workers are not going to be as trusting in the future.”

Marcella Keane is still waiting for a phone call to tell her when she can come back to work. The distraught shop manager has been a loyal employee in DIT for over 20 years and said that the situation has become so critical that several employees have turned to loan sharks for financial assistance. “I was always told that the Student's Union was responsible for us and now the President is basically saying that, they are not liable for what happens to us” she said.
Glass smashed in student's face

by Cian Fitzsimons

Gardai at Fitzgibbon street station are investigating the alleged assault of a DIT student outside a DIT event.

A glass was smashed in the student's face, resulting in facial injuries requiring multiple stitches. Sgt. John Fahey confirmed that enquiries are ongoing into the incident which took place beside the Big Tree Tavern on Dorset Street in the early hours of Friday, 24th September.

The pub is a popular nightspot for DIT students, with weekly college events held there. On the night in question, a DIT student left the premises at approximately 2.30am when he was assaulted, in an apparently unprovoked attack, by a man in his late teens or early 20s. The student was in a critical condition for several days after the assault. The culprit fled the scene up the Drumcondra Road. Doormen at the pub had moved inside the premises, which had been cleared. Management at The Big Tree reported the assault.

Mr. Cohen said the DIT Independent that servicing the DIT is his priority. "Nobody wants to see that happen, least of all library staff. We do have a duty to protect the interests of the whole DIT community", he said.

Dr. Tommy Cooke, leader of the DIT Community Links scheme, is raising awareness of the difficulties in maintaining the programme. "Our biggest problem is funding. We have thirteen people employed between our various programmes and we need funding to sustain our projects", he said.

The DIT Community Links scheme is aiming to provide access to college facilities for people from disadvantaged backgrounds. A central part of the project encourages DIT students to go into local schools and talk about their college experiences. Inner city Dublin has the lowest level of third level participation in the country. Preparing children for college access begins at pre-primary level. Dr. Cooke believes the student outreach broadens the horizons of those who may feel that college is not a viable option: "We are trying to educate children and parents about the benefits of education. They have the same intellect as anyone else but often their ambitions are lower because of their background. We're facilitating young people to get into college who would otherwise not do so."

Bob Coggins, Ents Officer for Bolton Street, said that the Students Union is "assisting the Gardai in every way possible and hopefully anyone with information will do the same." Both he and the management of The Big Tree pointed out the complete absence of trouble inside the venue.

The Gardai have taken the step of erecting posters on all northside campuses appealing for information, following on from coverage in the national media. Garda Catherine Houlihan, who is leading the investigation, has reiterated the appeal for anybody in the vicinity of The Big Tree on the night to contact Fitzgibbon Street station on 6668400.

66k lost on library debts

by Jim McGrath

Students will no longer be allowed graduate if they still owe money to the library. DIT's library services had to fork out almost 66,000 euro to replace the books that had not been returned by students, with 1470 bills not paid in the academic year 2003-04.

This rule has been brought in as an effort to reduce this cost. Philip Cohen, the Head of Library Services said: "66,000 is 15 per cent of the total amount we have to spend on new books. It is more than the amount we have to spend on new books all year for the library at Cathal Brugha Street. There are victims here. It is the majority of students who suffer because of the actions of the selfish minority. The new sanctions available to us may mean that students are not permitted to graduate with a DIT qualification."

Mr. Cohen told the DIT Independent that servicing the DIT is his priority. "Nobody wants to see that happen, least of all library staff. But we do have a duty to protect the interests of the whole DIT community", he said.

Student Union vice-president in charge of academic affairs, Sharon Hughes said, "The libraries have assured us that it will only use the new sanctions in extreme circumstances."

Mr. Cohen said students are better off to let the library know if they have lost a book, saying "I would encourage any student who may have misplaced a library book to discuss the matter with staff at the appropriate library. We will try to be sympathetic and understanding wherever possible. But remember: if it often pays to contact us before we contact you!"

Mr. Cohen insisted students are better off to let the library know if they have lost a book, saying "I would encourage any student who may have misplaced a library book to discuss the matter with staff at the appropriate library. We will try to be sympathetic and understanding wherever possible. But remember: if it often pays to contact us before we contact you!"

66,550 euro from us to farcical USI

by Arthur Sullivan

The USI is facing a projected deficit of 300,000 euro and decided to tax all members $2.86 per student per year. This was not "overly happy" about the 66,550 euro fee but the final decision of whether or not to pay it will be made by the DITSU governing council.

Meanwhile only a small number of students turned out to the USI anti-fee demonstration on October 12. The protest was made up of about 70 demonstrators.

It started outside Dáil Éireann with Student Union presidents of DIT, UCD, TCD and IT Tallaght all making brief speeches along with a Sinn Fein representative.

Dr. Tommy Cooke, leader of the DIT Community Links scheme, is raising awareness of the difficulties in maintaining the programme. "Our biggest problem is funding. We have thirteen people employed between our various programmes and we need funding to sustain our projects", he said.

The DIT Community Links scheme is aimed at providing access to college facilities for people from disadvantaged backgrounds. A central part of the project encourages DIT students to go into local schools and talk about their college experiences. Inner city Dublin has the lowest level of third level participation in the country. Preparing children for college access begins at pre-primary level. Dr. Cooke believes the student outreach broadens the horizons of those who may feel that college is not a viable option: "We are trying to educate children and parents about the benefits of education. They have the same intellect as anyone else but often their ambitions are lower because of their background. We're facilitating young people to get into college who would otherwise not do so."

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DIT Independent

Trading on thin Ice

HOW will DITSU Trading survive? Without major bills, it managed to accumulate a massive debt. In an effort to bail it out, DITSU Ltd has offered up money obtained from pool tables for most of the next ten years.

Next to student capititation fees, this money from 'Pool and Video' is the second biggest source of income to DITSU Ltd. With entertainments generally running at a loss, can it afford a donation over nearly ten years? DITSU President Jarlath Molloy told the DIT Independent that 'Pool and Video' accounts for roughly €46k a year. After nine years this would suggest DITSU Ltd will have sacrificed just under half a million to secure safety in a business currently at risk of liquidation.

Why did DITSU Trading fund Mountjoy Square canteen when they were transporting more than half the students to Aungier Street? Why did it engage in such projects when already experiencing losses? Talk of increasing prices to rescue Trading is farcical. Prices are already equal to if not greater than in most shops on the street. The DIT Independent has investigated as far as it can but awaits answers. DITSU sabbaticals (elected representatives of the student body) are not forthcoming with information, due to fear of legal threats - at least, that's what is being said. The sabbaticals should be commended for their efforts to resolve all the problems in DITSU Trading. They have done so while fulfilling their duties to a high standard.

Bereft of DITSU Trading for the past two months, students of DIT await further results and acknowledgement of what really happened to 'our shops'? Everything in student politics is done with the best of intentions, but not with the best of sense. We elect our representatives to represent us, not to direct companies. When those who sit on the governing council can't inform us, who can?

Irrelevant USI

USI are continuing to prove themselves as one of the most ineffective lobby groups in the country. With over 30,000 students in Dublin city, approximately seventy students felt their anti-fee protest was worth turning up.

USI claim to be the reason that fees were not introduced. The fact that the PDs were set against fees, may be a more significant factor. USI is picked out of a clique of student politicians who most of us do not vote for. The result - USI has become completely irrelevant to most of the student population. Take this along with the fact that they managed to go 300,000 euro in debt last year.

