

# An Focal

**In Focus:**  
**Exam Busting** p.12



**Sport:** Ladies claim  
Intermediate League p.23

2 December 2008  
Tuesday

Official Paper of the University of Limerick Students' Union

Volume XVII, Issue 7  
FREE

## Students force Ministerial U-Turn at Thomond Bridge

Aoife Breen  
Editor

ALMOST 400 students forced Minister for Arts, Sports and Tourism Martin Cullen, TD, to abandon his car on the University's main campus and trudge his way in the heavy mist and sharp biting breeze across the pedestrian Living Bridge to the Irish Chamber Orchestra building on the North Campus at lunchtime on Monday, 17 November.

In front of the army of students who completely blocked Thomond Bridge, the ministerial Mercedes succumbed to a u-turn and made its way back to the main campus.

From just before 1pm, students stood on the bridge awaiting the Minister who was at the University as a special guest at the opening of the new €3.5 million Irish Chamber Orchestra building located on the Clare-side of the University.

Ahead of the protest, SU President Pa O'Brien remarked, "It is our understanding that Minister Batt O'Keeffe has crossed the line in terms of registration fees and barring access to education. With that in mind, we believe we should show his fellow Minister the same hospitality that we have been afforded: he blocks our access to education, we block access to the

opening".

As the black ministerial Mercedes did a turnabout in the road, the student army starting chanting, "cheerio, cheerio" and waved at the minister as he returned along the route by which he came back towards the main campus, blocking his access to the ICO building.

No other vehicles were affected during the protest as they were all allowed to pass through and although there was a strong Garda presence, the SU-organised protest remained peaceful throughout.

Pa O'Brien commented, "What we set out to achieve here today was to erect a barrier to the Minister just as his government has erected a barrier to our education with the 67 per cent hike in the annual registration fee. We have achieved this by ensuring that he didn't cross Thomond Bridge".

He went on to say that the demonstration was not directed at the ICO or its celebrations during the opening and said, "Our only issue was with the Minister and we feel our message was strong and loud".

The Minister returned to the main campus where he was forced to leave his car to make his way by foot to the ICO building. He crossed the Shannon using the widely acclaimed pedestrian Living Bridge opened



A Bridge Too Far: 400 UL students blocked Minister Martin Cullen from crossing Thomond Bridge to the North Campus on Monday, 17 November, in protest against the 67 per cent increase in registration fee effective from next September. (Photo by Hugh O'Brien)

during the last academic year. Students made their way back to the SU courtyard after the demonstration where the SU President vowed to

them that "from today, no government minister will come on campus unimpeded". A breakaway group of students who

were not affiliated with the Students' Union protest continued the demonstration at the ICO building. Free Education for Everyone (FEE),

an organisation calling for "mass militant campaigns", attempted to gain entry to the building but were restrained by Gardaí.

## Kayakers scoop national award

Aoife Breen  
Editor

WITH over eight months' preparation going into UL Kayak Club's inter-varsities held between the 22 and 24 of February this year, it was only right that the work put in by the five-person varsity committee and club members was rewarded with national recognition by the College and Universities Sports Association of Ireland (CUSAI).

At the award ceremony on Thursday, 13 November in the Pavilion, TCD, the club picked up the top place for the Inter-Collegiate Multi-Day Event, overcoming rival inter-varsities held by UCD

(basketball), NUIG (equestrian) and Queen's University, Belfast (hockey). Club President Ruán Dillon-McLoughlin remarked, "There was a lot of effort put into what turned out to be a great weekend and it's a great achievement to have received national recognition for this.

"I'm very proud of the work and the organisation that the varsity committee and all our members put in during the months beforehand as well as over the weekend itself"

Seventeen colleges from across the country entered over four hundred participants over the duration of the three-day event which already

nabbed the UL Clubs and Societies award for 'Best Club Event' in April this year.

The Club hosted four different competitions including, water polo in the Arena pool, white-water kayaking in Castleconnell, long-distance kayaking at the UL Boathouse and a freestyle competition at Curragower Falls in Limerick city.

Kevin Egan, head of the specially designated varsity committee, was "delighted" with the award.

"It took dozens of people to make the weekend the success that it was and this just recognises the hard

work they all put in.

"The weekend itself was just fantastic and winning this is a great accomplishment for the club."

The event was assessed by application as well as on-site visits to the IV during the course of events by CUSAI representatives.

The club president thanked Mr Egan and the other members of the varsity committee – Lorraine Feeney, Eimear O'Donnell, Mike Sweeney and Mike Jones – for their work and was also grateful for the sponsorship from Ulster Bank.

Clubs & Societies Development Officer Paul Lee congratulated the

members and complimented the club on its organisational abilities, acknowledging its capacity to turnover efficient committees year after year.

"The success of the kayak club... is the culmination of a club tradition, at least a decade in the making, to develop the club to the point that it finds itself today, which not many people might appreciate.

"In a University environment that sees entire memberships wash through every four years and a sport regarded as a minority sport in this country, it makes the national sward all the more significant."



# An Focal Digest

## In Brief

### Deb U going from Strength to Strength

THE UL Debating Union keeps going from strength to strength, with the last few weeks seeing various members competing very successfully in some of the most prestigious competitions in the UK, in a debate in UL itself along with the History department, and in the well known Irish Times University Debating Competition, not to mention the Freshers' Mace last week, a competition only open to first years.

Two weeks ago four member of the Deb U, Maurice Cotter speaking with Eamon Quinlan and Mairead de Faoite with Adrian O'Higgins, set off for Oxford University to showcase their speaking skills along with some of the most renowned speakers from all over Ireland and the UK ahead of the upcoming World Championships.

The same four returned only this week from another of the UK's finest universities, Cambridge this time, where they once again did fantastically well, doing the Union and the College as a whole very proud indeed. On both occasions the two teams finished well up the speaker tab and ended up with some of the best results in years from any UL teams.

Last week the Union hosted its very own in-house debate in the subject of patriotism and dying for one's country. This was chaired by a guest from the History department, Pádraig Lenihan, and proved to be a very enlightening and interesting discussion.

The Irish Times are due to host the quarter finals of their competition in the next two weeks, with no less than six UL speakers having qualified, the biggest number in a long time. These speakers saw off stiff competition from the likes of UCC, Trinity, UCD, NUIG and Maynooth to qualify in the earlier rounds.

Finally, the Union held its own in-house competition last week for all its new first year members. The debate was a huge success, with Una O'Grady and Darragh Roche winning it out in the end, two very promising members to watch out for in the future.

### Music Soc

Owen Hickie

NOVEMBER Trust, Ava Ria, Murdock and Hammered blasted out the tunes on a spectacular Music Soc Halloween event while Maslow, Hammered and Shardbourne were showcased on the 20th. Two fantastic events in Bakers and meas mór in particular to UL's own Hammered.

The gigs don't stop there, we're already planning on a next-semester gig for Walter Mitty & The Realists, winners of this year's Indie Week in Toronto (and following in the footsteps of another Limerick group, Vesta Varro, who won it last year)

We've been planning on improving the Music Soc even more for next semester. Obviously there'll be more gigs, stay tuned for those. The big news is the proposed DCU – Limerick Colleges Intervarsity Extravaganza! Bands from UL with rock off against each other, the winners will go through to face winners from similar events in LIT and the Art College, from which one band will troop up to Dublin to face off the best DCU can throw at us in some sort of earth-shattering showdown! Yep, it's almost as complicated as the All-Ireland hurling championship backdoor system, so I'll condense it into four simple words for you: Bands. Competition. Session. Dublin! More info soon!

We also want to promote the shhpangly new Music Soc Website & Forum at <http://www.skynet.ie/~ulmusic>. Sure we can put on pretty gigs, but if there ain't any bands, then there can't be any gigs. Whether you've got the vocal wail of Robert Plant, the lightning fingers of Eddie Van Halen, or maybe if you've the gutsy warblings of Curt Kirkwood and the wandering frettage of Sid Vicious, you can find instru-mentalists to suit your need on the forum and form the stadium rockers of tomorrow. You can also find out about upcoming gigs, organise music lessons, or even just waffle on about the importance of Horslips in the history of Irish rock. Now how cool is that?

As usual, the email for all information is [ulmusicsoc@gmail.com](mailto:ulmusicsoc@gmail.com), and you can book the music room at [musicroombookings@gmail.com](mailto:musicroombookings@gmail.com).



Protesting students blocked Thomond Bridge, preventing Minister Cullen from crossing in his ministerial car (photo by Cian Gallagher)

## In Words

*A deal had been arranged between ULSU president (and Fianna Fáil member) Pa O'Brien, Cullen and the Gardaí which enabled both Cullen and ULSU to get what they wanted - ULSU got their photograph of Cullen turning away against a backdrop of student extras while Cullen was able to waltz into the opening of the Irish Chamber Orchestra building totally unimpeded.*

FEE (Free Education for Everyone) posted allegations on their website suggesting that ULSU had entered into a pre-arranged agreement with the Minister and the Gardaí so that students would facilitate the Minister's presence on campus. The SU has since refuted these allegations wholly.

*All we ended up doing was giving Fianna Fáil a bit of publicity*

The post by 'Risky-Business' (Darragh Bourke, 4th Year Business class rep) on the [ulsu.ie](http://ulsu.ie) forum alleging that the blocking of Thomond Bridge only served to publicise Fianna Fáil. Mr Bourke later retracted his original views on the protest.

*UL Students' Union will continue in their campaign against third level fees and we'll do it how we see fit, not how any external political party with vested interests do. We won't risk the wellbeing of our members to suit the agenda of a few. We stand by all our actions completely.*

SU President Pa O'Brien in response to allegations that the SU "orchestrated a pantomime protest" against Minister Cullen on 17 November.



UL Kayakers Eimear O'Donnell, Kevin Egan and Ruan Dillon-McLoughlin being presented with the award by CUSAI chair Kieran Dowd.

## In Figures

**5 out of 6**

The number of sabbats who are HPSS graduates now that Eamonn Gardiner has joined the team. The SU is a very good employer for LM046.

**1086**

The total poll for the Education Officer by-election on the 21 November.

**52**

The number of balloons released to mark World Aids Day on 1 December.

**450**

The number of tickets sold in advance for each night in the Stables during Christmas Day.

**2**

The number of weeks left of the autumn semester... and they're chock full of exams. Boo!



## Gardiner tops Education poll

Jason Kennedy

EAMONN Gardiner has been elected as the Student Union's new Education Officer, beating off competition from Diarmuid Healy.

Mr Gardiner (24) polled 714 votes, while Mr Healy (20) polled 365 in last Friday's election, which was called after former Education Officer Shane O'Callaghan resigned for health reasons.

Speaking after the result, Mr Gardiner said: "I'm absolutely ecstatic. I'm going to try and fulfil all my campaign promises as much as I can and I'm going to fight all the way for students."

Voting began at 9am and ended

at 6pm, with a total of 1086 votes cast, including seven spoiled votes.

This election was Mr Gardner's third time to run for the position, after losing out to Alan Higgins in 2007 and Shane O'Callaghan in 2008. Mr Gardiner's campaign manager was Barry Kennedy.

Mr Gardiner, who is originally from Fermoy, also offered Mr Healy some words of comfort. "I've been there before and it hurts like hell. There's nothing I can say to make it feel better. All I can say is dust yourself off, get back up and try again"

Mr Gardiner said the first change

he will make will be the update of the class rep handbook. "This will be an essential tool for all future class reps. I'm also going to begin immediate revision of class rep training."

Mr Gardiner also plans to change the way students get their exams results. "I suggest that we phase in exam results, because the system crashes when 10,000 students logon at once. If we have 3,000 logging on each day it would be more manageable."

Mr Gardiner also showed his gratitude to the people who voted for him. "I'd like to thank all of my

supporters, everyone who voted for me and everyone who came out in the lashing rain today.

"I'd also like to thank everyone who stood outside in the cold, including my campaign manager Barry, my girlfriend Aoife and all my friends who supported me

throughout the years. Lads, this one's for you."

President of the Students Union, Pa O'Brien congratulated Mr Gardiner and said that he would be looking forward to working with him.



Counting the Ballots: Gardiner came in with 349 votes more than rival candidate Diarmuid Healy

# Student Behaviour Slashes Bus Services

Aoife Breen

BUS Éireann have withdrawn services to three stops in the Castletroy area as a result of serious anti-social behaviour carried out by student passengers on their buses in recent months. On Tuesday and Thursday nights the last bus that

will service the UL, Kilmurry and Hurler's stops will be the 21:45 bus from the city centre.

Acts of vandalism that have bent seats and broken glass panes as well as other "boisterous" behaviour such as shouting to the point of intimidating drivers and passengers has forced Bus Éireann to withdraw night time services on nights that students most frequently use the

buses.

"These runs are often at the end of a day's work for our drivers and they are just uncomfortable picking up some students. They are often just overpowered," commented a spokesperson.

"At best they could be described as being boisterous. They're already worse for wear when they get on the bus. Then they get even more

hyper and start rocking the bus or chanting. They bring cans and bottles on with them even though we've asked them to leave the beer behind

"From a so-called 'centre of learning' it's very disappointing."

The company has footage of the culprits involved in the more serious incidents and is considering disciplinary action.

SU President Pa O'Brien said, "It's a very serious issue with service to the whole community disrupted.

"The students involved in this behaviour need to know that there's CCTV on the buses and they'll be identified and the Gardaí could get involved.

"They also need to consider how they're affecting the rest of the

students and the community in Castletroy

"Our main issue here is that student safety is in jeopardy because of this. With no late busses many students will be forced to walk home not being able to afford taxi."

At present, there are no plans to resume the services to these three stops on Tuesdays or Thursdays.

# Pay car park finally held accountable.

Máirtín Lally

STUDENTS will no longer be forced to pay €3 for the privilege of driving around the pay car park opposite the Student Centre only to discover that there are no spaces following the successful lobbying by SU Campaigns and Services Officer Damien Cahill to have an electronic counter installed at the entry point.

The new electronic counter has a display that lights up when the car park is full and disables the barrier from lifting.

Students and other members of the public using the pay car park previously were unable to tell if there was a free space in the car park and would have to pay the €3 fee on exit regardless of whether they had parked or not.

Damien Cahill welcomed the new improvement to the on campus parking facility.

"Admittedly, it's not ideal that students have to even pay for parking on a campus of this size, but at least this development means they will not be forced to pay when they cannot even secure parking," said Mr Cahill.

"We were constantly aware of the

issue and made numerous approaches to the relevant departments in the University, resulting in this improved system".

However, car parking on campus is still a major problem with most car parks full to capacity by 9am.

One notable exception to this is the new pay car park located on the way to the boathouse. Although it is in close proximity to several key buildings, including the Schuman and the new KBS building, it is rarely more than half full. The charge on this car park is €3 also.


Mr Cahill insisted that the ongoing problem of the car parking fee should

at least be addressed by the university in relation to this car park as it may help alleviate parking problems elsewhere.

"Should there be an initial reduction in the levy imposed on this car park, then I would see it as a positive step forward for the University both in terms of providing affordable parking and dealing with the shortfall of spaces."



SU CSO Damien Cahill and President Pa O'Brien with the new electronic feature on the pay car park opposite the Student Centre



**get home safely...**

**PLASSEY CABS**

**CALL 061 336 336**

Unit ID  
Annacotty Business Park  
Annacotty Co. Limerick  
plasseycabs@eircom.net

**Register today at the Students' Union for the Safe Cab initiative and never be stuck on a night out. A safe way home - guaranteed**



# UL Commemorates World Aids Day

An Focal Reporter

WORLD Aids Day was commemorated on-campus on Monday, 1 December. The main event of the day saw 52 red balloons released in the Students' Centre courtyard to represent the 52 men, women and children diagnosed with HIV living outside the greater Dublin area in 2007. The event was poorly attended by both students and the powers that be in the University, but those who did attend seemed moved by the calm atmosphere.

The need for more AIDS and HIV awareness was highlighted by the comments of one student, "You never really hear about HIV much any more, and when you do you automatically think of Africa. I had no idea that one person is diagnosed with the virus every week of the year in Ireland."