The DIT students union will have to pay 66,500 euro in membership. USI provide training for student union sabbaticals, which helps them cater for our every need as students. Yet they neglected to provide adequate training for Alan MacStefain (our Vice-President), one of our three USI sabbaticals this year. Incorporating the above, is that really worth 66,500 euro?

"It is the policy of the DIT Independent to correct any inaccuracies as soon as they occur. Any corrections or clarifications will be printed in the next edition of the 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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Only in DIT...

After spending time in DIT, you may become surprised sometimes, but nothing will shock you in this college. To gain some comic relief from our Do It Tomorrow administration system, Only in DIT..., will become a regular feature in the DIT Independent. If you have had crazy experiences with college authorities email us at chiefnews@campus.ie.

by Hélène Hofman

What's that Draft? Student Charter left out in the cold.

The DIT Student Charter is finally on the verge of completion having spent almost 6 years on a shelf.

The Charter which "sets out the level of service and standards of excellence we [DIT] intend to provide for our students", was initially drawn up in August 1998. Its aim was to provide information on such student baililities as accommodation services, counselling and careers services, amongst others. The Charter tells us what the DIT should be doing for us and what we should be doing for the DIT. It covers everything: what services you are entitled from the day you arrive, DIT's stance on learning supports, even what you can expect from your site canteen.

Fortunately, the shelved draft was recovered this summer by a couple of knights in shining armor (aka SU President, Jarlath Molloy and Director of Academic Affairs, Frank McMahon). Its cobwebs were dusted off, it was reviewed and sent to be approved by the relevant departments.

So, all going to plan, we should expect our Student Charter to be fully-appraised and available early next year - worth the wait?

Beer Bargain Proving Popular

by Kieran Dineen

Good news for beer loving penny-pinching students. Bavaria beer will be coming to a drinking hall near you - on draught no less.

Disgruntled punters, fed up of the rising price of draught beer, are finally to get an alternative to Diageo and Heineken. Bavaria beer, a popular choice in off-licences, will now be available in Dublin pubs for just 3 of your hard-earned euro.

Bavaria beer will retail cheaper than Heineken and Carlsberg because it will not have an advertising campaign. Sales are booming in the 50 pub outlets where it is on offer and drinks distributor, M & J Gleeson, expect 200 pubs to be offering customers the cheaper alternative by the end of the year.

Publican Jay Bourke, owner of a chain of pubs and nightclubs, including the Globe on Georges Street in Dublin, said Bavaria was proving a hit with customers at just 3 euros a pint, compared with about 4.40 euro a pint for other types of beer.

Mr. Bourke said the Globe is selling seven barrels of Bavaria, compared with 11 or 12 barrels of Heineken, one month after introducing the new beer to his pub. He said the strong performance of Bavaria showed that "people are not that brand-loyal".

Bavaria Beer has been brewed in Holland since 1719 and it has been a family owned and operated brewery for the last 284 years. It is sold in over 82 countries worldwide and is the second largest brand in and is the second largest brand in Holland.

Landlords Act Better

by Kieran Dineen

Are you fed up with lazy, crooked, money-grabbing landlords? Tenants now have more rights than ever, and landlords more responsibilities, under the residential tenancies act 2004. Whether you have a lease or not landlords must do the following:

- allow the tenant to enjoy peaceful and exclusive occupation;
- carry out repairs,
- insure the dwelling.
- provide a point of contact,
- promptly refund deposits unless rent is owing or there is damage beyond normal wear and tear.
- reimburse tenants for expenditure on repairs that are appropriate to the landlord.
- enforce tenant obligations
- not penalise tenants for making complaints or taking action to enforce their rights.

If your landlord is not carrying out these responsibilities you can now bring a complaint to the Private Residential Tenancies Board. Rent may not be greater than the open market rate and may be reviewed (upward or downward) once a year only unless there has been a substantial change in the nature of the accommodation that warrants a review. Tenants are to be given 28 days notice of new rents.

Tenants now have security of tenure after 6 months. The landlord can terminate without specifying grounds during the first 6 months, but once a tenancy has lasted 6 months, the landlord will be able to terminate that tenancy only under one of the following circumstances:

- the tenant does not comply with the obligations of the tenancy;
- the dwelling is no longer suited to the occupants' accommodation needs (e.g. overcrowded);
- the landlord intends to sell the dwelling in the next 3 months;
- the landlord requires the dwelling for own or family member occupation;
- the landlord intends to refurbish the dwelling;
- the landlord intends to change the business use of the dwelling.

The Act applies to the mainstream private rented sector so it does not apply to: "rent a room" or other arrangements whereby the landlord also resides in the dwelling or on-campus accommodation.

Dude, where's my canteen?

by Sean O'Neill

Portland Row, is unknown to most DIT students. Yet, there is a DIT campus on this street. An annex of Mountjoy Square DIT, Portland Row is an imposing building.

My mission was to find the canteen and that I did. It consists solely of vending machines; there isn't even somewhere to get tea. I met a 4th year student who, with years of experience, brings a flask with him to college.

The students of Portland Row have long bemoaned the state of their facilities. At the end of last year a Class Rep told me that Portland Row did not have a solitary computer.

Many students feel unsafe walking home and Portland Row students feel even more endangered than most. The surrounding area is an infamous trouble spot; Amiens St, The North Strand Road and Summerhill are not considered to be the friendliest parts of Dublin.

Portland Row's isolated position, in relation to the other sites, makes it easy to forget about the campus. But the students have been vocal about the college's shortcomings. As a Bolton St student I find it hard to get excited about the idea of a canteen but at least we have one available, we have tea and coffee available too. None of which you will find in Portland Row or even close by.

The Portland Row students talked to seemed content enough with their surroundings, many of them were probably sick of complaining. But they still spoke of the college's isolation from the rest of DIT and the lack of facilities. The consensus among many - even the porters - seemed to be that Portland Row gets the short end of the stick.

So next time you complain about the queue in the Aungier St canteen, just remember... at least you have one!
Ich bin ein Dubliner

Eramsus student Felicia Reinsaedt gives her first impression of DIT and Dublin.

ACTUALLY I should have gone to Helsinki for my studies. The reason I finally landed in Dublin is the result of a over-night decision based on some friends' vivid Irish holiday stories featuring Guinness and Baileys. The fact that my English is much better than my Finnish and the first record of The Thrills were also factors in my coming here.

The only Irish person I knew at that time was a drunken Dub I bumped into one night in Munich. He was very talkative - which by now I know most Irish guys are - but because of his strong accent I hardly understood anything except "Slanughy". I guess he was a Northsider. Of course I didn't know then, but this Southside-Northside thing was one of my first insights into Irish life. When I told people that I lived on the north of the Liffey, they went "oh- no", telling me dangerous stories about this part of the city. This is why I still don't answer my mobile when going home on Parnell Street.

"Don't walk alone at night" was another piece of well-meant advice, I received. But actually I never really felt alone on the streets at night, especially not at the weekend. I have never seen such a rush at three in the morning, when everyone steps out of the pubs and clubs and meets in the middle of the road for a big get-together. Indeed I had to redefine the term "nightlife" as it seems to start here in the afternoon and does not end until a decent time before dawn.

My first day at DIT began with a typical Irish breakfast organised by the College. Unfortunately I am vegetarian and so 80 percent of the plate was inedible for me. But they did serve real coffee for us Continental Europeans, who are not used to drinking tea all day. So breakfast was the first Irish thing I got to know at university. The second thing I found out about DIT, was that it takes a while until everything gets started: until everyone is back at university, until you get registered, the courses begin and you finally meet some people that are NOT Erasmus students.

I can't compare DIT with my university in Germany. It's a totally different way of studying. At home I sometimes sit with 300 students in a lecture and hardly know one of them. I pick my courses three months before the semester starts and call my lecture by his surname still wondering if I have to use his doctor or professor title as well.

I still feel a bit old here with my 22 years of age, but I think I am now acclimatized: I drink tea with milk, I also can have it with crisps and I eat those triangular-white-bread-sandwiches for lunch. I have learned to stand in a queue for almost everything, even for a rock concert and I also tried to dress more lightly as Irish people seem to be more immune against bad weather.

I wasn't too successful on the last point and got a cold. So you probably will recognize me as the girl with the warm cap and the big scarf beside all my t-shirt-skirt-wearing classmates.

The Poncho strikes back

Ceri Teggin gives some winter fashion tips for ladies

IT is official. Summer is over. We've begun to pack our short skirts away as the last flicker of sunshine leaves the sky. But, as we hop along to the shops, ready to buy our lovely fluffy winter coats, we are stopped dead in our tracks by a hideous sight on the racks... The poncho is back.

The poncho made its mark on the fashion scene decades ago. Once worn by hippies, and our mothers, this horrible excuse based on some friends' vivid Irish holiday stories featuring Guinness and Baileys. The fact that my English is much better than my Finnish and the first record of The Thrills were also factors in my coming here.

The only Irish person I knew at that time was a drunken Dub I bumped into one night in Munich. He was very talkative - which by now I know most Irish guys are - but because of his strong accent I hardly understood anything except "Slanughy". I guess he was a Northsider. Of course I didn't know then, but this Southside-Northside thing was one of my first insights into Irish life. When I told people that I lived on the north of the Liffey, they went "oh- no", telling me dangerous stories about this part of the city. This is why I still don't answer my mobile when going home on Parnell Street.

"Don't walk alone at night" was another piece of well-meant advice, I received. But actually I never really felt alone on the streets at night, especially not at the weekend. I have never seen such a rush at three in the morning, when everyone steps out of the pubs and clubs and meets in the middle of the road for a big get-together. Indeed I had to redefine the term "nightlife" as it seems to start here in the afternoon and does not end until a decent time before dawn.

My first day at DIT began with a typical Irish breakfast organised by the College. Unfortunately I am vegetarian and so 80 percent of the plate was inedible for me. But they did serve real coffee for us Continental Europeans, who are not used to drinking tea all day. So breakfast was the first Irish thing I got to know at university. The second thing I found out about DIT, was that it takes a while until everything gets started: until everyone is back at university, until you get registered, the courses begin and you finally meet some people that are NOT Erasmus students.

I can't compare DIT with my university in Germany. It's a totally different way of studying. At home I sometimes sit with 300 students in a lecture and hardly know one of them. I pick my courses three months before the semester starts and call my lecture by his surname still wondering if I have to use his doctor or professor title as well.

I still feel a bit old here with my 22 years of age, but I think I am now acclimatized: I drink tea with milk, I also can have it with crisps and I eat those triangular-white-bread-sandwiches for lunch. I have learned to stand in a queue for almost everything, even for a rock concert and I also tried to dress more lightly as Irish people seem to be more immune against bad weather.

I wasn't too successful on the last point and got a cold. So you probably will recognize me as the girl with the warm cap and the big scarf beside all my t-shirt-skirt-wearing classmates.

In haute couture, the catwalks took a strange turn with the revival of the equestrian style. Jodhpurs, leather riding jackets, and over the knee boots are just some of the items top designers are touting as this season must haves. But if you don't want the horse faced, bow legged look, there is definitely a nicer style awaiting. The British shoe shop 'Office' has finally hit town and brought with it boots, boots, glorious boots. It is on Henry Street and the most up to the minute design is the cowboy boot. The embroidered leather and pointy toe looks adorable worn with skinny jeans.

If you are looking for something a little classier, then try jewel clad show girl boots. They are guaranteed to put a little sparkle into proceedings, especially if you are brave enough to wear frilly knickers and a garter. Ditch the GHD and let some ribbon to you hair and some smouldering eye shadow to give that demure, but naughty, saloon girl look.

On a finishing note, the summer sales have dispensed with the last of the eighties tack that cluttered the high street stores. Whilst this is definitely a joyous occasion for all of mankind, there is one stranger that just seems to have tagged at our heartstrings. It is, of course, the leg warmer. Never to be mocked, they provide that extra little bit of warmth those of us still clinging to our short summer skirts need. While the bravest may struggle on wearing flip-flops, blue toes can be avoided by teaming them...
Sarah Cooney spent this summer finding her spiritual side and her journey brought her to Stonehenge and Glastonbury.

IN ancient times, hundreds of years before the dawn of history lived an ancient race of the people... the Druids. No one knows who they were or what they were doing... but their legacy remains.

And so 5,000 years after Stonehenge mysteriously appeared on the Salisbury Plain, 21,000 people brave the cold to celebrate the summer solstice as their ancestors once did. Despite sporadic showers, spirits remain high as the crowd swell in anticipation of ten o'clock when we will be allowed up to the stones.

In the distance, shrouded in mist, the stones are the scene of a ceremony as Druids celebrate the solstice. Once the Druids finish their ceremony the gates open and the crowds surge up the one kilometre walk to the stones. People are mostly silent as the realisation begins to dawn that they are about to experience something ancient and awesome.

The stones are incredible. Only at the summer solstice are people allowed into their midst and the privilege is not lost on the crowd. Everyone buzzes with energy but at the same time are silent. Even the police gaze in wonder. People hug and touch the stones, feeling the thousand-year-old lichen between their fingers.

The enormity of the event is overwhelming. It is only when you are inside the circle that you realise the gravity of the occasion. Humans always have difficulty grasping the concept of time and to think that thousand of years ago people gathered here to celebrate the dawn of the longest day of the year is mind-blowing.

Whether or not you believe in energy fields and ley lines no one can deny the astonishing power of Stonehenge. People emerge from the stones feeling dizzy and light headed. Inside a druid leads a group in a cross between tai chi and chanting.

The night is cold and long but for those who manage to stay awake the reward is invaluable.

As the sun begins to pierce the clouds, a shout goes up as the crowd clap and scream. It is a slow crescendo.

Finally, the sun's rays, which have travelled 150 million kilometres through space, burst through the gates and light up the entire circle. Everyone cheers at the amazing experience. It is staggering to think that a race considered primitive constructed a monument that is precisely aligned to be illuminated when the rays of the solstice reach it.

If you only catch one sunrise in your life make it the summer solstice sunrise at Stonehenge.

To continue our mystical journey we voyaged to Glastonbury Music Festival. Following gales the night before we were greeted by lagoons of mud. It was only Wednesday and the festival started on Friday so we had two days to watch the finishing touches being put to the festival site.

At night, everyone gathered around the festivals own stone circle where a fire had been burning since the solstice. Musicians playing bongos, guitars, saxophones and other random instruments provided entertainment. There were flame throwers, fire jugglers and people doing fire poi.

On Thursday night 40,000 fans watched the England match but those of a more spiritual disposition opted to drink chai in the innumerable canvas cafes until the wee hours.

Friday dawns with fresh optimism as the sun made its first appearance. Immediately rain ponchos were abandoned in favour of mini-skirts and wellies. Fridays acts included Lupe Fiasco, The Magic Band and local heroine PJ Harvey while Damien Rice played a career-defining set on the Other Stage.