Caitríona McGrattan, SU Welfare Officer, responded to this

student's comment by saying that, "More awareness is needed around HIV and AIDS; we need information in relation to protecting ourselves from contracting HIV."

Ms McGrattan was also quick to point out the need to eliminate stigma surrounding those living with the viruses: "You cannot contract either HIV or AIDS by sharing cutlery and crockery, shaking hands, or by using the same toilet facilities; these are damaging urban myths that need to be forgotten."

The Students' Union also encouraged the staff and students of UL to show their support for the millions of people living with HIV worldwide by wearing red on 1 December.

Although take up of this idea was not very high, the message that solidarity is needed was echoed in the number of people wearing red ribbons, the

international symbol of HIV for the past 15 years.

Red Ribbons were sold at the SU reception and all proceeds from the sale of these red ribbons went to the Red Ribbon Project, a voluntary organisation which provides information on the prevention, care and support services relating to HIV/AIDS and Sexual Health in the Mid West.

A separate World AIDS Day remembrance service was held in Limerick city. It was organised by the Red Ribbon Project for those living with HIV, those who have died of HIV or AIDS related illness and for those wishing to show their support to other people whose life and love have been affected by HIV and/or AIDS.

More information on HIV and AIDS can be found on any of the following websites [www.redribbonproject.com](http://www.redribbonproject.com), [www.dublinaidalliance.com](http://www.dublinaidalliance.com) and [www.stampoutstigma.ie](http://www.stampoutstigma.ie).

# Christmas Cheer for Charity

An Focal Reporter

OVER €12,000 was collected from ticket sales and bucket collections during the annual Christmas Days festivities hosted by the Stables Club in a preliminary estimation of this year's donations.

Now in its seventeenth year, the annual three-day event is an early campus celebration of the festive season put on to raise funds for local

charities.

Manager Declan Collins commented that the money raised during Christmas Days "always has been and always will be" given to local causes. This year's recipients include the Fr Gerry Daly Christmas Appeal, Milford Hospice and Milford NS.

Each night sold out its capacity

450 tickets in advance of the events.

Mr Collins remarked that the club began the tradition because "the Students' Union felt the Stables did nothing for students at Christmas" and it was the club's way of giving something back to the local community.

# Santa's visit to Student Kids

An Focal Reporter

THE CHRISTMAS spirit was still in full flow on Friday of week twelve even after three days of Christmas fun in the Stables as the student parents of UL celebrated the festive season with their children at the second annual Student Parent Christmas Party hosted by the Students' Union and the Postgrad Students' Association.

Thirty delighted children were greeted by the big man himself, Santa Clause, in An Teach Fáilte. Santa had an early Christmas present for each child. The parents were also treated to some seasonal delights such as mulled wine and mince pies.

Welfare Officer Caitríona McGrattan, would like to thank Sarah and Koenraad for the use of the chaplaincy centre, the Stables and Students' Union shop for their donations and all those who helped wrap presents and on the night and a special thanks goes to Mr Clause.

"It is thanks to the hard work and generous donations of all these people that the Student Parent Christmas party has now become a permanent fixture on the SU calendar," said Ms McGrattan.

She was delighted with how the night went, "Although there were a few slight hiccups, everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, some of the adults even more so than the children!"

The student parent Christmas party was first organised in December 2007 by the then-Welfare Officer, Judith Lynch and the incumbent PSA president, Emma Murphy with generous sponsorship from UL President Don Barry. The idea behind the party was to give UL students with young children an opportunity to meet other student parents, while showing their children where Mammy or Daddy goes to college.

Professor Barry sponsored the party again this year and was also made possible by the discount given by Smyths' toy store on the Childers' Road and the generous donations of the SU Shop and the Stables.



Front L-R: Eric Doyle, Niamh O'Donovan, Minister Martin Cullen TD, Adam Davis, Back L-R: Derek Daly, David O'Sullivan, Eamon Quinlan, Denis Murphy

# Fianna Fáil Wrap for Christmas

Derek Daly

THE TIME has come for exams and holidays, so let's tell you what we've been up to for the past number of weeks.

In Week 10 we held our annual Christmas Party which went down well with those in attendance. Following a warm up in Brookfield we headed to Trinity Rooms where an enjoyable night was had. In Week 11 we met with Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism; Martin Cullen in the newly opened ICO facility on the North Campus.

We discussed various matters with the Minister, including the front

cover of Week 11's *An Focal*. We informed the Minister that the current state of training pitches and playing facilities on campus was less than substandard and that it was actually dangerous in some cases. We discussed the general mood among the membership, which is resilient and also informed the Minister that the Union was not responsible for the demonstration taking place directly outside the building as board members of the Irish Chamber Orchestra made their speeches in the official opening ceremony.

The Minister informed us that the sporting facilities (an issue relevant to his department) issue is to be addressed in a new programme

of Regional Sporting Centres, one of which will be UL.

On Saturday Week 11 members of the cumann attended a Munster Consultative in Cork. A workshop was given in canvassing technique and a discussion was held around the issue of suicide and mental illness. The evening concluded for us following a charity poker game, with the proceeds being donated to the National Suicide Research Foundation. Unfortunately we were unable to stay for the night due to exams being so close.

Anyone wishing to get further info or wishing to join can email us on [ul@ogra.ie](mailto:ul@ogra.ie)

Ar aghaidh le Fianna Fáil

**Pat O'Neill School of Motoring Ltd**  
**:: RSA approved driving instructor :: ISM Qualified ::**

*excellent qualified tuition*  
*car hire for test*  
*lessons over test routes*  
*dual controlled cars*

**087 262 3126**  
**Limerick City & County**  
**Discounts on Block Bookings!**



# ICO Opens its Doors

Aoife Ní Raghallaigh

MONDAY of Week 11 saw the launch of the Irish Chamber Orchestra's (ICO) purpose-built rehearsal and office space. The building, which was officially opened by Minister for Arts, Sports and Tourism, Martin Cullen TD, cost €3.5 million to build and was part-funded by the Department for Arts, Sport and Tourism, as well as by donations from Limerick City and County, the University of Limerick and from private donors. The building is now owned debt-free by the ICO.

The University of Limerick also aided the construction of the building by donating an area of land on the northern campus to the ICO to build on. The project was designed by Project Architects in consultation with AWN

Consultations, a specialist acousticians group and consists of a double-height rehearsal space at the building's centre, as well as individual soloist rehearsal and instrument rooms. The ICO's administrative team have also been provided with a number of offices to work from.

The ICO has held residence in UL since 1995 and originally used the Bourn Vincent Gallery as a rehearsal space. When this was made into a permanent exhibition centre the ICO began sharing rehearsal space with the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance but were again forced to relocate as their programmes began to expand. Now they have secured a permanent, purpose built rehearsal

space in the ICO building.

The building will also allow the ICO to expand on its educational activities by allowing school children and member of the public to come to the UL campus and work with the ICO. This is allowing the ICO to nurture a new generation of classical music lovers both in Limerick and around Ireland. The building also provides the ICO with an advantage as they are now one of the only Chamber Orchestras to possess their own permanent rehearsal space and office building.

The new ICO building is located on the northern UL Campus and more information can be found at [www.irishchamberorchestra.info](http://www.irishchamberorchestra.info).

# Lisbon Treaty would 'let go' of democracy

Darragh Roche

THE Lisbon Treaty is undemocratic and endangers basic human rights, MEP Kathy Sinnott told a Law Society seminar held on Monday, 24 November in Dromroe Village Hall.

Ms Sinnott said that the treaty would make democracy more remote and would replace the Constitution of Ireland, which she praised as the best example of a document that upholds human rights.

"It's an amazing constitution, not perfect, but absolutely amazing," Ms Sinnott said, "Lisbon meant we were voting to set aside the constitution," the MEP added.

Ms Sinnott criticised the treaty for being 'above democracy' and said that voters had to control legislation through the ballot box by letting MEPs know of their dissatisfaction.

"Democracy is a self-correcting mechanism, people in Brussels have to keep looking over their shoulder," Ms Sinnott said, "[with Lisbon] democracy became more remote than it already is; we let go of the helium balloon of democracy," she added.

If Lisbon is ratified, Ireland will find its voting strength greatly reduced because vote share will be based on population, Ms Sinnott said,

with only one Irish vote to every 20 German votes and every 15 UK votes. Ireland currently has one vote to every four German votes and every three UK votes.

"Bigger countries have other things going for them, like the size of their economy, smaller countries need a certain advantage," Ms Sinnott said, "This creates a two speed Europe, the big countries and the small countries."

Ms Sinnott revealed that MEPs are anxious to have the treaty ratified before the European elections but that senior figures in Brussels know that Lisbon will not survive a second 'No' vote.



# Inaugural Address from Medical School Head

Katie Harrington

Over 200 people were in attendance on Tuesday of Week 12 as Professor Paul Finucane give his inaugural address as Foundation Head of the Graduate Medical School. The event which was hosted by the faculty of Education and Health Sciences was preceded by a reception at the Kemmy Business School. The title of the address was 'Why Ireland Needs a New Medical School', focusing on the beginnings of the UL's Graduate Medical School which Prof Finucane spoke passionately about. Professor Mary O'Sullivan, Dean of the Faculty of Education and Science opened and closed the evening while University President Don Barry introduced

Professor Finucane.

The Mission Statement for the Graduate Medical School as outlined by Prof Finucane went as follows "To graduate doctors who are competent in a broad range of diagnostic, consultative, communication and organisational skills, are conscious of their social responsibilities, are committed to life-long learning and research as a foundation to providing high quality patient-centred care, and will positively engage with other healthcare professionals and the health service in advocating for the health care needs of Irish society."

He spoke on the history of medical education and the need for reform

in it; the impact of international reforms on Ireland and the part that Ireland, and UL in particular, has to play in the future. He emphasised the changing way in which medicine is taught, moving from a system of 'rote learning' to one where students take responsibility for their own learning processes. In terms of future innovation, Prof Finucane pointed to biomedical research as an area where UL can 'talk the talk' or go ahead and 'walk the walk'.

Professor Finucane, a doctor by profession, had been working on the development of the graduate-entry medical programme at UL for over three years when he took up his position.

# Saving the Trees

Nicole Ní Ríordáin

THE ongoing paper saving campaign in UL has so far been a massive success, it was revealed this week.

The LAPD (Local Authority Prevention Demonstration) Programme, in conjunction with the University, introduced an initiative to reduce the amount of paper consumed on campus almost two years ago. Since then the University has reduced its consumption of A4 paper by 32 per cent and its related carbon dioxide emissions by 182 tonnes.

Since the scheme was implemented, the University has saved over €40,000 on A4 paper costs and reduced its ecological footprint by 40 global hectares. The

introduction of a greener policy on campus has led to over 8 million sheets of A4 paper being saved.

The LAPD thanked the students and staff of UL for their participation in the changes, but committee member Nicola Hogan reminded everyone that, "there is still room for improvement."

"Results of surveys completed by 4th year students and academic staff last July indicated that students were still printing coursework single sided and lecturers were still unaware of the change to University policy with regard to the double sided submission of coursework, including FYPs."

It should be noted that all assignments will be accepted printed on both sides and many now can be submitted online, an even more environmentally friendly choice.

The committee have published

paper-saving tips on their website in order to encourage a further reduction in the amounts of paper wasted. Habits as simple as recycling coversheets from the print room, using scrap paper instead of wasting a new page and printing on both sides can make a huge difference in the long term.

When asked if they printed double-sided or single-sided, a first year student replied, "My assignments are always printed on both sides because I print them in the library and the printers there do it automatically. I don't have a choice in it but it's good for the environment so I can't complain" while another stated, "I have a printer in my room which I don't think is able to print on both sides...although I've never checked".



# The Truth, the Whole Truth, Nothing but the Truth\*

## \*May, in fact, all be lies

An Focal's Top Investigative Reporter

The Union was left in a state of consternation this week when they were accused by a UL Society and the national action group FEE (F\*\*k Everyone Else) of being in bed with the Gardaí, Martin Cullen and indeed the extended Fianna Fáil party over their "Operation Bridge Block" protest.

Members of said party went so far as to say the protest had been arranged to "grant Fianna Fáil publicity" and it has even been muted that the protest was arranged as a distraction to students so that Minister Martin Cullen could get to the ICO unimpeded by rampaging students...wait now, no, no, let's move on, ahem.

Well, I tell you, this is one reporter who researches his stuff, and I wouldn't have believed the accusation but for the shocking image you see above this article. This photo was leaked to me from a covert source within the Union and is a damning indictment of the present administration.

When O'Brien was asked for comment on the photo and said accusations he said "can you call

back after lunch, my caviar is going colder".

On my return I levelled these accusations at him again. He replied, "Sure that's not me in that photo at all; my beard is way beardier than that, you clown".

This intrepid reporter then learned of a scandal that went all the way to the core of the Fianna Fáil party and would shake the roots of ULSU. It turns out that in return for granting Martin Cullen the great publicity of being humiliated and turned back from Thomond Bridge, the Fianna Fáil party have offered O'Brien and Cahill a holiday home in Wexford right beside Martin Cullen's.

It's said the holiday home will be used for brandy and cigar-smoking while the three laugh gleefully at the plight of students. O'Brien is also said to be lined up for a Junior Ministry in Arts, Sports and Tourism with Cahill becoming Chief Whip due to his legendary prowess in S&M circles.

When I questioned Cahill about the protest he stated, "It was deadly; there were t-shirts and people shouting and I saw some guy smoking

weed I think, it was like Oxegen with bridges".

When questioned about his suspect promotion within the Fianna Fáil party he stated "sweet, do I get a gun now?". This response led this reporter to believe that Campaigns Officer Cahill is either very, very smart, or very, very sexy.

But what you say of Martin Cullen's comment to the journalists, what of that evidence and I quote, "There was an agreement that we would go up, recognise them, which is fine, I have no issue with that, and then I would walk across the bridge and I enjoyed the walk," said an upbeat Minister Cullen".

Damning evidence it would seem, damning, damning, damning. If this reporter knows anything it's that no Minister, no elected representative of people, no upstanding member of Fianna Fáil with a history of Haughey, Lenihan, Bertie, would lie to deflect from the truth.

Surely we must recognise and believe in our Minister. Why would a Minister do that, why would he attempt to save face in this situation. That's crazy talk readers; crazy talk.



Concealing the Truth: CSO Damien Cahill attempting to block the view of SU Prez Pa O'Brien sealing The Deal with Minister Martin Cullen and an unknown Garda

When asked to respond to these accusations Cahill replied, "I did not have sexual relations with that Minister. We just had sex; there were no relations involved, so it doesn't count".

And what of Rockett's quote on "chaperoning" the minister across

the bridge. When Rockett was questioned on the issue he replied "Sure I was only there for the free booze, but, no, I haven't drank chaperone in years"

So, there you have it folks, the grim truth. Needless to say this corruption is endemic and must be

stopped. I suggest a campaign against future ULSU campaigns and many personal attacks on the President's personal life. I've found out where he lives and intend to kidnap his mother and his cat. Who's with me, whooooo's with me?

# CHRISTMAS

# BASEBALL CAP


# APPEAL

Buy your hat during the Christmas Market or from the SU reception for just 2 euro!

All proceeds go to Lisnagry

A RECESSION-SAVING PRESENT

IDEAL FOR DADS AND GOLF FANS!





# Can We Do It?

Sandra Quinn

This is the question that Andy Wilson editor of ‘Sustainability’ magazine left the audience with after his talk on how we can get the country out of crisis in UL last Wednesday, 12 November. He addressed many issues and produced astounding figures proving why we are now in this energy and economic crisis. He spoke about the country having 100,000 to 250,000 surplus houses and while this ‘economic contraction of around 2 per cent’ will get much worse over the next few years, this is the time to utilize those houses and stop putting more money into building new ones. There are up to 50,000 holiday homes that can be used as full time homes as well as an unknown number of recently abandoned houses that are lacking domestic activity.