Oasis headlined on Friday but because of the post-match hangover we decided to avoid what was essentially a Britpop love-in. Back at the stone circle and an Irish guy was reciting an epic poem about faeries. Fires were burning all over the hill. Someone was selling homemade special brownies, cookies, fudge and truffles. In fact, Glastonbury is like Willie Wonka's factory for those wishing to open the doors of perception. And I'm sure I saw on Oompa Loomba somewhere.

By Saturday, the rain had returned. However, there were so many things to do at Glastonbury that the rain is part of the experience. From ten-metre tall wooden sculptures to candle-powered toy boats, Glastonbury has everything. There is a children's area, a circus, a comedy tent and a theatre. A left-field market with a tent in honour of the late Clash frontman and Glastonbury regular Joe Strummer hosted debates on world debt and fascism.

There is a cinema, a huge market, a climbing wall built by Greenpeace in the shape of their flagship Rainbow Warrior and even a ballroom where suits and gowns can be rented by those wishing to escape the mud for a little sophistication.

Paul McCartney belted out the hits at his Saturday night slot with "Live and Let Die" the hi-light as fireworks illuminated the 10,000-acre site at the crucial musical moments. Classics like "Get Back" had the crowd boogying despite the fact that their feet were encased in mud. Sir Paul ended with "Hey Jude" and the crowd "na-na-naed" until their voices croaked.

On Sunday, morning witnessed a first at Glastonbury. The English National Opera performed Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" (best known now as the music used in Apocalypse Now). A hug-over, muddy crowd gathered to watch as the opera performed Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" (best known now as the music used in Apocalypse Now). A hug-over, muddy crowd gathered to watch as the opera performed Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" (best known now as the music used in Apocalypse Now). A hug-over, muddy crowd gathered to watch as the opera performed Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" (best known now as the music used in Apocalypse Now). A hug-over, muddy crowd gathered to watch as the opera performed Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" (best known now as the music used in Apocalypse Now). A hug-over, muddy crowd gathered to watch as the opera performed Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" (best known now as the music used in Apocalypse Now). A hug-over, muddy crowd gathered to watch as the opera performed Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" (best known now as the music used in Apocalypse Now). A hug-over, muddy crowd gathered to watch as the opera performed Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" (best known now as the music used in Apocalypse Now). A hug-over, muddy crowd gathered to watch as the opera performed Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" (best known now as the music used in Apocalypse Now). A hug-over, muddy crowd gathered to watch as the opera performed Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" (best known now as the music used in Apocalypse Now).
I'm a Barbie girl, in a Barbie world

1. The Aungier St. Bimbo

by Daniel Blackford

LET the cry go out across DIT the Bimbos are coming, the Bimbos are coming. Or Aungier Street's Militant Bimbo Wing (hereafter to be referred to as the MBW) to give them their correct title.

While the MBW's outward appearance is unlikely to strike fear in the hearts and minds of the average DIT student - be afraid be very afraid. To identify a member of the MBW look out for the following tell tale signs - blond straightened hair (though not always); wearing a pair of hipster jeans; fake tan covering all visible skin; sporting some variation of navel exposing 'top' and absolutely caked in make-up. Often UCD-rejects they are generally in possession of some kind of glossy 'lifestyle' magazine such as the ubiquitous Cosmo.

The MBW's natural habitat is Java in Aungier Street where they can be spotted drinking latte, nibbling on some health conscious morsel from a local eatery (Fruit-tree on Camden St is currently in vogue) while at the same agonising about their addiction to their favourite chocolate treat - a craving which they usually give into. Number one topic for conversation - yes you've guessed it...Clothes, followed closely by hair, nails, and make-up. For instance did you know that GHD stands for Good Hair Day? This reporter for one was seriously disappointed to learn the relatively mundane meaning behind this famous acronym - after hearing such amazing claims as 'Ohmigod, like, GHD, like, totally changed my life!', I was expecting something truly amazing - but no, that was it. This is the kind of thing we're dealing with people, afraid yet?

Well if you're not you should be. These are the type of people who claim to be feminists, yet watch the Rose of Tralee 'for the lovely dresses'. The type of people who having spotted a guy they fancy invent fictitious names for them - 'Did you, like, see Brad (real name unknown) today?' and so on.

Members of the opposite sex constantly provide the average MBW with a multitude of options to consider. To text or not to text? What to text? How to phrase it? What words to use? How long to wait before texting back? Should you text again after not receiving an answer? Should you call? These are all daily concerns of the MBW. And that's just texting procedure.

The most frightening aspect of the MBW is their pervasive influence - even though they are more than likely unaware of it. They are a silent cancer that one only discovers when it is too late - if we don't act soon, and as unlikely as it may sound, this cultural phenomenon could spread as far north as Bolton Street. But you have been forewarned - we must fight them in Kevin Street, we must fight them in Cathal Brugha Street, we must never surrender.
A porter’s perspective

by Aimée Vickers

Dublin Institute of Technology has changed considerably since it first opened its doors to students in 1887. From the establishment of technical education in Ireland, it has now evolved to an Institute, which is now recognised as an international centre of excellence.

While students and academic staff have played an important role in the development of the college, it is often the loyal and dedicated men and women of the non-academic staff who ensure the smooth running of day-to-day life in DIT. Yet often the work of these very people tends to be forgotten when praise is being handed out.

This month, the DIT Independent is acknowledging the dedication of one of DIT’s longer-serving members: Peter Masterson, Aungier Street’s Head Porter.

Peter has devoted over twenty-eight years to DIT. His colleague playfully describes him as a “dinosaur” while Peter modestly adds that he is “over sixty”. The warmth and good-humour that goes with the banter at the Porter’s desk becomes immediately apparent.

Peter’s career began as a General Operative and over the years he was given more responsibilities. “I gradually worked my way up to the parochial heights of Head Porter,” he says.

His long career means that he has witnessed many of the major changes that have taken place over the years, especially workers’ responsibilities and security aspects of the building. He says, “You now have people who are more aware of their obligations under the legislation. It is vital that the rest of the porter staff be aware of what their duties are”. Peter believes that there is an excellent relationship between the staff and students and cannot recall any occasion to make him think otherwise.

In his many years in DIT he has had some memorable experiences. On one occasion a stray cat climbed into a ceiling cavity and activated the alarm system during the night. Poor Peter was woken several times during the night and had to leave the comfort of his bed at 2:30 a.m. One security guard called him to deactivate the trigger every time the cat activated the alarm. While he laughs at it now he says that he was more than a little disgruntled at the time.

Peter has been around to see some of the best student activism in DIT. He particularly recalls a demonstration in the late eighties in Rathmines College of Commerce in which students pressed for a lockup facility for their bicycles. They occupied the college by hanging their bikes from the stairwells and anywhere they could put them! “They had them all over the place, he says.

The porters make a substantial contribution to the environment of students and staff in DIT. If it were not for the outstanding work that they provide many DIT students would find themselves left out in the rain! As Peter Masterson states “We think, we believe and we try to give a good service”. When asked about what has kept him in DIT for so long and he said “I’m here for the money! That’s why I’m so poor”.

Islam in DIT

by Maura Fay

Mohammed Alkalbawi doesn’t look like your typical DIT student. He has a three-inch-long black beard, dark skin and is wearing a knee-length black trench coat. He is in his final year studying Applied Physics, Mathematics and Science in Kevin St. He is also a Muslim.

The Irish Census of 2002 puts the population of Muslims in Ireland at 19,147 although the Imam Al-Hussein, leader of the Islamic Society of Ireland, says it is “closer to 25,000, taking into account the students who did not participate in the census and recent arrivals of refugees.” The Muslim community on course to take the place of Presbyterianism as the Republic’s third largest religious grouping.

This year Mohammed set up DIT’s first ever Islamic Society. So far 20 people have joined but he estimates that there about 35 Muslim students in DIT.

Islam isn’t just his religion; it’s his way of life. He’s forbidden from drinking alcohol and being in a place where it is served. “When we finish exams Irish students have only one thing planned—going to the pub” he laughs.

Muslims are called to prayer five times a day. “We have a place to pray in Kevin St. but it is not really suitable”. The society is aiming to organise a suitable room to use permanently.

Muslims always pray facing Mecca, the birthplace of their most revered prophet, Muhammad. Muslim women pray kneeling behind the men. With Ramadan approaching he is hoping to organise iftar, a community meal signifying the end of the day’s fasting. During Ramadan, Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset.

With Ramadan approaching he is hoping to organise iftar, a community meal signifying the end of the day’s fasting. During Ramadan, Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset. He also wants to get a Mullah (somebody who is a religious and social leader in Muslim community) to give a talk about Islam.

Limitations on socialising aside, Mohammed is enjoying DIT student life. Lecturers like to ask him about his religion and remember his name before they remember other student’s names. His classmates are very friendly and he has not experienced any racism or prejudice.

The closest mosque to Kevin St. is at 163, South Circular Road. The first trickle of Muslims arrived in Ireland in the 1950s. Many came from South Africa to study medicine at the Royal College of Surgeons. In 1959 a group of students met and founded the Islamic Society, renamed in 1990 as the Islamic Foundation of Ireland. They organised Friday prayers and acquired No. 7 Harrington St. in 1976 to use as a mosque. In 1983, a former Presbyterian church on the South Circular Road was acquired which now holds the headquarters of the Islamic Foundation of Ireland, a Halal shop and restaurant.

Ireland’s largest and only purpose built mosque is in Clonskeagh, which can hold up to 1700 people.

Clonskeagh is also home to a Department of Education-funded school that was opened in 1993 by the then President, Mrs Mary Robinson. The building of the school and mosque was financed by the wealthy Al Maktoum family from the United Arab Emirates.

Mohammed says the Islamic isn’t just for Muslim students; it’s for Irish students too. “People have the wrong idea about Muslims with all the bombings. If anyone has a question they are welcome to contact the society.”
DIT Clubs and Socs

Karting club high on speed

by Kate McDonald

TO get the lowdown on DIT's biggest and best sporting club, we contacted Mossy and Sinto who run the DIT Karting Club. Those of you who were in college last year will recognise the club as being DIT's largest and most active sports club. For those of you new to college get ready for a year of high speed skills and no beer spills.

Their main aim is to bring affordable motor sport to a large number of people. We do this by running local grand prix in Santry at a discounted price of €15. These events will be run roughly every two weeks until the end of November. After this the top karters from each DIT site will go forward to the DIT championship in Galway in early December.

This is the pinnacle of the years karting within DIT as the winner will be crowned the overall DIT champion and be presented the John Hanahan Memorial Cup for the year 2004/05.

From here drivers will be chosen to represent DIT in the Irish Times All-Ireland Intervarsity Karting Championship which takes place during the months January to April. The Karting club also provides merchandise in the form of t-shirts and fleeces which will be available over the coming weeks.

DIT Karting club enjoy success every year on the track

On the piste

by Maeve McLaughlin

ON the 30th of September, the Ski Club held their first fundraising event of the year; the Thailand Full-Moon Beach Party.

This event took place in Club Anabel and 700 people attended. Beach-wear was the recommended dress code and, despite the cold weather, many people made the effort and bared all in their bikinis.

The party-goers enjoyed drinking cocktails from sandcastle buckets, and Teresa O'Neill, a second year Business Management student, said: "it was one of the best society-run events I've gone to since I started at DIT.

Last year, the Ski Club in DIT was run in conjunction with the one in UCD. Paul Harvey, who established the Ski Club in DIT, explains that this was to "attract bigger numbers"

The Ski Club held the Snow Ball in Club Anabel last year. It was a very successful event, which saw Anabel's decorated with ice sculptures.

Paul hopes to organise the Snow Ball again this year, if he has the time. He explains that events like this greatly help to fund the club, as they do not receive funding from DIT for skiing trips.

He is hoping to bring 70 DIT students to Val d'Isère in the French Alps in January.
B&I are too cool for school

by Nuala Ryan

They queued. And they queued. And then they queued some more.

Wednesday, October 6th, saw the first event on the Business and Engineering society's calendar, the annual 'Skool Disco'.

It took place in Redz on D'Olier Street and it was another success for the B&E society, despite all the queuing. Those who didn't burn their school uniforms on finishing secondary school seemed only too happy to take them out of their wardrobes for the big night.

Membership last year reached around 2000 showing the B&E society to be one of the most popular societies in Aungier Street. It added to this by winning the award for 'Best New Society' at the D.I.T Soc Awards last year.

Jeff Taylor, founder of the society, was delighted as it was a complete sell out. He did want to apologise, however, to all those who didn't get in and advised members to buy their tickets and arrive early for future events. And members of the society can expect many more of these in the coming months. Last year's Pyjama Party will be held again, as will a Black and White Ball later in the year.

One of the main aims of the B&E society is to unite students of business and engineering socially. Membership last year reached around 2000 showing the B&E society to be one of the most popular societies in Aungier Street. It added to this by winning the award for 'Best New Society' at the D.I.T Soc Awards last year.

Straight talking from LGBT

The Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Society has operated successfully throughout DIT for the past two years. It is jointly presided over by DIT students Keith Martin and Simon Ryan. Keith, a second-year International Business and Language student, kindly spoke with the DIT Independent.

"Our aim is to create a positive space for LGBT students and to promote a positive awareness amongst the student body of DIT that it's ok to be gay. We are who we are and we can't change that."

The society is a social/support group in which Keith, Simon and the other members integrate the playful and serious sides to the society. "We go out 'on the scene' quite regularly as well as organising more casual social events like cinema trips." Keith and Simon will be instrumental in running the 'positive space' campaign, which helps involve the whole student body in accepting all shades of sexuality.

Later in the academic year, the DIT LGBT society will participate in 'pink training', whereby 260 LGBT students from colleges and universities nationwide attend a weekend-long seminar on sexual health and gay rights, and general LGBT related workshops.

Keith admits that "it's very daunting" to walk up to the LGBT stand during sign-up week. Most of its members join either by phone, email or at one of LGBT's regular meetings. Members or potential members can text or phone the society's mobile if they wish to speak to someone regarding their sexuality. Confidentiality is guaranteed.

Despite the hard work and commitment of Keith, Simon and others, fellow DIT students are not always welcoming toward them, and Keith has been "thrown some ugly looks, by both sexes" due to his involvement.

Despite his taxing duty, Keith remains adamant and enthusiastic over his involvement: "I took over the society this year because it's one of the best things that's ever happened to me. When I first joined I was unsure and had very low self-esteem. Now, through the support of the society, I'm much more confident and I'm very happy with my sexuality. I want to give back to the society and help other students."

So what is Keith's message to potential members? "You do not have to be 'out' to join, and you won't be pressurised to come 'out.' It's a private and confidential space. I made some of my best friends through the society, and it's definitely worth checking out!"