Currently, most energy is used in the transport, residential and industry sectors, in 2020 Andy predicts a shift here in that there will be more energy use in agriculture and services and considerably less in transport. In comparison to other countries, we are using a phenomenal amount of crude oil with each person using about 60 barrels or more each year and in India one person only roughly 1 barrel each year. This overuse and over dependence on non renewable energy sources means that we can ‘expect that our economy is going to decline very significantly’ in the future.

At the moment 1 per cent of the country controls 40 per cent of the wealth, and this corresponds to 20 per cent of the wealth causing 20 per cent of the damage. What needs to be brought in is a taxation system

that penalizes those who are adding significantly to an already existing problem.

‘We need to develop our renewable energy but it will be a slow process.’ I’m sure you are all aware of the problems that this inactivity towards a solution has already causes. We are a country in crisis. Our dependency on cars is ever increasing, we have a surplus of poor housing stock, unequal distribution of resources and little official appreciation of the fact that we are in a crisis situation. There is little to no funding going into teaching and research, the two areas that need to be developed if we are to come up with the technology that will allow us to use our renewable energy most efficiently. ‘We need to develop our alternative as rapidly as we can.’

Wood is often overlooked as a

resource, it is easily renewable, economically viable and can be using in the domestic, industrial and public building areas. Another important area that is often ignored is how much we export. We need to start building for ourselves and keeping the money and the products within the country. 700,000 tonnes of scrap metal are exported every year and this metal could be used for making machinery to harness ocean and wind energy as well as creating jobs for the people who will be doing the work. The introduction of steel works could also see the production of agricultural tools and railway lines. Basically we need to stop outsourcing and become self sufficient.

So what can we do to make all of this happen? We can reopen our railways. In 1906 the railway lines

almost went right around the country and if you look at the railway routes today, you will quickly realize that a lot of these lines have been left to ruin. We need to move away from road transport; at the moment only 2% of Irish freight is carried by rail. It is a resource that can be used to our advantage, saving on money and energy use.

Ireland also ‘already has a water infrastructure’ and if we expand our existing canal network we could link up the population and resources and use the water for economically viable transport rather than just for tourists and leisure.

So what do we do now? It is time for us to develop our Plan B. We can reuse waste, introduce equitable taxation (the polluter pays), corporate accountability (have them work for the people not themselves) and

develop the biomass and biogas sectors thereby reducing energy use in transport and the residential sector. At the moment all fireplaces with a chimney actually only heat up to a max of about 25% and when the fire is not lit the heat within the house escapes through the chimney. If sealed stoves are installed instead of these, our houses will be warmer and we will be using less energy. We would then need an industry to make these stoves, jobs would be created and there would be less energy usage. We need to start recycling paper, glass and plastic here instead of ‘sending it abroad and euphemistically calling it recycling’ as we do now. If these ideas are implemented, we can save ourselves from economic crisis and begin to effectively use our renewable energy resources. We can do it!

# Fear and Loathing in Tuam

Luke Holmes

WHILE travelling to Galway for a friend’s birthday, the journey ended up being the highlight of the trip. The trip was relatively uneventful until we stopped in Tuam, Co Galway. We stopped into a grotty petrol station where we bought food from a dirty and disgruntled cashier who picked our money out of the palms of our hands as if she would have caught some terrible disease if she made too much contact with it.

After spending our money in the deli, we were quickly ushered out of the shop, followed closely by the manager who was claiming that our excited noise levels were disturbing other customers shopping experience.

Feeling a little worse for wear and conscious of the fact that the day was young, we sat into the car in the car park. I tucked into a suspiciously pink-looking chicken roll expecting to turn violently ill at any second but I was so hungry I reckoned it was worth the risk.

We passed through Tuam, a town that had left me decidedly unimpressed.

On the other side of Tuam we came to a small country road beside a forested area. “We took a wrong turn there, man, turn back around.”

Just as these words were uttered, the driver noticed a large mass of men beside the forested area looking apprehensive and excited. There were over fifty cars left everywhere

and anywhere, as if they had been abandoned in some great rush.

“What’s going on here lads?” he asked inquisitively.

“Dunno, let’s go have a look, sure.”

Whatever was going on, there were enough people in the crowd for us to blend in fairly well. When we opened the doors of the car and walked closer we noticed the crowd were all involved in a sort of heated discussion verging on an aggressive confrontation. A lot of the crowd were drinking heavily and as it was one o’clock in the day, we thought this must be a special occasion.

One man in a white vest and a moustache that would have done a cast member from Magnum PI proud kept on shouting out, “No bitin’ No bitin! We wan ta schee a fair fite” in one of the most incoherent voices I have ever heard. I quickly got an ear for the accents after five minutes of deciphering the language hidden within the strange phraseologies. Two men in the centre of the circle seemed to be in the centre of the debate. They stood staring at each other aggressively, red faced and with venomous expressions.

We began to feel uncomfortable; we clearly didn’t fit in here but this was far too intriguing to simply walk off and forget about.

If asked to leave, we would quickly oblige without question, otherwise we would watch, gaining an insight into the type of world we were momentarily gaining access

to. Some men had cared to bring cameras, which intrigued us further. You don’t bring a camera to a forest for no reason. Something was happening here; it was planned and people were excited about it.

A middle-aged man in an all-denim outfit and boasting a greasy black mullet had set up a stall as a sort of side show – a wooden table with a box full of money on top. He began shouting his sales pitch; giving various odds on the fight, which he informed us, was about to take place.

“Four to one for the lurch to knock ‘em out”, he shouted continuously.

“Is this a bare knuckle boxing fight?” I asked.

One man butted in with an excited smile, “Yeah, it sure is.”

We weren’t sure if we wanted to be here, but still we were strangely fascinated. Most of the money was going on a man being referred to as ‘The Lurch’ who had a clear size advantage over his unnamed, aging opponent.

“Noah mure bets on de Lurch lads,” the crowded bookmaker shouted to the disappointment of the crowd.

Roughly £5,000 to £10,000 had been taken in by the bookmaker, his moneybox packed to the brim with £50 notes.

A man appeared from a red car in the makeshift car park and walked over with purpose. He immediately commanded the respect of the crowd by blowing a whistle. He was in some sort of referee attire. The

crowd fell silent.

“Right lads,” he started addressing the two middle-aged men who were all geared up to fight.

“I want a clean fight, no biting and no head buttin’.”

This was followed by a chorus of approval from the crowd some of who repeated the ref’s philosophy on the sport. “Ay, no bitin’ no buttin’.”

The two athletes proceeded to wrap up their knuckles and wrists with tape so as not to cause too much damage to their wrists in the fight. We stared in awe at the absolute madness that was unfolding in front of us. Is this really happening?

The crowd was getting restless. ‘The Lurch’ seemed to have a lot of supporters and family members behind him as many members of the crowd bared an uncanny resemblance to ‘The Lurch’.

“Gwen da Lurch” was a phrase chronologically roared out at any given opportunity by some of his more enthusiastic supporters.

I noticed one man with a shaved head, a tribal tattoo on his cheekbone staring at us from across the crowd. I chose to ignore him completely. This was not the type of place where you started a confrontation. He glared over in a way that suggested that our presence at such an underground event both confused and angered him. He had obviously spotted our tourist-like fascination on what was happening.

“Who are ye?” he shouted over at us.



I prayed that one of the lads would answer but how do you answer a question like that? Who were we? In this world we would have commanded little respect. We didn’t have nicknames like ‘The Chainsaw’, ‘The Bull’ or ‘The Lurch.’ We weren’t underground bare-knuckle boxers; we didn’t pride ourselves on our ability to inflict pain on others.

He began to march over towards us.

As he stormed across the muddy terrain we attracted more attention from the crowd who were increasingly turning from the fight build-up and concentrating on the reasons behind our attendance at such an exclusive sporting event.

We stuck out like Souljah Boy performing at a poetry reading, or Marilyn Manson attending mass:

not wanted and definitely not welcome.

“Ye would want ta get outta here fairly quickly, son, ye can’t just wanther ova ere lioke yaw owen da place so geth outha ere fore I rip yere eds off. Ya wudnt last one round wit me mate.”

I rejected his offer of a bare-knuckle boxing fight, and left immediately with a chorus of heckles spat in our direction as we scuttled back to the car.

Attention soon went back to the fight as we drove off into the distance feeling strangely bewildered at the kind of world we had just dappled in, but at the same time highly amused and exhilarated.

“Wait till we tell the lads about this.”



Environment

# Cluais Bodhar, Súil Dall Christmas Time in UL

Ruth Ní Cathair

AG SIÚIL timpeall an Ollscoil na laethanta seo, buaileann rud mé i gconaí ná, ní chloiseann tú an Ghaeilge á labhairt aon áit ar an gcampus agus ní hé nach bhfuil sé ag na daltaí nó ag na leachtóirí. Silim go bhfuil níos mó den Síneas agus den fhrancís cloister agam ná an Ghaeilge. De thoradh tagann an ceist suas, an bhfuil muinteoirí gaeilge na tíre seo chomh dona sin nach bhfuil gaeilge d’aon chaighdéan ag na daltaí uilig nó an bhfuil an fhírinne, nach bhfuil go leor speis ag daltaí chun i a labhairt. Is ceist é an mbeidh níos mó plé déanta ar sna míonna atá amach romhainn le Seachtain na Gaeilge ag teacht agus an rialtas ag iarraidh na pingin a chur sa bhanc. An coir dóibh léanuint ag aghaidh le Gaeilge mar príomh abhár san Ardeist agus airgead a thabhairt do na “Quangos” go léir éagsula a bhfuil “ag cur an teanga chun cinn” muna bhfuil suim dá laghad ag daoine ar bith inti? Is ceist é a bhfuil a thuairim féin ag gach duine faoi go háirithe mic

léinn. Ach is deas an rud é chun cloistéail go léanann UL a dualgaisí i leith an teanga le fograí dátheangach agus an fear sin a bhíonn ar an gcallaire sa leabharlann.....ach ná cur ceist ar duine ar bith cá bhfuil Gráig Thumhain!

Fear a bhí ag cuardach Tumhain i rith na seachtaine, an droichead ní an Gráig ná Martin Cullen. Is cinnte atá rud eigan na laethanta seo ná, go bhfuil an Nollaig ag teacht agus airí rialtais anseo ag tabhairt bronnntanas duinn. D’oscail Martin Cullen áitreabh den scoth i gcóir na daltaí ceol agus ní thar am comh maith. Ach bhuaigh na daltaí a raibh ann, buile siceolaíochta air, nuair nach ligeadh dó dul trasna an droichead go Thumain agus bhí air d’eirigh ón Merc agus siúil sa bhaisteach. Comhartha beag dó nach bhfuil muintir UL chun ligint dó agus dá comhghualithe sa rialtas dul tharainn agus táille ollscoile a thabhairt ar ais tríd an cúl doras ach chun mánaa a ghoid ón rialtas céanna, “Go leor déanta, i bhfad níos mó le déanamh”.

Daoine eile a bhí ag glacadh



Photo by Eoin Stephenson

páirt i gnéithe neamh oideachsúil den shaol ollscoile ná iadsan a bhí páirtech i Smokey Joe’s Café sa Johnathon Swift i rith na seachtaine. Oíche thar a bheith taitneamhach a bhí ann le ceol, damhsa agus roinnt acrobatics comh maith! Mar fóchuid den Drama Soc rinne said éacht ag iompú meon daoine nach raibh ceoldramaí “a rud” mar a dheirfá. Agus bhí sé díreach críochnaithe in am don Karaoke sa Stables. Smaoineamh níos fearr ná beith ag féachaint ar Éire ag ciallúint sa sacair arís ar aon nós. Ní mar sin a bhí sé ag féachaint ar Munster faroar agus iad ag déanamh éacht chun an ceann is fearr a fháil ar na All Blacks arís - bhuel beagnach! Agus cé a bhí i gcroí lar an rud ar fad ach UL. Is beag nach bhfuil pictúir ag chuile dalta le ceann de na All Blacks a bhuail

said leo i rith na seachtaine. Ní drochrud é i gcóir seachtain ag an ollscoil agus mar a bhí ráite ar an Máirt, “Ní fhaigheann tú é sin i Trinity!”

Mar focail scoir, rant beag dom féin.....ceard atá suas leis na doaine ard go léir atá timpeall an ollscoile seo faoi latháir? Ní hé go bhfuil rud agam i gcoinne daoine atá “suas ansin” ach an gcaithfidh sibh seasamh os comhair daoine beag? Cuireann sé as dom nuair a thagann daoine a raibh an t-ádh orthu cos fada a fháil ón a dhéantóir agus seasann os comhair daoine a bhfuil buanna eile acu seachas airde. Tá fios agaibh cé sibh! So mar nód de dhaoine ard UL ná stop os comhair leprechauns na hOllscoile go háirithe nuair atá Munster ar tí úd a scóráil! Go dtí an céad t-am eile.

You lined up on a freezing cold night in mid-November to purchase your Christmas Days Tickets, with the belief that the day and night would help you forget the worry of exam time. However, with Christmas Days done and dusted for another year students minds are filled with the events that will unfold during the dreaded weeks, marked in the UL calendar as ‘14’ and ‘15’

Speaking to students last week during The Stables annual festivities, exams and due dates were still present on most minds. However, Trinity Room vs. The Lodge was a big contender.

“They are so annoying” spat an irate, fourth year. Although, this maybe true, we should all try and cherish our exam time, as next year’s lot will have to pay a substantial increase of 67 per cent in fees just to sit them.

So instead of getting stressed when looking for books or trying to find a seat in the library proves harder than getting into The Lodge at 12 p.m. during Thursday of Rag Week. Take a moment and smile at how much less this year will be costing you (and more likely your parents) compared to subsequent years. Remember that there will be fewer students on campus next year due to people being unable to afford such fees. Do try and fake a smile when classmates who you had reported missing and presumed dead begin giving you extra compliments in order to either beg borrow or steal your hard earned, however, less expensive, notes.

But thankfully like all ‘good’ things exams will come to an end and you can rejoice in the knowledge that your lecturers will replace you sitting in their very own hot seat, fretting to get all papers marked by the 22 January. When we can all wait patiently for up to three hours for results to reveal themselves on the Student Portal. The Christmas festivities and turkey will keep your schedules crammed until Semester One with the exception being all the lucky Fourth Years. Who, shall spend the festive season on Jstor and Wikipedia, respectively filling chapters for the ever ominous due date, of the (three most dreaded letters that ever entered the alphabet) FYP!

Weeks 14 & 15 Extended Hours:  
Monday - Thursday: 08:30 - 22:00  
Saturday: 08:30 - 17:00 Deli: 08:30 - 16:30

Owned and operated by  
students for students!

LAB COATS  
& GLASSES

- Goodfellas Deeply Delicious Pizza flashed @ €2.99
- Spar Isotonic Orange - buy one get one free! €1.09
- Bramble Hill Cranberry Juice - half price! €0.89
- Cuisine de France mince pies - 6 for €2.20
- Chicken fajita mix in a wrap - €3
- Spar tortilla and dip for €2
- Cadbury Selection Box - buy one get one free - €3.50

STAR BUY!

Buy any roll or sandwich  
from the deli,  
and get any 2 of: M&M peanut/crispy,  
apple/banana  
AND Spar Water 750ml for €1 more!

Main Courtyard Shop:  
Monday - Friday 08:30 - 20:00  
Saturday 09:00 - 18:00  
Sunday 11:00 - 17:00

Dromroe Shop:  
Monday - Friday 08:30 - 18:00

See Euro Crunch offers in store:

- Spar Water sports cap..2 for €1
- Cadbury Crunchie/Caramel/Twirl...2 for €1
- Lyons teabags Green 40s...€1
- Spar chilled orange juice ...€1
- Kitten Soft 2-pack Toilet Roll white ...€1

specials



Finance

# Third Time Lucky for Eamonn

Brittany Witcher

“I AM an armchair supporter, but I’m a very, very avid supporter of Munster Rugby.”

Eamonn Gardiner sat back comfortably in his new office, his blue T-shirt sporting the authentic Munster Rugby logo. An old Munster flag hung on the wall to the right of him. A ply-wood board scrawled in pink and white paint saying “NO FEES” directly behind him.

Having experienced losing twice for the position, Gardiner compared his new position as the education officer at the University of Limerick Students’ Union to the GAA games.

“I suppose the first is—it’s a thing they say about Gaelic games in this country, and it’s very applicable in this situation. That if there’s no heartache in losing, there’s no joy in the victory.”

Gardiner (24), a former History and Politics undergrad, is now in his sixth year at UL studying for his Masters in History. He explained

that the subjects he studied definitely had a play in helping him achieve his position, but also his social experiences at college played a huge role as well.

“Definitely it’s the ability to meet people. To interact with people in a positive way. And to make friends.

“Personally, I grew up as a quiet young fellow. I read a lot of books. I stayed inside a lot. I didn’t really engage in sport. I didn’t really engage with the outside world as much as I should have or could have.

“[In college,] you learn to trust people. You learn to conduct mature, interpersonal relations with people. Quite possibly, [that is] the best thing to come out of a college degree apart from your degree.”

After previously running for the education officer position twice, Gardiner finally achieved his goal this year when he won against Diarmuid Healy by nearly 350 votes.

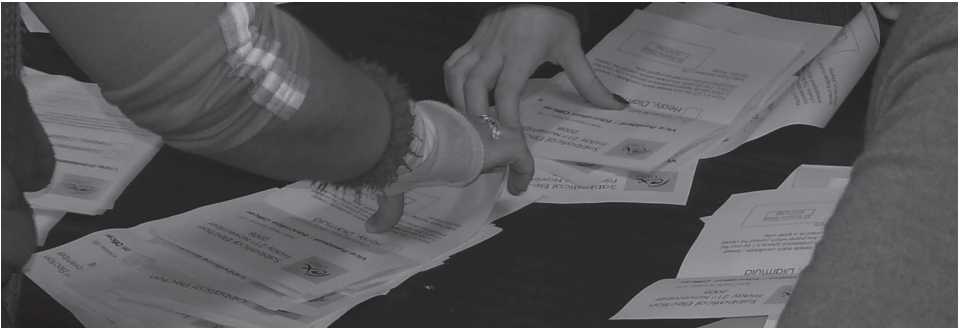
While many people this semester turned out to vote for him, some were skeptical about Gardiner’s policies. One person in particular

recently posted in a blog: “[W]hile Eamonn’s promises/aspirations are indeed admirable I think every Education Officer since I’ve been in UL has promised something similar. Maybe I’m just cynical, but what’s new?”

Gardiner responded: “I’d agree. He is just cynical. Yeah, they’re campaign promises. Campaign promises aren’t meant to be taken seriously. They’re meant to give to the electorate something to give you an insight into the person that you’ve never met before.

“I accept that. Eight months is a very short time. It’s four months shorter than 12 months for starters, and this is an in-term position. But if I don’t achieve at least one thing that I’ve set out; it will sting me for the rest of my life, because I promised student teachers I’d do something.

“And if I don’t deliver on any of my promises—if I don’t get a photocopier for the Health Sciences Building in some way, shape, or form, it will hurt me. So basically, what I would say to that person is



yes, everyone promises these things. And yes, some people deliver and some people do not. But I wanted the position for three years. Personally, I wouldn’t be able to live with myself, if I didn’t do something—if I didn’t achieve something.”

Gardiner has a passion for his position as education officer and he wants to get more and more people interested in the position as well. Giving some advice to future UL Education Officers, he said to sit in on some meetings or ask to sit in their office for a day. “You walk a mile in a man’s shoes. It’ll tell you an awful lot about them.

“What is important I feel is you have to know what you’re taking on. You’re taking on a big ask, and if you fail at that ask, if you leave for one reason or another, you have to accept that people will remember that.

“And if you’re willing to take it on for a year, I will say, you have my full support in whatever capacity I give it to you. But if you’re just looking for an easy job for a year, look elsewhere. There are easier jobs than this one. It’s very hard, but it’s immensely rewarding if you get it right.”

Ten years from now, Gardiner

wants to take everything he has learned from this experience as Education Officer and apply it to his future career. He aspires to one day write books on history, preferably Ireland at the turn of the 20th century. But he is even considering teaching or travelling abroad through the army reserves he is already a part of. Generally, Gardiner wishes to make a difference in the lives of many people.

“If I could make a difference in one person’s life, every year in those 10 years, then that would be 10 very good reasons to keep doing what I’m doing.”

## That’s My Goal

Ciaran Lyne

“I WROTE myself a cheque for ten million dollars for acting services rendered and dated it Thanksgiving 1995 (at the time he was earning around \$20,000). I put it in my wallet and it deteriorated. And then, just before Thanksgiving 1995, I found out I was going to make ten million dollars for Dumb & Dumber. I put that cheque in the casket with my father because it was our dream together”

*Jim Carrey, Oprah Winfrey Show, 1997*

This is a great example of setting future career goals, and it is something I have taken to heart. I recently realized that I have been in education for so long with my path preordained; that I began to think less and less about what I would do once I was actually finished. I had become so accustomed to there always being goals for me to focus on in the short term (a test or a college project) that I never focused my attention on any long term goals. This is ironic seen as education is a means to give an advantage in the “real world”, and not an end in itself. I can honestly say that, this has changed significantly in recent weeks. I have gone from being passive about

my future, to almost obsessive. I recently got 3 pages of A4 paper and wrote out life goals for where I wanted to be in 1, 5 and 10 years time. Let me tell you, for someone who has never looked past his next test or night out, this was a daunting task. It was daunting, but refreshing; I realized that with 10 years and a college education, there is very little you can’t do....

### Some of my goals

- ☐ 1 Year Achieve a 2.1, have a blog, be able to play guitar
- ☐ 5 Year Own a car, speak another language fluently
- ☐ 10 Year Own a house, pub and a yacht (minimum 30ft). Married?

There is a famous study conducted at Harvard in 1979. In that year, the students were asked, “Have you set clear, written goals for your future and made plans to accomplish them?” Only three percent of the graduates had written goals and plans; 13 percent had goals, but they were not in writing; and a whopping 84 percent had no specific goals at all.

Ten years later, the members of the class were interviewed again, and the findings, while somewhat predictable, were nonetheless astonishing. The 13 percent of the class who had goals were earning,

on average, twice as much as the 84 percent who had no goals at all. And what about the three percent who had clear, written goals? They were earning, on average, ten times as much as the other 97 percent put together.



# NOKIA



Get your Mobile Phone collected  
at the Students’Union and have it  
repaired for free at...  
Nokia Service Centre, 66 Catherine St, Limerick.

Text 087-9531975

or email

info@nokiaservicelimerick.com for more information.



Columnists

Pete’s Pet Peeves

What really pisses me off is the government’s nonchalant attitude towards third-level education fees. Now, I know that, to many, this is beating a long-dead horse, but the repercussions of this government’s flippant actions will be known not only to current students, but probably the children and grandchildren of current students as well.

The government can blame the current economic situation if they like, but this has, in all truth, been a long time coming and has been part of a larger effort in the economic liberalisation of this country that Haughey put in place two decades ago. Let’s not make any mistake when we call “Haugheyism” what it really is: “Reaganism,” and “Thatcherism.”

Many players in policymaking circles during the 1980s have come out in recent years and described the level of sexual tension between Lady Thatcher and the late Mr Haughey, so we can question ‘til the cows come home about ‘why’ Ireland adopted the policies of neo-liberalism, but let’s not kid ourselves that Ireland did in fact spread its legs wide open to foreign direct investment and agree to radically cut state spending across the board – including third-level education for its citizens.

This is only a piece of the larger economic so-called “reforms” coming to fruition – a plan of neo-liberal totality. This element of the plan coming to fruition just so happens to come at a time when neo-liberalism itself has entered a period of systemic crisis around the world – what we are calling the “current economic crisis,” or the “credit crunch.”

What the government would do well to remember is that it was the high quality of education in this country, especially in the “before times,” before the Celtic Tiger, before you had a Taoiseach who fancied a right-wing, English ginger.

This island was renowned through the dark times of the Middle Ages as the European pinnacle for education, and it was the educators from this island who were largely responsible for re-disseminating educational institutions across Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire. Education has historically been a backbone of this land itself. When there was nothing else going good, education was still stronger than it was in many other post-colonial developing countries.

I was delighted to see and hear a very vocal protest take place last week, led by an SU President who has been a profound organisational and motivational force on this campus in rallying students behind such an important cause that affects everyone, whether they know it or not.

What really p\*ssed me off afterwards was the attack on said President by a joke of party that calls itself “left wing” through global media outlets like the once-respected (by Pete) Indy Media. They accused the individual doing the most on this issue of being in bed with the ruling party of government; of being too soft, and of being disingenuous on the issue of third-level fees.

What had been a very successful protest that got the attention of members of the government was tainted by their behaviour and the proliferation and tone of their accusations. I, for one, miss Joe Higgins greatly. I respect him and I think he was a potential agent of change. The problem with many young people, however, is that they don’t understand the concept of winning hearts and minds – they seem to just succeed in p\*ssing them off.

They remind me of the “emo kids” from South Park who simply sit back and criticise any action that any one takes that they are not in charge of. They even criticise Marxist academics for not being radical enough while they sit there sucking the sweet juice of hypocrisy from unnamed cola products.

It was Marx who said that ‘the people’ get to make their own history, but not in the structures of their choosing. Even if a prominent leader for the students has historically been tied to a political party, it does not mean that he cannot be a profound agent of positive change. Building consensus between those who are against an issue is the only way forward in getting something concrete done about an issue. A small, disgruntled faction throwing stones from within the larger majority who are against the same exact thing won’t even make a ripple in the river they were trying to block. Damn it!



I Spy only realised this week that he had failed readers miserably. This realisation hit me as I attempted to finish the most soul crushing essay of my life. As the clock ticked to 5am, I stared into the abyss of how Italian party systems were crap, and I wondered why we needed Italy at all. My life would be so much easier without them and their systems, but, alas, we do have Dolmio sauce and pizza, so it’s not all bad.

As I downed my fifth cup of coffee in the space of three hours I stopped shaking to realise I had never rated the coffee on campus: “you fool,” I thought. Coffee is a staple of every student’s life. It’s like cheap cocaine – and it won’t kill you – which is always good. It shits on red sauce in the importance stakes; shits all over it.

So here we go, where is the best coffee on campus?

My first voyage was into the Stables. Here, there are two different methods of coffee making. One is the standard percolator coffee coming in at €1.25, the other is a more flashy Bewley’s grinder type for €1.80, it must be noted that this posher version comes with a little caramelised biscuit which sweetens the deal. The regular stuff is grand and does the trick. The more expensive version is nice, but isn’t the best in the €1.80 bracket. Still though try it once because it could be to your liking.

On Wednesday I was doing a marathon session in the Library, I got to the point where I was trying to convince myself I was studying but I was actually staring at a brown haired girl with amazing eyes and a white jumper, she looked scared so I don’t think I was getting anywhere! I ran down to the ULSU Shop and got a large coffee for €1:85. It was a good size mug and the coffee is quite nice. I also got a good buzz of it which enabled me to stare at women for at least another 2 hours, all in all.....job done.

On Thursday I went to the bar they used to call Java’s(Scholars for you freshers). Being known as Java’s carries a promise, it means if you decide to name your café after a type of coffee, it better be pretty damn good coffee (€1.80). Well I have to say that their coffee is pretty damn good. You get a good amount, especially in the take away mugs, plus to be honest with you its good and strong and will blow the head of a happy first year. I strode back down to the library like a man on a mission, ran up the stairs, sat down at the table, opened the book, got up walked around to burn off some energy, sat down at the table, got up again to go to the toilet etc etc etc. So there you have it. My advice to amateur coffee drinkers would be head to Java/Scholars’, forget the drugs get with the mugs yaaaaa.

So there you have it I didn’t go anywhere else cause I had to study like and didn’t want to waste my money on some sub-standard shite, bit stuck in my ways that way. I hope anyone who read the column enjoyed it. I’m sure a lot didn’t but that’s why I write anonymously. I leave being heckled to people who actually enjoy it like Union heads or whatever. Have a good Christmas and look forward to my first article in the February edition where I Spy will rate which one of your relatives its best to call a bollox on Christmas day, I don’t want to offend anyone so I might just go with all of them.....



Columnists

Generally speaking the protest held to curtail Minister Cullen’s visit to the opening of the ICO seemed to be a success, or so I could see from the Stables, although the view wasn’t the best. Around 300 people turned up, shouted at the Minister; an effective-looking photo was taken of the Minister turning around; lots of media attention. Job done.

But, perhaps not. Possibly – probably – around the pages of this paper the happenings at the ICO’s opening itself will not be mentioned. Or maybe it will be, in which case it will be the SU ‘line’ and therefore to be approached with caution. The front page of the SU website very bravely dealt with the unaffiliated protestors with the line, in a smaller font than the rest of the article, ‘A breakaway group of students who were not affiliated with the Students’ Union protest continued the demonstration at the ICO building’... blah, blah, blah.

At this point Bath goes to try and read the posts on both Indymedia and the ULSU.ie discussion boards relating to the controversy about the second protest in an effort to find something interesting to say...

Very boring to read a long, thin column of text – I can only imagine how you feel.

Pa’s response, despite its importance, is simply too long to read through. Yes, I am hung over, thank you for asking. Focusing is problematic.

I make it through the Frau Goebbels response to the SU’s detractors. It all looks familiar, probably because I read it on last Friday on Indymedia but can’t remember. No deal was made, Pa is an FF-er but he doesn’t bring his politics into the office. Good man, jolly good show. What else...

Bath goes down to the kitchen for a glass of water sporting his hangover t-shirt, typing trousers and untreated hair. To say he looks dishevelled would be an understatement. According to a free calendar from Jumbos, next year will be the year of the boar. How apt.

Seem to be a lot more students selling Viagra and pornography on the SU message boards than the last time I was there. Somebody else is selling a bike for €50. Looks pretty good in the description but I need a photo. Damn, focus Bath – student protests, big debate about the presence of non-ULSU SU types on campus etc.

Banging on windows, shouting, causing an obstruction for others by being kneeled on and that sort of thing, but gladly no pooing on cars, was what has been reported. But while many have suggested that they put the University and the student population into disrepute, I’d say that they were a little less impressive than that.

No doubt, aside from the exciting people who regularly discuss issues on message boards and read

# Notes from the Bath

Indymedia, no one will stop their children from going to UL because of the poor quality of students they have down here. It’ll be the guns and that gangs that swing it for them that way. People have very short memories for student protests unless they’re very, very big. Paris 1968 for example. UCD’s Gentle Revolution anybody? No, thought not.

But anyway, FEE is linked to Socialist Youth. This is interesting for a big, obvious Marxist reason.

“We FEE stand for the building of a mass activist grassroots student campaign to fight the attempt to bring in fees and fight for genuinely free education. We believe that education should be funded through central progressive taxation on the rich and the corporations along with an end to the €80 million/year subsidy of private second level education by the government.” Aside from the second part of this which I would absolutely support, the first part is inherently flawed from a political point of

view.

A lobby group can affect changes in a government policy if they have influence in terms of access or resources. A large, well-organised, but poorly resourced lobby group can, if it acts very efficiently, change small parts of policy, such as getting the Government to reconsider reintroducing fees, which is largely what has happened. But because of the lack of real influence – access or resources – which students possess, the policy change simply displaced the fundamental need to raise money into a hike of the registration fee. If students were truly a significant lobby group, which they simply cannot be without the support of the wider Trade Union movement or a major political party, the displacement would have effected another sector of society. This is not likely.

What FEE want to affect is a total transformation in the nature of the economic system in the country, in the name of no one and based on a



non-existent abstract principle that education is a right. Under no conceptualisation of human rights could third level education be considered a right.