Email: lgb@dit.ie

LGBT's successful 'Amach' publication
Horseplay in Fairyhouse

by Laura Donnelly

The huge queues and the mini-mosh that took place as soon as the Students Union members arrived to sell tickets were the first indication that the Freshers Furlong was going to be a fun event.

Packed buses left Mountjoy Square and Kevin Street from 7pm. And that’s where the fun began. Students from different DIT’s chatted, and Students Union members mingles and "supervised".

While queuing to get in we were entertained by jugglers, fire-throwers, and slightly freaky stilt walkers.

Fairyhouse Racecourse as a venue is nice... but oh-so-cold! I discovered that after I’d parted with my beloved poncho, so we went straight to the bar for something to warm us up.

The venue was an old, dark building (and did I mention cold?) but there was a great relaxed and chatty atmosphere and it was easy to get talking to our fellow freshers, as people were more relaxed and chatty than in the classroom. It was definitely a good icebreaker.

DT’s entertained the crowds first with a mixture of old and new stuff, before the Air Guitar Competition began. Ah... the Air Guitar Competition, what can I say?!

They entertained the crowds for two hours, with songs such as ‘True Friends’ and ‘Upside Down’ from their album ‘Be Yourself’. The bouncers looked very worried, and although they confiscated a chair from an over-enthusiastic contestant, the damage was minimal.

Jerry Fish and the Mudbug Club then took to the stage, and the crowd loved them. They entertained the crowds first with a mixture of old and new stuff, before the Air Guitar Competition began. They are a friendly group, and one guy who sat down beside me told me the heartbreaking story of how he broke up with his girlfriend a few days beforehand. I replied with typical agony-aunt style answers. He then invited me to a party in his house and I said I would be there. I don’t know who he is or where he lives, but hopefully I helped him by providing a shoulder to cry on!

Sore feet forced me to get on the first bus home (damn shoe addiction) but it was definitely the best bus to be on. I got talking to two guys doing engineering in Bolton Street, who tried to persuade me to help them set up new societies. They were country boys and wanted to set up a cow tipping society. One of them was also in need of a hair cut, and wanted to set up a society where you could get your hair cut for free. Students, eh?

Overall it was a great night. As a Freshers event, it fulfilled its duties of helping us get to know each other, and everybody made new friends. The only complaint I did hear was that there was none of the one thing we students really love... free stuff!
Slammin' at the Redbox

by Stephen Murphy

WHEN I arrived at the Redbox, at about a quarter to twelve, there was no queue whatsoever. This came as somewhat of a surprise, as did the sight of a horribly empty room when I came through the doors.

The lasers were firing all over the place, there was the smell of dry ice in the air and the support DJ Billy Scarry was serving up some lively enough house tunes. But there were only about three people on the dance floor!

Having said that, they were really going at it and making up for the lack of people joining them. Not being one to populate such an empty dance floor just yet I went to the bar. I got a drink without any queuing and got a seat without any looking around. There was a lot of head bobbing going on amongst the people sitting down at this stage. The house Billy Scarry was mixing was fairly funky but not the type of stuff that would have you running to get your groove on.

The next time I had a look around things had changed quite a bit. There were people occupying the whole dance floor. There was still lots of room and nobody was dancing yet but the atmosphere was definitely picking up. I had to wait a while at the bar for a drink and someone had robbed my seat!

Slam took over the reigns without many people noticing. The two Glasgow DJs Stuart McMillian and Orde Meikle look like your average thirty-something. They were standing behind a long table stocked with turntables, laptops, mixers, drum machines and all sorts of esoteric electronic music equipment.

The sounds got progressively more techno orientated and after a while the place was going crazy to some quality tech-house. The huge leap when a grittier, more techy version of 'lie to me' pumped out of the soundsystem. The dancing got more energetic and there wasn't a person near the floor abstaining.

The next thing I noticed was that there was always enough room to dance and the venue never got uncomfortably hot, which is always a fear when going to see a big name play. All in all an enjoyable night even if it wasn't as techno orientated as I would have liked.

The cheesy five

by Louisa Houghton

RECENTLY added to Vicar Street's line up for the ever-interesting, Camembert Quartet. This more than mediocre five-piece band have raised many the eyebrow in their career so far.

Clint Velour (vocals, guitar, keyboard), Bunny Green (drums, percussion, vocals), Vic Ferrari (bass, vocals), James Wand (Korg keyboard, vocals) and Doctor Sleaze (keyboard, saxophone) are said to be the greatest five-piece quartet in the world. It has been two years since the release of their debut album, Music Is War, and they have been gaining popularity at an alarming rate. With appearances on Joe Duffy's Liveline, Newstalk 106, 98fm and Ryan Tubridy's The Full Irish, The Camembert Quartet have helped mould their own success. Ryan Tubridy in particular took a shine to the five musicians and even persuaded them to record a Weebax ad. for the programme.

These Irish performers became well-known by many for controversial contributions such as Boybands Are C*nts. Their satirical lyrics and delivery have earned them huge favour. Some fans, however, have contested the changing of the title of the song to the milder Boybands Are Runts. Clint Velour responded to these complaints thus: 'you idiots, no one will ever be able to play Boybands Are C*nts without their career taking a toilet cleaning curveball'.

The Quartet will put forward their latest offering The Camembert Quartet Sell Out Live on November 5th in Vicar Street. Tickets are €20, and it will be worth every penny.
Who art thou Chromeo?

by Bernie Commins

Chromeo - She's in Control

"THIS is a new sound, we came to get down! Our name is Chromeo and we are in control". Formalities out of the way; let's get down to business.

Chromeo comprises best friends Dave 1 and Pee Thug, an Arab and a Jew from Montreal. If you think this is a strange amalgamation, then listen to their debut album She's in Control. Weird but wonderful.

Both funksters boast the likes of Michael Jackson and Prince as some of their favourite artists; their influence is evident even if it is subtle. Chromeo are in a league of their own however with their drum machines, synthesizers, saxophones, grooved-up guitar solos and their expert use of a talkbox.

The repetitive beats, uncomplicated rhyming lyrics and groovy keyboard sounds almost make them sound too cheesy to be good, but they are. Good. Need the definition of funky? Can't get to grips with groovy? Step up Chromeo.

The subject matter of their melodic compositions is simple: love; girls; romance; anger; the stuff of classic pop songs. These songs are addictive after a single listening, and the eighties edge adds something extra special.

Some outstanding tracks include: Me and My Man; Woman Friend, a sexy love-song with a difference; Needy Girl, their new single; You're so Gangsta, with its catchy sax solo and its infectious chorus and the finale, She's in Control. This album is this week's reason to party. Don't forget your dancing shoes.

Good luck to all!
Entertainments: Reviews 16

Not so compelling

by Keith Reilly
Exorcist: The Beginning ***
Director: Renny Harlin
Cast: Stellan Skarsgard, Gabriel Mann, Israel Abramov
Release Date: 29th October 2004

How in the name of God do you make a sequel to a film that has written its own infamous chapter in movie history? 1973’s The Exorcist can justifiably claim to be one of the most influential horror films ever, transforming cinema-goes of the time into nervous wrecks. Ludicrously banned amid a public outcry, it defined the horror genre for a generation. So, a hard act to follow. Significantly, Exorcist: The Beginning isn’t technically a sequel; it’s a prequel. Set almost a quarter of a century before the events of the original, it follows ex-priest Lancaster Merrin (played by Stellan Skarsgard) as he investigates a mysterious dig in East Africa. Merrin has lost faith in the power of the church following the atrocities he witnessed in a Nazi concentration camp, but when a cured 5th century church is unearthed his expertise is sought.