You may not like it, but, based on the fact that even if you were to get every student in Ireland on board, generally speaking, you still would not be able to execute the economic transformation required for ‘totally free’ University education, and by protesting against the reintroduction without the accompanying economic transformation, you are merely consolidating the situation whereby working class people are forced to indirectly pay for the children of middle and upper-middle class families to go to college, thus reinforcing and reproducing existing system of elites and power structures

in society – to speak in the parlance. Good socialists would focus on making sure that the supports which make it possible for those from disadvantaged areas and perennial poverty are given a better opportunity to go to University than attempting to consolidate a broken, lowest-common denominator system.

Your idealism is therefore misplaced and would be better served focusing on the actual problems of a neoliberal economy, rather than trying to court attention by making Third Level Fees a focus of your never-ending angst. Or better still, you could play some sport. It releases endorphins which may solve some of the anger problems. Porn is good too, when used in small doses. I hear there’s some for sale on the ULSU website.

## From The Working World

The innermost thoughts of a co-op student

Finn McDuffie

### 20 November 2008

While studying students worry about exams, Co-op students have different concerns. These concerns are wrapped in silly Santa ties, sparkly tinsel and bad dancing. I’m talking about office Christmas parties. Those awful affairs of fluff and sparkles and Santa hats. Don’t get me wrong - I’m no Scrooge. Hell, I’d give Crockett coal any day.

But while free drink and dancing wrapped in shiny delight might dazzle a student in any other circumstance, the thought of getting hammered and later dirty-jiving with a Client before vomiting all over a Senior Partner’s lap seems less appealing. This hasn’t happened to me, of course. I value my career. But I know of someone it did happen to. And he was fired.

On the other hand, workers behave differently when their co-workers are absolutely fluted. Parties are the seeds from which rumours blossom. And it’s always the busy bee that collects the most gossip. Some people enjoy the night’s spectacles and leave them behind along with their sobriety. And some enjoy them over and over again. I’m talking about the type of person who will tell all about the Associate who took his secretary home for Christmas. This is the type of person who saw the receptionist order 10 shots on the company account. This is the person who is most sober of all. And they’re easily detected because theirs will be the only party-hat still on by 12 that night. It takes a sober bee to collect all that pollen!

### 24 November 2008

I got a funny email today. Comedy usually portrays an unusual character in a normal situation or vice versa. Cringe-worthiness also sometimes makes a situation quite hilarious. Nobody understands this better than Hollywood producers, who often portray the toe-curlingly

horrendous antics of a misunderstood hero. Predictably, one bad situation occurs after another after another. And there’s generally something to do with a fire or being fired. This is why my friend’s Christmas party should feature in a Ben Stiller movie. Though, as it wasn’t a movie, there was no predictability involved.

Apparently it started off fine. My friend was excitedly chatting to fellow students, also on internment from other Universities and seated around one table. The firm had chosen a fine Dublin five-star hotel for their festive event. All were seated in the dining hall and the tables were beautifully presented. An atmosphere of formality set in, as napkins were drawn on laps and waiters hurriedly served ‘madams’ and ‘sirs’. Candles lit the crockery and cutlery and crackers and tinsel, decorations and streamers adorned the tables.

It started with one DCU student, who began to mess with a streamer which hung from high on the table’s centrepiece. As he played with it, the streamer caught fire. Slowly but surely, what started as a small fire began to engulf the streamer quite rapidly. His attempt to extinguish it with a napkin ended in more flames. The entire hall’s attention had turned to the student table. The entire length of the streamer and centre piece had now burst into flames. A minor fiasco had unravelled. Thoughts of hotel evacuation tormented my friend who sat beside the student who’d started the fire who was discussing the use of milk to extinguish the flames. A more enlightened UL student just splashed a jug of water over the fire, the table and whoever got in the way of the streaming water. The dining hall erupted with applause. The students were helpless with laughter. Much like the end of a Hollywood movie. And not without the one-liner, which came from none other than the CEO. ‘Students are the future of our country. But if they are anything like ours, the whole place will go up in smoke.’ And though ash floated merrily around the dining hall for the rest of the evening, everybody lived happily ever after.

## A Fresh Approach

Jason Kennedy

Diary of a First Year

WHERE did this semester go? It seems like yesterday I was going out every night and spending all my money on pints, shots and the occasional book. Thirteen weeks later and now I’m right back in leaving cert mode, but I still manage to enjoy the odd night out.

The past few weeks I’ve had interview after interview. I’ve chatted to Michael Lowry about Educational cutbacks, Bankers about the Government’s dig-out and, best off all, Paul Howard about life before Ross O’Carroll Kelly. Paul may write as a self-centred, arrogant man, but it’s obvious from the start that he’s the exact opposite, and he really knows how to interact with the crowd, making them laugh at every joke. During the interview we hit common ground straight away, after I told him that I did work experience in the ‘Sunday Tribune’, the newspaper that launched Ross O’Carroll-Kelly into the public eye. We chatted for about fifteen minutes and he never glanced at his watch or sighed once. It was his own time he was giving up. Paul Howard was easily the nicest man I’ve interviewed so far.

But I’d love to have an interview with Martin Cullen after the protest on Thomond Bridge. When I first heard of it, honestly, I thought it was a bit mad. Sure what does Martin Cullen really have to do with fees? I said I’d go down to see what it was like and was shocked by the huge turnout. Being the sheep that I am, I decided, fuck it, I might as well join in. It may have been raining, but that didn’t stop the crowd from letting Martin Cullen know exactly what they think of the Government when he arrived late, in his shiny new automobile. It didn’t take long for him to turn around and leave. True, he did end up opening the concert hall, but I thought the whole point was just to stop him crossing the bridge. Just to send out a message, not to piss on the ICO’s parade. It just seems fair. Still, when I went back to Cappavilla from the protest, there was a certain society, that I aren’t name, still lingering at the concert hall, desperate to make themselves as big a nuisance as they could. They banged on the ICO’s windows and yelled abuse at everyone that dared criticize them. These people should have just left like everyone else did, instead of making themselves look foolish.

Okay so, rant and semester over. Until next year.



In Focus:

Exam Busting

Stress Busting

Exam Checklist



Eamonn Gardiner  
Education Officer

Lose your head if it wasn't tied on? Fly off the handle at the slightest bit of pressure? Well then exams are going to be FUUUUUNNN for you! But on a more serious note, they're exams; they're not the end of the world! Handle them like that and before you know it you'll be through them without a bother! As a former fellow sufferer I know where you are coming from; my first exam (Politics) had me so stressed that I couldn't eat anything before it! And it was at half-four! That sort of stress isn't helpful to anyone. If you let that get to you, the exam period will loom over you like some sort of scary-monster-type-thing (kind of obvious that I majored in Politics and not English)! The purpose of this article is basically to give you a few pointers about how to lessen the impact of the inevitable stress which will come down onto your nice sheltered life of lectures and lodging like a proverbial ton of rectangular shaped building thingies.

1. Eat well. An army marches on its stomach and your studying skills will only march so far without sustenance. And the person sitting opposite you in the exam will get really thick if your tummy keeps rumbling all the way through the paper (personal experiences)!
2. Arrive on time. Again personal experiences on this one. Don't wake up on the floor of your room having fallen asleep studying all night long

and have to race to your exam! Spending the first ten minutes of your exam attempting to get your breath back is not fun!

3. Bring pens and pencils. There is nothing worse than running out of steam in an exam! Don't let yourself down and run out of ink! Also if you're doing a paper which requires drawing make sure you bring your materials with you; if you get a chance clean the rulers etc so they won't mark the page.
4. Read the whole paper from start to finish; you might find that Questions further down the page suit you better than those at the top. Don't rush in, take a few minutes and use some spare paper (put up your hand and ask for it!).
5. Do a word dump; literally write down everything you can remember from your studying on one side of the page. After you've looked at it for a while, turn the page over and use the reverse to try and construct a working idea of what you're going to write for your answer. Don't be afraid to ask for more rough work paper!
6. Don't just dump all those lovely words on to the paper! Think about your question, analyse it and underline key words and phrases, e.g. *Explain the similarities and differences* between the *War of Independence* and the *Civil War*. Then construct your essay around those key points; don't write about everything you know, only write about everything you've been asked!!
7. Your ID card is not just for getting into nightclubs and the Stables/Scholars. Bring it with you to your exams; the invigilators will need to verify you're you (who else would be stupid enough to sit an exam they don't have to?) before they'll let you into the exam hall. Students have been forced to either return home or go to Student Academic Administration in order to get a new card before the invigilators will allow them to take an exam!
8. Turn off your phone going into the exam, or put it on silent. There's nothing worse than being in the middle of a train of thought and having the invigilator march down and interrupt you!
9. Leave your lucky teddy or dolly in your school bag. Trust me they'll still be close enough to give you the bestest luck possible and the supervisor won't ruin your luck by asking you to remove them!
10. Take your time planning a question for a few minutes before you race off into it and realise you've no idea what you're writing about! Use your rough work paper; you did pay for it after all!
11. Don't on the other hand take the entire exam period planning the celebrations after the exam or ogling the hot (male and/or female) supervisors! Firstly, you're pretty obvious boys and girls and secondly it just distracts you from what you're supposed to be doing, namely writing your paper and getting your exams! Don't daydream, it's an expensive hobby in more ways than one.

- DO NOT leave for your exam without your:**
- ID Card (You can't sit your exam without it!) ☒
  - Pens/Pencils/Eraser/Set Squares ☒
  - Calculator/Dictionary/Texts allowed ☒
  - Bottle of Water ☒
- In your Exam hall you MUST:**
- Eat breakfast/lunch before you go to your exam; you might not want to but you will need the energy. Your body will thank you! ☒
  - Take everything off your desk apart from what you will be using to write with, your ID Card and any other essential materials (Calculators, Dictionaries, etc); Lucky Mascots etc have to stay in your bag. ☒
  - Put your hand up and ask for roughwork paper as soon before you start answering; its designed to allow you space to rough out your ideas without destroying your answers! ☒
  - Read the ENTIRE paper before you start answering! There might be questions that suit you better further down the page. You may have to answer questions from different sections. ☒
  - Do a Word-Dump on the roughwork paper. Write down all ideas concerning the question you're thinking of answering. You might know more than you think and as you write more information might come to you. ☒
  - Don't rush through all short questions; with multiple choice questions be careful. Leave harder questions until the end. Take time saved on some questions and put it towards harder questions. Don't leave anything blank; attempt everything! You don't lose marks for trying and they all add up towards the total overall mark. ☒
  - Use every minute of time you have; supervisors get paid if you leave early or last! Don't daydream. Answer your questions and have a read back over them at the end if you get a chance. Having a few minutes at the end to do this drastically increases your chances of spotting mistakes and increasing your marks! ☒
  - Don't forget your ID Card! Every year people lose ten minutes off their exam (and a few quid from their pockets) because they have to go and get a new one issued from Student Academic Administration! ☒





# Nackered?

Instead of sleeping in the library why not meet another student or postgrad from your course for a coffee?"

**connect**  
student network 

[www.ul.ie/connect](http://www.ul.ie/connect)

Email: [connect@ul.ie](mailto:connect@ul.ie) • Phone: 061 23 4624

Text: 086 728 3131 • Office: Main Building C2-058

A student run service.  
We help you with stuff!



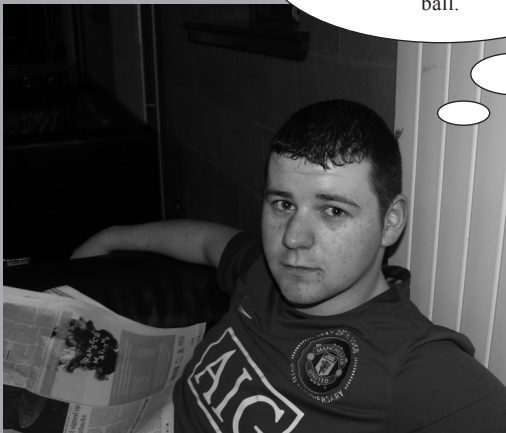
Student Speak

With exams looming on the horizon and the threat of studying casting a shadow on the campus, *Eamon Heavey* asks UL what their best excuses are to get out of exams.

Sarah Murray  
2nd Year Law & European Studies  
Mumps. Simple as.



Colm O'Brien  
3rd Year Sports Science  
I'll still be hungover from the PESS ball.



Paula  
Hanly 2nd Year Law & European Studies  
I'm not saying PMS!!



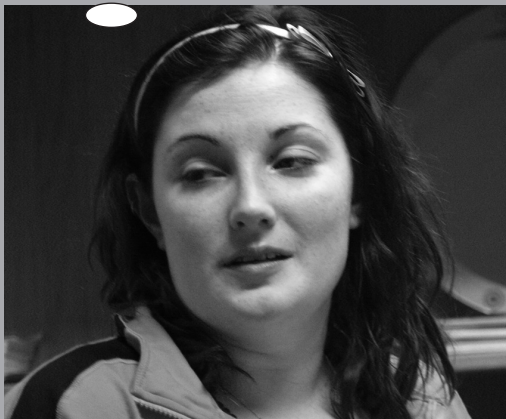
Santa Clause  
I'll be too busy  
finding all the naughty  
little girls!



Cathal Ronan  
1st Year Arts  
STD anyone?.



Aoife Finnerty  
4th Year Law & European Studies Post-traumatic stress disorder brought on by the amount of German I've had to study.



Rachel Ward  
1st Year Journalism & New Media  
I'm pregnant; don't tell my parents.





## Editorial

# An Focal

University of Limerick  
Students' Union  
University of Limerick, Plassey, Co Limerick  
Volume XVII, Issue 7  
Tuesday, 2 December, 2008

Letters to the editor (Aoife Breen, 2008/09) may be sent to the above address or alternative may be emailed to editor@ulsu.ie. Please note that submission of a letter does not guarantee publication, but you never know, you may be lucky.



## The Last Word

This is the second year that exams in UL are before Christmas. Before the calendar change last year, exams always sat at the bottom of January's gloom, weighing down the holiday break, demanding more attention than a spoilt child on Christmas morning who has discovered that he is without the prerequisite batteries.

Now, with exams all piled before the festive season really kicks off, the autumn semester is all neatly packaged together, without any breaks.

Running from early September until mid-December, 15 weeks at UL just pass by so quickly.

First years are no longer the freshers that they were in orientation week. Fourth years now have to face up to the reality of FYPs that have been consistently pushed off the agenda. Co-op students are getting their final pay slips; the next batch is looking forward to income. Erasmus students are packing their bags to come home; others, counting down to their departure.

Much change can happen over the course of a semester at UL. It is, after all, the best part of four months; a third of a year. But it just doesn't seem that long when it's actually in motion.

Suddenly, you find yourself at the end of the whirlwind in week 13 with no more lectures or classes and maybe there's even a twinge of guilt if you didn't go to some of them over the previous 12 weeks; it's not like there wasn't an opportunity to do so.

It doesn't seem like all that long ago that Blizzards' front man Niall Breslin was telling the new students of UL not to accept the return of third level tuition fees from the stage in the courtyard.

Fees have been the buzzword this semester. From the streets of Limerick in September, to Cork in October to our own bridge on campus in November, the students of UL have taken Bressie's advice on board. We will not accept this; we will not shut up.

As has been stated in these pages so many times before and will, undoubtedly, be stated again, the issue of third level fees is more than about standing in Arthur's Quay Park or chanting on a bridge. It is about

the idea behind what fees mean: a barrier to education; a financial barrier to access to education.

A thousand students turned out to march through the city on 23 September; 400 blocked Minister Cullen from crossing Thomond Bridge. Who knows how many will turn out next semester?

Semester two will come sooner than can be imagined. Six weeks away from the microcosm that is UL will give everyone a chance to lunge themselves into it all again come week 1 at the end of January.

And then the usual whirlwind frenzy will begin again for another 15 weeks. With the added bonus of RAG week in there, too. Seasons greetings to all An Focal readers; until next year, farewell.

“A thousand students turned out to march through the city on 23 September; 400 blocked Minister Cullen from crossing Thomond Bridge”.