However, when Merrin arrives, the circumstances surrounding the dig are decidedly odd. Hyenas patrol nearby, while a young African boy named Joseph (who has an unmistakably English accent – fantastic casting there) is struck mysteriously ill. He is placed in the care of site doctor Sarah, played by former Bond girl Isabella Scorupco. She provides the obligatory love interest for Merrin, now blissfully free to commit any sin of the flesh he wishes. Director Renny Harlin maintains a steady sense of momentum as the film builds to its climax. The underlying sense of menace is ever present, and the disturbing imagery employed throughout adds to the unsettling ambience. Inevitably, though, this film is going to be compared to its seminal predecessor, and this is where some may feel it falls down. The shocks are far more dependent on viscerally than the creeping unease that permeated William Friedkin’s original. Neatly, Harlin tosses in a knowing nod to a couple of the infamous scenes of the original. Both the spider-walk and neck-twist are referenced, while the demon’s language when it finally appears is, well, a tad offensive. Skarsgard does an admirable job of filling Max Von Sydow’s boots, and in general the film is quite an enjoyable spectacle. Modern audiences probably won’t be running screaming from cinema-at the sight of some spilt blood, but Exorcist: The Beginning deserves to be judged on its own merits rather than being compared to its illustrious forefather. On that basis, it’s certainly worth a look for horror fans. Go see it. The power of Christ compels you.

Dumb and Dumber

by Deirdre Reynolds

Alien Versus Predator (15PG)
Release: 30 October
Cast: Sigourney Weave, Michael Bay, Linda Hamilton
Directed by: Paul WS Anderson

Some things are good together: bubble and squeak, Richard and Judy. Then there are those whose paths were never meant to cross, Lemon & Lime KitKat: This is Your Life. Alien Versus Predator, like a hideous redneck mating with his less attractive cousin, creates a crossbreed that fits nicely into the latter category of sickening unions. At one point in the film a pivotal character exclaims “This is all Beginning to make sense”. Of course, he means the type of sense that pitches these two sci-fi legends against each other in an ancient underground pyramid in the middle of the Antarctic. When satellite radar detects signs activity on the site, a cliché crew – boldy female captain, wimpish Scotsman, OAP not fit for a spot of hunting and sacrificial worship. Call me picky, but their former status as God-like hunters does tend to give Predator the upper-hand in any apocalyptic smack-down. But Alien fans, fear not because a dense ending ensures round two will commence in another hundred years. Hopefully I’ll be dead by then.

October video treats

Fahrenheit 9/11 (15)
Release Date: 18-Oct-2004
In this, the most successful documentary of all time, George Bush hater extraordinary Michael Moore does what has now become like taking candy off a baby: make Bush look like an idiot. Although lugubriously entertaining, this is a direct polemic rather than a balanced examination of the facts surrounding the reaction to 9/11 and the subsequent war on terrorism. Despite the bias, this is an absolute must-see for anyone.

Mean Girls (12)
Release Date: 18-Oct-2004
This classy caper by Mark Waters features nerdy misfit Cady Heron, who has to learn fast in the cutthroat world of American high school after her scientific upbringing. Befriended by two kind outsiders, Cady is forced to choose between her real friends and the blood ‘plastic’ trio who try to initiate her into their coven. Her real friends convince her to stay with the plastics to glean gossip, but things are complicated by a saucy love interest!

Mean Girls (12)
Release Date: 18-Oct-2004

The Ladykillers (15)
Release Date: 20-Oct-2004
The Coen brothers have produced a stylish remake of the 1955 British comedy with Peter Sellers. Tom Hanks stars as the cunning criminal who rents a room from a dear old lady and uses it for his cunning endeavours. Worth seeing simply for the bizarre character that Hanks plays.
There's nothing mediocre about DIT's gaelic footballers

by Seosamh O Galluaigh

Higher Education
Intemmediate Championship
Round 1
DIT 2-07
UUJ 1-07
DIT'S Intermediate Footballers had a magnificent victory over a star-studded Jordanstown outfit in blustery Jordanstown on October 14th.

With only ten of their regular outfit playing, but ably assisted by 5 freshers, DIT ground out a most unlikely win with a classic combination of graft, teamwork and luck.

Barry Lyndsey was inspired in goals, while Daniel Cunningham and Kieran McScriarty mopped up wave upon wave of attack in the full-back line. "Willy Dwyer, Willy Donnelly and Cathal Keegan burst through the midfield time after time, taking the game to the Ulster side at every opportunity. But it was the midfield pairing of Kieran Garvey and John Donegan who laid the foundations for this famous victory. Donegan was particularly brilliant, contributing 6 of the team's 7 points. His accomplished display of high fielding and precise free taking deservedly earned him the Man of the Match award.

David Reynolds scored a majestic goal during the first half after being put through by Paul Kehoe, and he later added a point from play. In the end, though it took Kehoe's goal, scored ten minutes from time, to secure DIT's win.

by Arthur Sullivan

With 23,000 students, DIT is a college with huge potential in the GAA. Yet for some reason, national success has more often than not eluded the college. This is no more evident in any sport than hurling.

The current senior manager of the hurlers, former Offaly ace Aidan O'Halloran, puts this down to the sporting facilities previously offered by the college, "It's terrible being dependent on other colleges. It's so hard getting lads to train when they have to trek to different places every evening. Without a base, winning becomes much harder".

However, things are now looking up. The forthcoming move by DIT to one campus at Grangegorman is already benefiting the hurlers, who now have a solid base in which to train. It could prove to be the spark that ignites DIT hurling.

DIT face DCU away on October 21st in their Division 2 league opener and are expected to repeat last year's result and defeat the northsiders. In the group they will also face NUI Maynooth and a strong St. Pats side. Anything less than victory in the league would be disappointing for the DIT boys.

The Keloc cup also provides an opportunity for DIT's hurlers to win some silverware. Last year was DIT's first appearance in the inter-county competition and they performed brilliantley, losing narrowly to eventual champions Meath at the semi-final stage.

The general consensus is that they can win the competition this year with the level of talent in the side.

by Ronan O'Connor

THE men's soccer team are looking forward to the new season with great anticipation, hoping to build upon the successful work done last term.

DIT beat UCD on penalties to win the Collingwood Cup (the annual inter-varsity competition) Plate last season. The College will again be hoping to bring back some silverware from this year's tournament, which will be hosted by University Limerick in March.

Last year two DIT players represented the college on the CFAI National team's tour of Cyprus. Oige Kennedy and Shane Brennan both played important roles in a hugely successful trip that resulted in two wins and a draw from the three games played.

DIT also has two teams entered in the Irish Colleges league. The 'A' team will compete in Division 1 South, and were due to play their first match against the Garda College on 20th October. They will also face Limerick IT, Waterford IT, Tipperary Institute and IT, Carlow in their quest to top the table.

The 'B' team will play the Division 2 Dublin North Central title. They kick off their campaign against the National College of Ireland on October 20th. IT Blanchardstown B, IT Dundalk B and Mater Dei Institute will also oppose DIT 'B'.

Students

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The ‘other’ handball is bouncing back

by Eoghan Morrissey

DIT’S Irish handballers have become one of the world’s most feared collegiate teams. But the college is also home to Team Handball (also known as Olympic Handball).

Team Handball consists of two teams of seven players and is played on a 40-metre long, 20 metre wide court, with a ball slightly larger than a grapefruit. Players can take only three steps with the ball in hand before releasing, although they can bounce the ball whilst travelling. It is a fast-paced, physical, sweaty game similar to five-a-side football or basketball.