## Pa's Propaganda

Hello people and Merry Christmas, or exam time as I like to call it.

So I'm sure most of you have freaked out or will be freaking out about some aspect of exams at the minute. But don't worry, keep the head, stay relaxed and just do as much as you can. These things usually work out anyway once you put the work in. One year I studied the whole wrong century in a History exam which was inconvenient for me to say the least, but hey the repeat went well so not so bad. Once you're done with them there's no point in worrying about them until January so get them out of the way and celebrate accordingly.

Being Christmas I don't like to bring bad news but I just have one thing. For the past three weeks Bus Éireann have suspended their services on a Tuesday and Thursday after 10pm to all of Castletroy. The reason for this is some really stupid behaviour from people on the buses. People are kicking down seats and breaking bottles on the floors. Whatever about drinking on the bus, breaking glass where someone could fall on it and get injured isn't cool. We all want to have a bit of craic like but now we no longer have a bus service. This puts the safety of student who can't afford a taxi

and have to walk home in jeopardy. Sorry for sounding like someone's dad but it is a serious issue.

On a lighter note I think we have had a good first semester around here, but I think second is going to be better. In second semester we are going to welcome on campus some great acts. We already have two bands booked for Rag Week (not telling ye yet) and we'll see the return of the stage in the courtyard and the festival feel that worked so well during Oktoberfest's Freshers' Ball. We also hope to have a gig for you when you return, a kind of welcome home, or welcome from home depending how you look at it.

We will also continue our campaign against fees with a national protest, and will keep representing you as best we can.

So, yeah, that's about it. Don't forget to keep bringing your issues to me; if you provide the rocks I will throw them! It's been a pleasure representing you all so far and I hope you're happy with what we're at in here. If you aren't, then feel free to come in and tell me what you want to improve and we'll do our best!

Wishing you Happy Times,  
Pa



The SU are reputed to have gone too far, now blocking Santa from the campus, demanding a sleigh-turnaround and calling an end to the feestivities.

Cartoon by Larissa Mirtschink





The Advice Bureau

# Leaving UL's never easy.... UL Careers Service

Eamonn Gardiner - Education Officer

The entire point of coming to college (apart from those pesky little things like leaving home, meeting new people and broadening your horizons) is to get a career and then get a job. We are fortunate enough in UL to have at our disposal a great service, specifically aimed at those who want to get ahead in the world of work and settle into their career path once they graduate.

The UL Careers Service is a subsection of the University's Co-Operative Education Office. It serves as the first port of call for many students who are seeking employment and offers great help and advice at Under and Postgraduate course levels. It provides a drop-in service for those students who are simply looking for short term help with CVs and interview preparation. It also allows students to access their considerable library of careers literature in their Careers Resource Area (EO019). The office also allows students the option of taking away copies of the material it provides or printing off online information should they want to.

For those who feel that they require further help in the preparation of their CV and more detailed discussion, the Careers Service also allows students to schedule a one-to-one appointment with one of their Career Advisors. This service also serves as a primary and secondary contact point for all students who are interested in pursuing postgraduate education both in Ireland and overseas.

The service aims to act in an intermediary capacity, representing students to companies and also encouraging employers to employ UL graduates in their enterprises. The office maintains and constantly updates their employer lists, also inviting employers interested in recruiting onto campus. This allows Under and Postgraduates with heavy course loads to contact potential employers in a face-to-face setting and gives them the ability to interact with their potential employers.

For employers, the service aims to provide them with the highest standard possible of graduates from one of the best third level institutions in Western Europe. Academic excellence and course-relevant co-operative placements are vital in this endeavour.

The Careers Service is open from Monday to Friday (2:30-4:30) and on Tuesdays and Fridays (11:30-1:30). It is located in EO019 (disabled users can access an alternative room at CG052 and the office can be contacted on (061) 202476 and at [www.ul.ie/careers](http://www.ul.ie/careers).

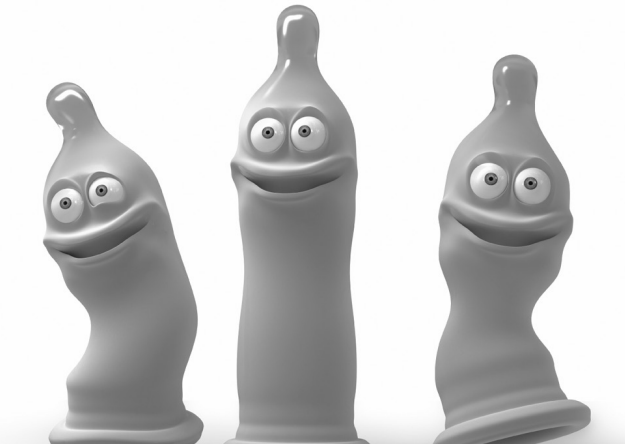
# A Guide to... Safer Sex

### Description

Safer sex means using any form of barrier method, e.g. condoms, female condoms, glyde and dental dams and latex gloves, to help prevent the transfer of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and also pregnancy in the case of condoms.

### How it Works

If you choice not to practice abstinence; the only way to help protect yourself from STIs and pregnancy is to use a barrier method that suits you and your partner. Safer sex barriers are made from latex with the exception of female condoms which are made from polyurethane. Whether you use a barrier method on, in, over or all about the penis and vagina the effect is still the same; body fluids are stopped from passing from one partner to another.



### Advantages

- The effectiveness of safer sex barriers varies, but most are very highly effective at preventing the transmission of STIs.
- All safer sex barrier methods listed above are available without prescription in most chemists, supermarkets and are free of charge from the Students' Union Welfare Office
- And all are compatible with other methods of practicing safer sex
- No medical side effects
- Safer sex is guaranteed better sex because it takes the worry of STIs and/or pregnancy out of the situation.

### Drawbacks

- Using barrier methods correctly requires practice especially in the case of glyde and dental dams and the male and female condoms.
- Safer sex barriers can get damaged if handled roughly or an oil-based lubricant is used, with the exception of the female condom which may be used with an oil-based lubricant.
- All barriers have a used- by date and should not be used after their expiry date
- With the exception of the male and female condom, safer sex barriers are not methods of contraception, i.e. they will not prevent pregnancy and should therefore be used in conjunction with a method of contraception e.g. the pill.
- Only total sexual abstinence can provide protection from STIs and prevent pregnancy.

# Let's talk about sex baby!

An Focal sex columnist Annie Glyde-Dammes

Inspired by a pair of handcuffs that I saw nailed to the notice board of a friend of mine I thought that the topic of this week's column should be bondage; the good, the bad and the ugly.

See, there are varying degrees of bondage –from the run of the mill scarves and ties for blindfolding and fluffy handcuffs to the whips and studded collars, similar to the ones in Dodgeball, if you've seen it. For the purposes of this column I'm going to talk basic bondage, if for no other reason, than the fact that I have absolutely no experience in anything more hardcore...

So yes, the topic at hand, bondage. If it's practiced safely then basic bondage-lite can be a lot of fun for both partners. Blindfolds can, amongst other things, result in a heightening of the remaining senses – naturally, touch and sound in particular. They increase the ability for one partner to tease the other, so naturally they magnify excitement and amplify the build-up to sex for many people and couples alike.

Unsurprisingly, the fact that your partner cannot see what you are about to do and vice versa intensifies his or her anticipation significantly. If both partners are wearing blindfolds at the same time it can often result in lessening inhibitions and more self-confidence; you're not eyeballing each other so unless you do something way out there, there's no need for embarrassment, is there?

Handcuffs often act as the vehicle in which submissive-dominant fantasies are played out. When you or your partner's hands are bound it becomes much easier to tease and for some couples this leads to far more enjoyable sex. Much like blindfolds the excitement and tension felt by the handcuffed partner can be intensified by the loss of control and the inability to touch the other person.

However with the good comes the bad and bondage, however light, is no exception. Trust is an absolute must between you and your partner before you go embarking on the road to bondage-ville, mainly because you don't want to be left, blindfolded and handcuffed to your radiator, screaming at your flatmates, or, worse, your parents to free you.

More seriously than that though, you (or your partner for that matter) don't want to feel forced into doing something that you'd rather not do. If the use of a safe-word seems a bit ridiculous and over-the-top, then just have an agreement beforehand to stop if either of your feel uncomfortable and display it. Besides, on the first time trying it out it's good to know that you can take it slowly.

On a lighter note – be sure to wear long-sleeved jumpers or coats for the days after you engage in handcuffing, because there's nothing as unsightly and difficult to explain as the bruises and marks that one gets on one's wrist after an evening with handcuffs. Oh did I mention handcuffs hurt? Only a little, I promise...





get home safely...

**PLASSEY CABS**  
CALL 061 336 336  
Unit ID  
Annacotty Business Park  
Annacotty Co. Limerick  
[plasseycabs@eircom.net](mailto:plasseycabs@eircom.net)

Register today at the Students' Union for the Safe Cab initiative and never be stuck on a night out. A safe way home - guaranteed





POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION CHRISTMAS PARTY  
FRIDAY DECEMBER 5TH 2008  
STABLES CLUB

TICKETS €10 AVAILABLE FROM THE PSA

TICKETS INCLUDE DINNER, 2 DRINKS VOUCHERS AND A SANTA HAT!

SPOT PRIZES WILL BE GIVEN OUT ON THE NIGHT!

ALL PROCEEDS WILL GO TO THE FR GERRY DALY CHRISTMAS FUND



ULSU Nitelink - Timetable for Academic Year 2008/09

Route A 19:00, 20:30, 22:00,

- Stop 1: Dromroe Village
- Stop 2: Thomand Village
- Stop 3: Cappavilla Village
- Stop 4: Plassey Village
- Stop 5: College Court
- Stop 6: Groody Student Village
- Stop 7: Courtyard Student Village
- Stop 8: Brookfield Hall
- Stop 9: Parkview Hall
- Stop 10: Park Mews (Kielys)

Returns to UL via Flag Pole Entrance

Route B 19:45, 21:15, 22:45,

- Stop 1: Kilmurry Village
- Stop 2: Elm Park
- Stop 3: Oaklawns
- Stop 4: Kilmurry Lodge
- Stop 5: Brierfield (Back of the Estate)
- Stop 6: Woodhaven
- Stop 7: Annacotty (Synotts)
- Stop 8: Spar (Dublin Road Bus Stop)
- Stop 9: Courtyard/Brookfield Roundabout

Returns to UL via East Gate entrance

Route C 23.30 Only

Route A+B Stops on Request  
Drop off only



# Caught on Camera



Feeling elfish during Christmas Days



In the Stables celebrating Christmas



In the Stables for Christmas Days



Celebrating Christmas Days



In the Stables in week 12



Hark! Is that reindeer we hear?



Elves' Night Off



Even Santa popped in...



Blocking the Minister on Thomond Bridge (photo by Denis Vahey, UL PhotoSoc)



Christmas Days photos taken by Michael Johnson, UL PhotoSoc.

Student Accommodation if fees return (photo by Denis Vahey, UL PhotoSoc)



SU Prez Pa O'Brien speaking against fees (photo by Cian Gallagher)



The Student Army blocking Thomond Bridge (photo by Hugh O'Brien)





# Ladies footballers claim intermediate league

Will McCormack

UL LADIES footballers claimed the first piece of silverware on offer this season with a hard fought victory over Garda College in Templemore on 19 November on a score line of 1-13 to 1-8.

Playing with the aid of the elements, UL led at half-time by eight points to three, Sinead O’Brien and Shona Curran contributing some fine scores. The Garda forwards were being well marshalled by a defence anchored by Joan McNulty, who also captained the side. The UL inside forward line were causing problems for the Garda full backs, with Mary O’Donovan denied a certain goal by an excellent reflex save from the Garda keeper towards the end of the half.

Following the change of ends the inevitable Garda fightback began to materialise and UL’s lead was slowly whittled down until Louise Callaghan was finally beaten in the UL goal by a shot that no keeper stood a chance of saving. This left Garda two points to the good with roughly ten minutes remaining. Lesser teams

would have caved at this stage but with Eimear Considine and Orlagh Heavey beginning to re-exert an influence at midfield UL began a revival of their own.

A pointed free, following another ‘committed’ Garda challenge, from Shona Curran reduced the deficit before UL produced the best passage of play in the game. A series of swift interplay involving several players spilt the Garda defence before the ball was transferred to Sandra Hall. She finished to the net in some style to put UL in the box seat with minutes remaining.

Try as they might Garda could not find a way past a resolute UL defence with Noelle Connolly dominant at full-back. In the closing moments it was UL who finished stronger, tacking on two points at the death to seal the victory.

UL: L Callaghan, S Glynn, N Connolly, K Coakley, M Hearn, J McNulty (capt), A Leonard, O Heavey, S Curran, S O’Brien, E Considine, N Ward, M O’Donovan, H Flynn, S Hall. Subs: O King, R Williams.

# Senior B footballers advance to semi-finals

Liam Togher

A LEAGUE campaign that had started so dismally in Tralee in mid-October is now gathering great momentum for UL Senior B footballers. The nature of that resounding defeat to the Kerry side would wreck any team’s mentality, but the intermediates quickly set about putting it behind them with close-fought victories over UCC and Cork IT. These narrow wins took them into a quarter-final clash with Sligo IT.

There were still questions about this UL outfit as they headed to Mervue on 18 November, but with an experienced management team, led by Davy Jones, proving guidance, there were plenty of grounds for optimism. Again this UL side came out trumps in a neck-to-neck battle, defeating Sligo IT by 0-12 to 0-9. A third consecutive win now brings the Senior B team into a semi-final meeting against DCU at the end of November. It’s going to take another gutsy team performance from UL if they are to maintain this excellent run of form, although the progress made following the disastrous result against Tralee IT a few weeks ago will offer plenty of satisfaction.

Another incentive for the intermediate players is the opportunity to break into the Senior A team ahead of the Sigerson Cup in February. With Cian O’Neill’s senior side disappointingly missing out on even a quarter-final place in the league, the shop window is very much open for those currently playing Senior B. But before any dreams of playing Sigerson are realised, there’s an intermediate league title for the taking.

# UL Karate Champs bring home medals

Richael O’Brien

NOVEMBER has been quite an eventful month for the UL Shotokan Karate Club, with success both at national and European level. Chris Byrne, a 2nd Don Black Belt, competed in the European Karate Championships in Italy and came third in kumite, a form of fighting. He faced stiff competition from participants all over the world but managed to hold his own and come home with trophies.

Byrne was also part of the seven-person UL team which went to the ISKA Open Intervarsities in the Mardyke Arena in Cork recently. From this competition the club brought home five medals - one gold, two silver and two bronze. Byrne claimed gold in the Brown and Black Belt men’s kumite and eliminated members of the Irish and Brazil national karate teams in the process. This was a highly competitive category and even getting into the finals was an excellent achievement, never mind being the outright winner.

Another person who deserves an honourable mention is Amy English, who came home with silver in the Brown and Black Belt women’s kumite and a bronze in the Brown and Black Belt women’s kata. For someone who has not fought competitively in a long time, coming second was an immense achievement and it really shows her skill and expertise in this area.

These results hammer home the club’s long tradition of never leaving a competition empty-handed and more medals have been added to our sizeable roll of honour. Hopefully we will have a new batch of competitors ready to step up to the mark again, once our bi-annual official grading takes place, so the team will grow and really set the mark on our upcoming intersvarsities in Galway next February and the first ever UL ISKA Open in April.

For anybody that would like more information on the club or training, call along to one of our training sessions, Tues 6.15 – 8 pm and Thurs 8.15 – 10 pm in the PESS Building Gym or e-mail info@ulkarate.com

# UL Go Three Points Clear at the Top

Richael O’Brien

**UL 4-1 UCD**

UL women’s soccer team have put three points between themselves and closest competitors UCD by beating them in Dublin on Wednesday of Week 10. Niamh Mulcahy put UL ahead early in the game, but despite enjoying much of the possession, UL couldn’t add to this, in the first half. The UL defence had one of their busiest afternoons to date, and despite suppressing the majority of UCD attacks, there was little they could do about the UCD goal. UCD’s celebrations were short lived, however, with Lynsey McKey shooting low into the corner when the ball broke to her on the edge of the box, making it 2-1 to UL. They continued to press, and it was Kacey O’Driscoll who made it three, before McKey, capitalising on a defensive mistake, made sure of the result.

**UL 8-0 UCC**

Having worked hard to achieve a great result in Dublin, UL were

determined not to slip up against UCC in Week 11, and they didn’t. This game was about as one sided as the score line suggests. Lynsey McKey was the first to get her name on the score sheet, closely followed

by Richael O’Brien and Jenny Downey. By half time UL were up by four. The second half was a similar affair, with UL matching their goal tally from the first. McKey and O’Brien were again on target,

and Kacey O’Driscoll added her name to that list. This emphatic win means that UL now top the table with 15 points. The next game is a home fixture on Tuesday of Week 12 against NUIG.



UL ladies soccer team



Club

# Hurlers on the brink of success

Liam Togher

HEADING into the final week of November, UL hurling stood on the threshold of no fewer than three league titles at various grades. The senior team’s defeat of GMIT on home soil at the start of the month was enough for them to top their group and advance directly to the semi-finals, where they now face a strong UCD outfit. Ger Cunningham’s side offered plenty of promise in their league campaign to date and the talent is there for UL to make a serious impact in the Fitzgibbon Cup next spring. All going well they will begin that competition with league success already in the bag.

Both freshers’ teams also feature in league semi-finals at the end of November. The Fresher 1 team bounced back from defeat by LIT to hammer Cork IT 2-22 to 0-6 at home to book their passage to the last four. If they can maintain that good form for another game, they will definitely fancy their chances of seeing off DIT. Meanwhile, the Fresher 2 side had an altogether easier route to the last four after

receiving a walkover from Tralee IT, although the donkey work had been completed in wins over LIT and MICL in their first two games. UL will now take on WIT in the last four, where victory will bring them to the final on 4 December.

On the intermediate front, UL had little trouble in topping their group. With two wins already under their belt, a 1-15 to 2-8 victory over CIT booked their passage to the knockout rounds. The group phase ended with a 1-12 to 2-9 draw against WIT. Both fixtures were played in Newtown. It has also been a good campaign for Brendan Cawley’s junior hurling team. Their defence of the league title began with a 100% group phase record. Recent victories over UCC (5-10 to 0-10) and WIT (4-11 to 1-11) ensured that the two-in-a-row is still very much on.

Tree semi-finals in one week represent the current strength of hurling in UL. With excellent managers such as Ger Cunningham, Sean Og Herbert and Liam Garvey to call upon, as well as the capabilities of the players, the outlook is very bright for the game in this college.

## GAA results

**HURLING**  
**Intermediate league:** CIT 2-8 UL 1-15; WIT 2-9 UL 1-12  
**Junior league:** UL 5-10 UCC 0-10; WIT 1-11 UL 4-11  
**Fresher 1 league:** CIT 0-6 UL 2-22  
**Fresher 2 league:** UL w/o from Tralee IT

**FOOTBALL**  
**Senior B league quarter-final:** Sligo IT 0-9 UL 0-12  
**Fresher 1 league:** UL 0-12 UCC 4-14  
**Fresher 2 league:** UL 0-3 UCC 3-15

**CAMOGIE**  
**Senior league:** UCC 0-6 UL 2-12

**LADIES FOOTBALL**  
**Senior league:** WIT 0-4 UL 4-12  
**UL 3 league:** LIT 7-2 UL 7-8; MICL 6-14 UL 0-6;  
WIT 3-6 UL 1-14; UL 7-21 Tipp Inst 0-2  
**Intermediate league:** UL 3-3 Garda College 3-12;  
Final: Garda College 1-6 UL 1-14

# Handballers not squashed in Mallow

WEDNESDAY, 12 November saw UL Handball Club travel to Mallow to play their UCC counterparts in a challenge game before the team Intervarsities held on 22 and 23 November in Belfast. Eight members of the club travelled and took on a similar number of players from Cork.

First up were Charlie Nolan and Jamie Geraghty of UL who took on but lost to John O’Keeffe and Maedhbh Prendiville 21-9. John Peppard was next in but also lost to Tim Prendiville, a player who has just recently returned to the game after a few years absence on a scoreline of 21-6.

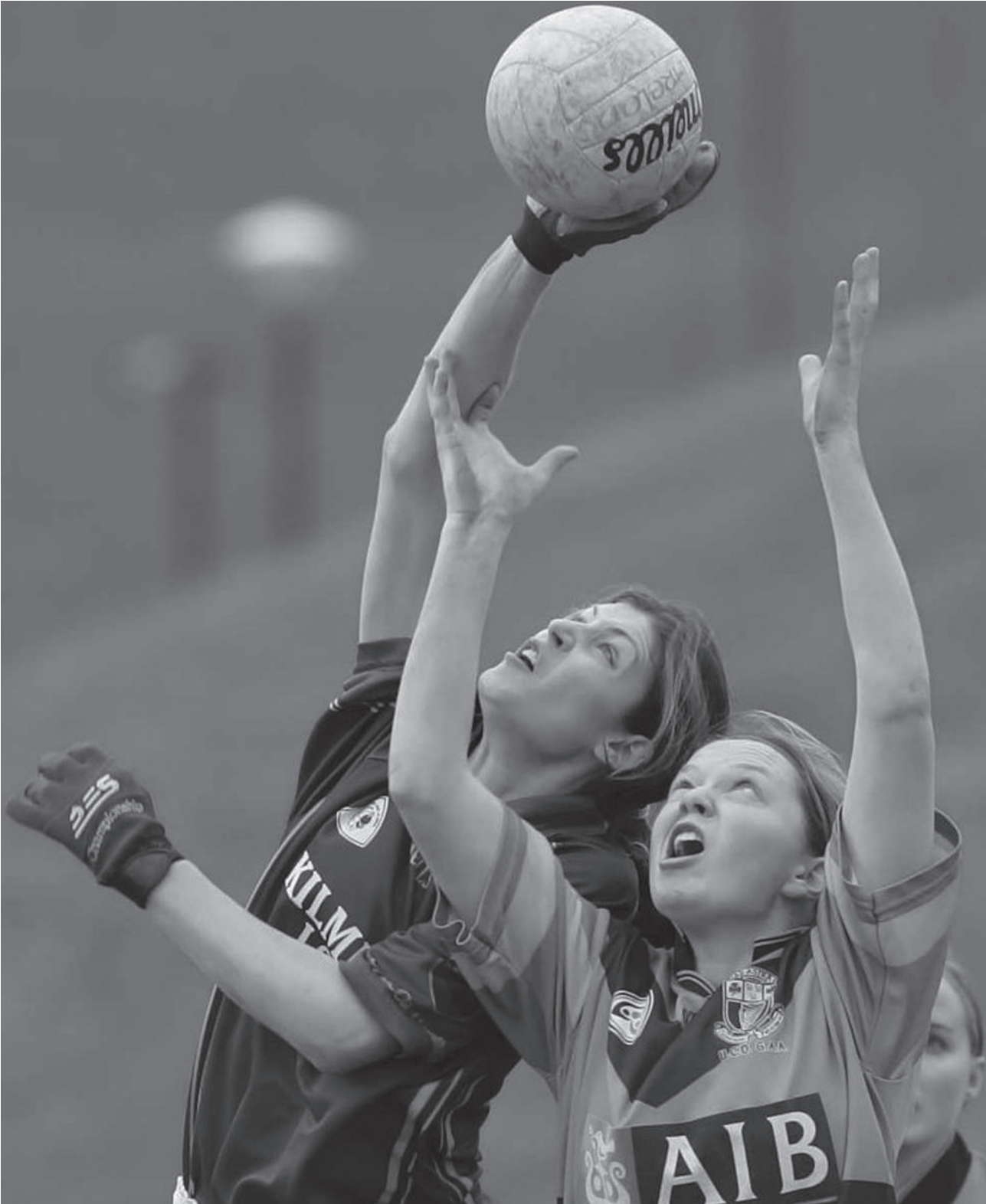
Neil Crehan was the first UL player to record a victory beating Alan Noonan 21-13. Deirdre Donohoe and Joan McNulty made it two in a row for UL beating Ashley Prendiville and Colin Keane 21-15.

Cathal Hannon and Neil Crehan continued the winning streak beating

John Kiernan and Nicholas Larkin 21-3. Mark O’Donovan then played Colin Keane but after a very close game disappointingly lost out 21-20.

Charlie Nolan and John Peppard combined very well against Alan Noonan and Tim Prendiville and this time UL were on the right side of a close game winning 21-19. Mark O’Donovan and Deirdre Donohoe took on Maedhbh Prendiville and John O’Keeffe but the Cork pair combined well again winning 21-7.

The final game of the night saw Jamie Geraghty and Joan McNulty take on Ashley Prendiville and Nicholas Larkin and were in top form winning 21-14 and bringing to an end a very successful and enjoyable night for UL Handball club.



Ladies footballers in action



# Women's Sport Round-Up

Noreen O'Connell

With the End of the semester just around the corner , Here is some of the activities of the women's sports and what they have been up to in semester one .. While most of the colleges are playing in the league this semester to get ready for next semester's Intervarsity competitions – They are still in competition now and it's been a very busy semester.

## Ladies Football:

In the opening match of the Division 1 League campaign, an under strength UL team battled against a much stronger Tralee side, away to Tralee. Although UL fought hard in the second half, the large lead built by Tralee IT proved too much for UL and Tralee held a convincing win over the UL Ladies. The second game of the league was against UCC, in harsh weather conditions, UL Ladies battled against a strong UCC team. Against a strong breeze in the first half, the UL ladies trailed by two points at half time, with the score line 0- 05 to 0- 03 in UCC's favour. These were two evenly matched teams which made for compelling viewing. The crucial moment of the game came in the second half with UL's Niamh Carroll scoring a vital goal in the final stages of the second half which left UL with a one point victory. The third game was against Waterford IT in Waterford and the girls secured a win here also. The Ladies played UCC in the Div final on Mon Nov 25th in a bitterly cold Newtown. The game was played under lights and was very much a game f two half's as UCC dominated in the first half leading 1 – 5 to 0 – 02 at the break . Then in the second half UL pulled together and the introduction of three first years changed the whole game , UL came away Winners on a scoreline of 1 – 07 to 0 – 13. Well done to Coaches DJ Collins and Will McCormack and all the girls involved.

In the Division two the ladies team were unbeaten and had booked their place in the final against the Garda College with a game to play. The girls also won this league on a scoreline of 1 – 13 to 1 – 08.

For the first time due to numbers of players the Ladies football have

entered a third team coached by Laura Walsh and Louise Brett and this team comprises mainly of Fresher's , At the time of going to print the girls are to play the final against Mary I.

With Ladies football going well in the college, we are all looking forward to an exciting O Connor Cup in March.

## Ladies Hockey:

The UL Hockey ladies play in both Divisions 1 & 4 in the Munster league and here is some information on their games to date. The club got their season off to a flying start with the Division 4 team played at home to Ashton and won 3 – 0. The winning form has continued well into the season for the Div 4 team, with UL victorious in their first five games. They have one loss away to Tipperary losing 2 – 1, and one draw at home to Bandon 2 – 2. Three of these victories included tough away matches against Fermoy, Cobh and Waterford. With the winning in Division 4 and the Girls doing well hopefully this might see them to move up to Division 3 next season which would be a big step in the right direction for the club.

The Division one team have had a mixed start to the season with some good performances but still coming out as the losing Side. They played Belvedere in their first game and won 2 – 1. The team had a loss to Catholic Institute 2 – 0. Then they faces Ashton away and got a great win on a scoreline of 3 – 0. Next up was Harlequins from Cork at home, in what was always going to be a hard fought game against tough opposition. Harlequins have been top of the table for the last few years however this did not faze the UL side. The full time whistle blew and the final score was 2-0 in favour of the away side.

While a lot of the team supports have their intervarsity competition to come in the second semester, the hockey have had theirs finished and here is what happened. The Inter-Varsity tournament was hosted by DCU this year and was held in Kilkenny and UL went into the competition with high hopes of going one step further than last year and get to the semi final stage with the added hopes of reaching the final. UL were in what could

be considered the pool of death in that the previous year's finalists UCD and UCC were in their group meaning that one of the best teams in the competition would not make the semi final stages. UL kicked off with an emphatic win over CIT beating the Cork side 3-0 and Laura Peters put away all three goals. This was just the start they needed to kick off the pool stages. That evening UL were due to play old rivals UCC. This had the makings of a great game as there is such rivalry between the teams with neither wanting to loose what could be considered a Munster Derby! With a lot of pride on the line UL approached the game like any other, all or nothing and they wanted to win. Unfortunately things didn't go to plan and the UCC attack was strong. They succeeded in putting 3 goals passed the UL side. The final score was 3-0. UL still preformed well and looked forward to Mondays games which would see them face UCD and NUIG it was vital that they win both matches if they hoped to progress to the next stage.

Monday morning brought cold weather and pitches were frozen meaning games were delayed and ended up closer together so fatigue was bound to kick in. the first game of the day for UL was against NUIG. UL were successful in putting 4 goals passed the Galway team and they now prepared themselves for the big game later in the evening. UCD are a tough side so rest and recuperation was vital. The UCD game was played under the lights in the Loreto School and tensions were high with great support for UL on the sideline the atmosphere was electric and the game started and ended at a very high paced with both sides constantly rolling subs on and off to up the tempo. The sides were level at half time in what was a 50/50 game but in the second half UCD broke through UL and put away 2 goals. UCD deserved the win but nothing bad can be said about UL's performance. Every player rose to the challenge and gave it everything. They now were out of contention for the semis but had the plate title to defend the next day.

UL played DCU on Tuesday morning and had a very comfortable win. The final score was 4-0. They were now into the final of the plate

against Queens of Belfast. The match being played at the end of the tournament meant a lot of players were exhausted and this was evident in both sides however Queens came away with the victory and the plate winning 5-0. The score line certainly does not do justice to the UL team's performance.

UL finished 6th in the tournament. Disappointing yes, but a lot could be taken from the tournament. Laura Peters came away with a goal tally of 9 and every player played to the best of their ability giving every match everything they had.

## Ladies Soccer:

The ladies soccer are hoping to emulate last year's success where they dominated in the Soccer competition winning the League and the Intervarsities. Here is an update on their progress to date. They got their season off to a fine start with a win over NUIG 4 – 0. UL, who dominated the game from start to finish. The management team of Mike Considine and Sean Hehir were very satisfied with this comfortable win. In a rare moment of harmony between Kacey O'Driscoll and a referee, the UL captain was awarded 'player of the match' by the official. Next up was the Garda College and again the girls dominated from the Kick off winning 4 – 1. Next team was old Rivals Sligo IT, However UL took the win here winning 3 – 0. Next up was UCD and true to form UL came away victorious so at going to print the girls are unbeaten and on the road to another great year. The ladies have already won the Indoor Futsal competition, so one trophy in the Cabinet already and hopefully more to come.

Also on the international scene UL's new recruits Niamh Mulcahy & Emer Flatley, travelled to Israel to compete for the Irish U19 team in the first qualifying round of the UEFA Championship. Ruth Fahy who is away on Erasmus just won the Galway Bay FM Female Soccer Player of the Year. Winning the Irish Intermediate Cup and she was also part of the Galway League team that played in the UEFA cup in Sarajevo. They did better than any Irish team to date, and were very unlucky to miss out on qualifying for the second round,



losing in their final group game.

## Ladies Rugby:

UL ladies Rugby have only had one game at the time of print. UL succumbed to a narrow and disappointing one point loss away to old rivals UCC on Thursday, 13 November. UL were indeed the far better team on the day with UCC being out classed at every position on the park. Despite this, UL never capitalised on their own advantages, they made some handling errors and missed many try scoring opportunities.