"It's fun quick and interesting to watch. If you play it once you're hooked."

DIT Team Handball Coach Colin Brosnan developed a grá for the sport in his first year in college. "After Christmas, I moved accommodation and one of my new flatmates was the President of the acrobatic, dominant goalkeeping style. DIT Team Handball Coach Colin Brosnan developed a grá for the sport in his first year in college. "After Christmas, I moved accommodation and one of my new flatmates was the President of the Olympic Handball Association. He dragged me along to a game and I became very interested." He founded the club in 1999, at a time when there were only three senior clubs in Ireland. The club has gone from strength to strength, Brosnan says. "This year we have 35 to 40 members but not everyone has registered yet. It's the best year yet for turning out for training." DIT will be fielding two men's and one women's team this year in the National League, which features a Plate and Shield Competition. At present there is no Irish Inter-Varsity Championship but DIT did organise and host a tournament a number of years ago. But as Brosnan admits: "Six out of the ten National League teams are colleges so it's pretty much a college league as it is." They would, however, like to compete in the British Inter-Varsities - funding and player availability permitting.

In addition to students, the club membership also features graduates and non-students. A number of the players are Erasmus students, which can create problems after Christmas when they return home. It also means the teams can vary from year to year. The membership includes players from France, Germany, Spain, Croatia and Latvia.

So what would Brosnan say to anybody interested in the game? "It's never too late to take it up. It's a great game. It's fun quick and interesting to watch. If you play it once you're hooked." The DIT Team Handball Club can be contacted by calling 087 2900160 or by e-mailing colinbrosnan@hotmail.com
Karate star wins World Silver

Karol McDonald has just returned from the WKO World Karate Championships in Italy where on September 25th, he won a silver medal in the -75kg section. This added to the bronze medal he won at the 2002 Championships in Birmingham. He told Mark Rodden how he became a world silver medallist.

The 3rd year PHD student won his medal in point karate, which is a quick, less physical version of traditional karate, with beams lasting three minutes. Points are scored when kicks and punches are thrown with good technique. First to six points wins, if either fighter opens up a four point gap he wins.

The rules make for attacking contests, as McDonald explains: "In point karate it's very up-tempo and you have to be attack minded to get the scores, whereas in traditional karate it's very slow and more about waiting and who cracks first."

At the World Championships, McDonald came through a gruelling day of fights to reach the final against his fellow clubman, Tommy Elberse.

He remembers it as a tense fight: "It was very close for the first two and a half minutes but in the last thirty seconds he took control. The nerves kinda got to me a bit and he dealt with them better."

"After two and a half minutes it was 2-2 and I was getting more and more tense as the fight was going on because I knew the time was running out and I had to get the point in."

"I went crazy trying to get a score back and of course he just picked me off, and then straight away it was 6-2 in twenty seconds and that was the fight over and done with." However the Sligo man's fighting wasn't finished. Later that day he took part in the team event, where the Irish team lost to England and pipped Italy's A team to the bronze.

McDonald's Sligo Green Dragon club also had a successful tournament. "Out of the senior team I think there was only one lad who didn't win any kind of medal. But he had two cracked ribs from a kickboxing tournament two weeks previous, and nobody knew until he came home and got the x-ray!"

Sligo might not be most people's idea of a traditional stronghold for karate, but McDonald was lucky to meet an enthusiastic instructor who combined the best elements of kung fu, kickboxing and wada ryu to form his own point karate style. McDonald has been hooked ever since starting. "I'm 24 years old so I've been doing it twelve years. I looked back since."

The mathematics student is currently a third Dan black belt. But the move to 4th Dan is quite a commitment: "To become a 4th Dan you either have to be a multiple world champion or, the way I'm going to do it, I'm going to win any kind of championship thanks to the support he received from DIT. "I get the scholarship grant from DIT for the PHD - that covers me for rent and food - but I wouldn't be able to afford to do all the training and the travelling if it wasn't for the sports scholarship on top of that, so I'm very lucky to have that."

The Sligo man was also successful at the last major international tournament he was at before the World Championships, held in July of last year near Frankfurt. He took silver in the -70 kg weight division and gold in the -75kg, which meant that he qualified for the Grand Championship, where he won silver. "That's where all the title holders of each section came together and fought off - I was pretty well bruised after coming home from that tournament."

As for the future, McDonald hopes to perform well at the next World Championships. "My aim is to win the world title there but beyond that get more into the teaching aspect and build up clubs. I plan when I get the PHD to emigrate and wherever I go I plan to set up a club and spread the style that my instructors taught me."

"So in years to come when I finish myself I hope to have taught world champions."

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Freshers' Football

By Fiachra Ó Muiré

Freshers' Football Championship Round 1 14/10/2004

First Team Match: UUJ 1-18 DIT 0-06

DIT's Freshers' teams suffered heavy defeats at the hands of Jordanstown in Belfast on October 14th.

Encouraging for DIT was the fact that they had forty players to choose from and the first team contained many accomplished footballers.

In the main game of the day involving the first teams of DIT and Jordanstown, DIT were evenly matched with Jordanstown in the opening third.

The teams were level at 3 apiece for a long time, with both teams hitting the crossbar during that period. Jordanstown pulled away at the end of the half, however, with a goal and a string of unanswered points.

DIT started the second half as strongly as they started the first with Michael Hallows scoring 2 points from frees. However, as the Ulster team began to break down DIT attacks as the half went on, they began to significantly outscore DIT.

Although the final score was disheartening, DIT can be encouraged by the promising performances of some of the team, including Emmett Bolton, Michael Hallows and Richie Walsh who put in impressive displays. Bolton was awarded Man of the Match and named as Captain for the upcoming match with UCD.

In the second team game, DIT were defeated in a high scoring encounter.

DIT First Team: Micheal Byrne; Sean Donnellan, John Daly, Ciarán Carey; Donal Leddy, Shuy Hannon, Emmett Bolton; Colm Daly, Eoin Brennan; Jamie Fitzpatrick, Michael Hallows (0-4, 3 frees and a sideline), Gaeil Quinlan, Niall Geraghty, Richik Walsh, David Cormie, Sub; Ronan O'Shea for Geraghty (30)
Ladies soccer team expects successful season

by Nuala Ryan

As the DIT Ladies Soccer team enter their fourth season, coach Stephen Dempsey feels he has every reason to be confident. Since they were formed in 2001, the team has experienced success after success. In their first season, the girls won the Leinster Regional League and they followed this up in 2003 by winning the Subsidiary Girls Cup. Last season they lost the league by just one point.

Looking ahead to this year, Dempsey is optimistic about his side's chances. "We have a good team", he says. "There is a lot of interest out there. So far 24 girls have registered and my phone is still ringing!"

The coach believes that the talent is there too. "I have seen the new girls in training and I'm very impressed." The new players include two Irish international players, Sandra Mulhall, who played at Under 19 level, and Michelle Dunne, who played for the Under-17's.

The coach believes that the talent is there too. "I have seen the new girls in training and I'm very impressed." The team will be training out every match and being beaten. "It would have been too demoralizing."

However, he is confident that the team will perform well this season. "We will be strong", he says. "Some of our girls are only in first year. This could be the year we go up to the Premier Division."

Life in the Premier would provide a tough test for the Ladies soccer team. They would be battling with the best teams from the major colleges, but they have a coach who believes that they can do it, and they are a team who are used to success. This could be their year.