A key factor to this UL team is it has many new faces, and for their first game together it was a great performance and it is a promising sign of what has yet to come from these promising athletes for the remainder of the season. There was a good blend of experience and inexperience, the new young talented rising stars of UL Ladies Rugby really shined amongst those who have been present in the team for the past seasons.

UL dominated the game from the very beginning with full back Ashling Hutchings opening the scoring early on showing both speed and skill evading numerous opponents before getting in for a try in the corner. UL conceded a penalty in front of their own posts granting UCC their first 3 points of the game. UL went on the attack from their own kick off and turned over UCC in a tackle. From this UL stretched the Cork defence and Ashling Hutchings got in out wide once more to score UL's second try. For the remainder of the first half UL defended really

well and kept UCC out, until the dying moments of the half when they scored a try. The Half time score was UL 10- UCC 8.

The second half saw UCC opening the scoring through their winger out wide. UL responded when Laura O' Mahony capitalized on a spilt UCC ball and scored a try under the posts which Lorna Barry converted. UCC scored the final score of the game through their winger out wide once more. UL didn't give up and tried to get that illusive score to the very end but it was not meant to be. Final Score UL 17, UCC 18.

*Congratulations* to Fiona Reidy of UL Ladies Rugby who has been called up to the 40 woman Irish training squad. Also well done to Jo O'Meara captain of UL Ladies Rugby who represented Munster in the recent Interprovincial campaign, and also to Sarah Hogan who represented Connacht in the same competition.

## Ladies Basketball:

The UL ladies have got their season off to a good start with a Win and loss against UCC , Two wins against Waterford IT and a win against NUIG. There area lot of new players and interest is very strong in the Club – So hopefully this is a sign of good times to come for the basketball club. The Club has also launched a new website and you can keep to date on all the teams going's on [www. ulbasketball.skynet.ie](http://www.ulbasketball.skynet.ie).

If you want to find out more information on ladies' sport, email [noreen.oconnell@ul.ie](mailto:noreen.oconnell@ul.ie)



# Kenny’s silver lining

## Liam Togher speaks with Olympic silver medallist Kenny Egan

WHEN it comes to discussing the best Irish sports personality of 2008, you can expect names such as Padraig Harrington, Brian Cody and Ronan O’Gara to feature frequently in the conversation.

Another name that is likely to be bandied about is that of Kenny Egan, the boxer who secured a silver medal for his country at the Olympic Games in Beijing earlier this year. Well I had the pleasure of meeting this great competitor in UL recently and he gladly agreed to give a brief interview.

Firstly I asked Kenny about his boxing career prior to the Beijing Games, before he shot to the fame he currently enjoys. “Well I had been boxing for many years before I travelled to the Games. I spent a lot in time at training camps and I competed in the World Championships. I’ve been a senior boxer since 2001, but it’s only now that I’m getting the recognition. What many people don’t know is

how hard I had to work before I got anywhere near the Games. I had to defeat opponents from all over Europe.”

Then came August 2008 and Kenny’s heroics in the Chinese capital.

“If I was offered a silver medal before the Games, I’d have snatched it with both hands. All the Irish lads approached the Olympics quite well. We went over there with the intention of performing to our best and giving it 100 per cent. I just took each fight as it came. I wasn’t looking at what anyone else was doing. And then I found myself in an Olympic final.”

That final was particularly memorable for some contentious scoring by the judges. “The scoring was a bit dodgy, all right, but I think 40,000 Chinese fans in the stadium did have an influence on it. However, I still got a medal, so it’s not all bad.”

Of course, Kenny wasn’t the

only Irish boxer to return home with a medal in his back pocket, with both Darren Sutherland and Paddy Barnes claiming bronze.

“There was something like 54 athletes on the Irish Olympic team; only five boxers went over. The two lads who were knocked out in the last 16 got beaten by the eventual winners.

“And it’s not only our Olympic boxers. Our junior team went to a tournament in Mexico and won gold, silver and two bronze. And the lads who went to the Europeans in Liverpool recently came back with three bronze. I’d say this has been the most successful year in Irish amateur boxing history.”

Since his Olympic exploits, Kenny has been busy with promotional work.

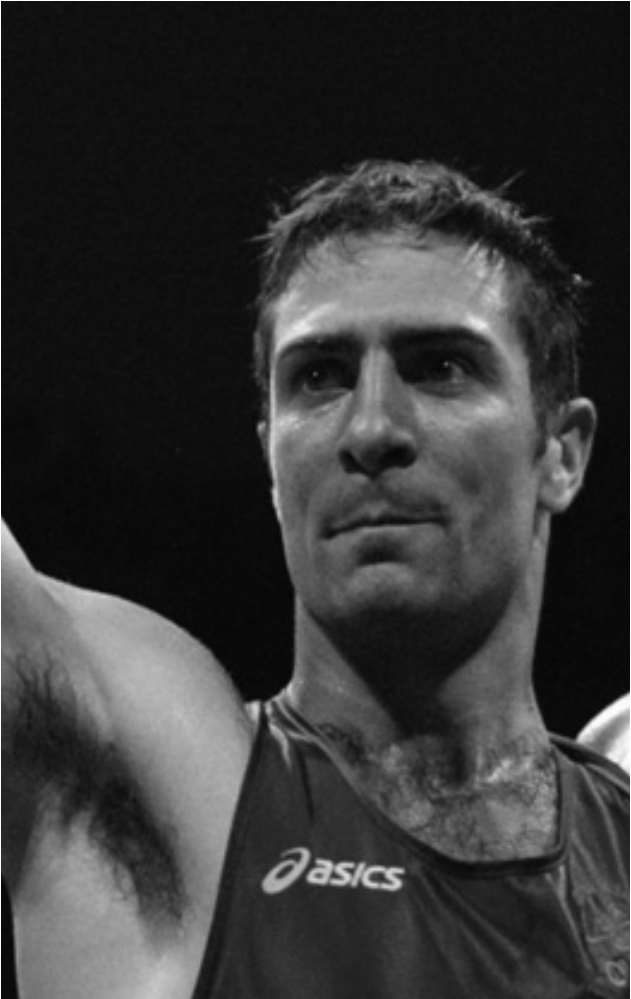
“I’ve been hard at work since I got back from the Games, doing all sorts of running around, visiting schools and what not. I have to make a calendar and note particular

dates, so it has been all go since Beijing.

“I’m on tour now with a DVD that I launched recently. I was in Cork and Galway in the last couple of days and I’m off to Kilkenny soon, so I’m all over the country with it.”

So has Kenny any plans to become a professional boxer? “I haven’t made any decisions yet. I’m still an amateur boxer getting ready for the national senior competition in February. I really don’t know at this moment in time.” Whether he makes that leap to professionalism or not, Kenny’s has already been an eventful career.

Check out Kenny Egan’s official web page at [www.kennyeagan.net](http://www.kennyeagan.net). Also, his DVD ‘Kenny Egan: Back From Beijing’ is now available in all good retail outlets across the country.



# 1978 and 2008: side by side for one magical night

Eoin King

TWO weeks on and already we can file it away under the heading of ‘folklore’. The result may not have gone the way it did thirty years ago but, hey, it exceeded the hype and will undoubtedly be spoken of for at least another thirty years. Set in context, it was one of the most remarkable feats in Munster’s illuminating history.

While New Zealand gave most of the playing time to their second-string squad, Munster were shorn of their Irish internationals. And therein lies the magic of the tale - the fact that Croke Park was left deadily quiet the previous Saturday at full-time as the All Blacks comprehensively defeated our national team. On the other hand, in Limerick, the refurbished citadel,

Thomond Park, had its official unveiling and almost seemed to creak under the raucous support, which was in itself a huge factor in the occasion. The moment Doug Howlett, Rua Tipoki, Lifeimi Mafi and Jeremy Manning performed the Haka, the signs were clear that this was going to be something special.

And so it proved to be. By now, you probably know the details. In fact, one can expect that in Munster circles they can never be exhausted. How they led at one stage 9-3 as Paul Warwick did the business with two penalties and a magnificent drop-goal, reminiscent of Tony Ward in 1978.

How Barry Murphy ran in for a try that meant we led 16-10 at half time.

How Munster combined passion, physicality, spirit, heart and anything else they could muster until, reinforced by their deep reserves, New Zealand scored with four minutes to go to win the match.

How it was so close.

How it was one of the greatest rugby games to be played in Thomond Park. One of the greatest in Ireland. Arrah, don’t you know all that?

It was 16-18. It was what we wanted from the boys in green. A battle. A contest. No regrets.

As ever, the men in red didn’t fail. It’s not surprising. They beat them before. Munster have maxed out their card on surprises. But for entertainment, passion, emotion and days to remember, their account is unlimited. Ain’t they something?

# 2008 - The good, the bad and the laughable

Liam Togher

2008 WAS A year that promised quite a lot on the sporting front and it certainly did not disappoint. From New Year’s Day right through spring, summer and autumn we have seen some sporting moments that will live on for generations. With the end of the year in sight, it’s time to look back on the last 12 months on Planet Sport.

After 44 years of trying, Spain finally won a major trophy when they triumphed at Euro 2008. It was easily the best football tournament for many a year, with incredible goals and heart-stopping drama throughout. The gloom surrounding our own national team has disappeared for the most part under legendary coach Giovanni Trapattoni, who has used his 30-plus years of managerial experience to pick up the pieces left by the previous hapless regime. On the club front, it was a year to remember for Manchester United, who secured both the Premiership and Champions League titles. Top-class players such as Fernando Torres, Cristiano Ronaldo, Lionel Messi and Zlatan Ibrahimovic continued to conjure up magic moments in a great year for football.

For the rugby fans among us there was plenty to savour, too. Munster delivered their second Heineken Cup in three years by defeating the much-fancied Toulouse in the final. We also saw the opening of the redeveloped Thomond Park in September and a classic rematch with New Zealand. Unfortunately, Ireland did not have such a good time of it. A woeful Six Nations campaign saw Eddie O’Sullivan given the boot and even Declan Kidney has a lot on his hands to turn around the fortunes of this ailing team.

The GAA front had both good and bad signs. While the hurling championship provided its share of thrills along the way, particularly for the likes of Waterford and Tipperary, there was simply no-one to even come close to matching the all-conquering Kilkenny. The format has yet again been revamped in another half-hearted attempt to liven up the championship. By contrast, the standard of Gaelic football this year was poor, but the All-Ireland final was the game of the season as Tyrone again got the better of Kerry. This year, too, we had the reintroduction of the International Rules series. Ireland took home the Cormac McAnallen Cup and there wasn’t even a hint of the sort of shenanigans that have wrecked this event in the past.

Elsewhere the headlines were grabbed by a few spectacular

individual feats. Padraig Harrington retained the British Open title and added the USPGA crown to his CV as well. Bernard Dunne continues to represent Ireland with pride in the boxing ring. At the Olympics, Ireland claimed one silver medal and two bronze. The Beijing Games were best remembered for the Herculean performances of Usain Bolt and Michael Phelps on the track and in

the pool respectively. Lewis Hamilton sensationally became the youngest Formula 1 champion in history while Rafael Nadal finally wrestled the Wimbledon men’s crown from Roger Federer after an epic final. Yes, 2008 really produced enough memories to satisfy sports hacks for quite a long time.

## An Focal ‘go on, sure, have a trophy’ awards 2008

Liam Togher

THEY may not have the same prestige as the Oscars or the PFA gongs but our very own ‘go on, sure, have a trophy’ awards are still worthy of winning. Well, at least more of them are. These are awards with a difference, as you will see. Some of them are much sought-after, others are best avoided. Nonetheless, they’re all merited.

**The ‘we’ll get it right eventually award’:** Spain for finally coming good and winning Euro 2008. Surely it won’t be another 44 years until they lift another trophy...will it?

**The ‘get me a better chair’ award:** Giovanni Trapattoni is the proud recipient here after he toppled over when trying to sit down during Ireland’s otherwise dull win over Cyprus.

**The fashion statement award:** Any team with a luminous away kit – this year that means Lyon, Everton, Chelsea, Derby and Oldham, to name a few. Perhaps a few of their players would be better off in the county council, all right.

**The Johnny Tightlyps award:** This goes straight to Michael Duignan, who when asked to elaborate on a point made by commentator Marty Morrissey, simply replied “Ya”

**The ‘give the others a chance’ award:** Kilkenny for their latest amble to another All-Ireland hurling title. I’ve said it before, give each of their opponents a 15-point head start to even it up a bit. Michael Phelps comes a close second.

**The ‘where are the rest of ye gone’ award:** Joe Canning gets this for his narrow defeat to Cork. Seriously, Galway may as well have dragged in 14 lads in maroon from the stands for all the good Canning’s team-mates did.

**The ‘I hit that’ award:** I get this after nailing the Crossbar Challenge in Salthill over the summer. It’s on YouTube, just search for ‘liam togher crossbar challenge’.



# The Score

Tomás McCarthy

## Goal King Cole

Andy Cole announced his retirement from professional football recently at the age of 37. The former Man United striker will be best remembered for his combination with Dwight Yorke in the Treble season. The question remains though is it Andy or Andrew?

## Boaz Is Ainm Dom

Hull keeper Boaz Myhill is having a rather impressive debut season in the Premier League. Did you know though that is his real name is Glyn Oliver Myhill? Boaz is much cooler isn't it!

## YouTube Sensation

This Rory Delap long throw is really catching on. A video simply entitled "Rory Delap – Stoke City" has hit 575,479 views on YouTube. Another one called "Tribute to Rory Delap" is on 438,647 views. Incredible stuff!

## Bus Stop

Staying with Stoke, the club are looking for a bus driver for their academy team. Maybe Dave Kitson could be the man for the job because he certainly isn't doing much up front at the moment!

## Where's Wally?

Well it's more like where's Dave Mooney? Remember the Cork City striker who was in blistering form getting the big move to Reading? The answer is the reserves and he's playing alongside Long, Gunnarson, Convey and Matejovsky. A very strong reserve side indeed.

## Gift Ideas

Christmas is coming folks and The Score has some smashing bargains for your nearest and dearest. West Brom Christmas baubles are going for £3.99 with a West Brom snowman selling at £7.99. All Eircom League clubs are going for half price as well I believe!

# GAA round-up

Liam Togher

## Senior Camogie

UL maintained their perfect league record on 18 November with a 2-12 to 0-6 victory over UCC in Newtown. This was another comprehensive win to add to their earlier thrashings of Garda College and Cork IT. The girls rounded off the group stage by facing WIT at home.

## Fresher Football

Both UL Fresher A and B teams were consigned to heavy defeats at home to UCC on 12 November. The A side lost 4-14 to 0-12, although wins in their previous two games were still enough for them to advance to a quarter-final meeting with either DCU or UUJ. Unfortunately, a 3-15 to 0-3 hammering for the B team means their league campaign is over. There was no room for error after losing to CIT in their first outing.

## Best Of Luck

While there is still silverware on offer for a number of UL, this will be my final opportunity to wish each and every GAA team in the college all the best when the serious business of championship action begins in January. Judging by most league results over the last few weeks, 2009 promises to be a memorable year for UL GAA. Good luck to everyone involved with the club in the coming months.

# Full-time verdict

Liam Togher

And that, as they say, is that. After 13 editions across two semesters, my time as An Focal sports editor has come to its conclusion. My co-op commitments, which should begin in January and last through to early September, will mean that I will no longer be at the helm, for better or for worse. Although at times I thought I was insane to assume this position, I know I made the right choice in accepting the post at the start of this calendar year.

Why was it the right choice? Definitely it was the people I worked with over the last few months that made it very worthwhile. Every fortnight my sports team took time out from their hectic schedules to listen to me delegating articles, match reports, etc. for a good half-hour or so. I was very fortunate to have an excellent group of lads at my disposal. They were always great company, never flouted deadlines and maintained the high standards of sports writing set under the tenure of my predecessor Tomas. So to Tomas himself, Alan, Mark, Mike, John and Eoin, plus anyone else who contributed to the sports pages during my editorial rein, take a bow. There's tremendous credit due to all of you.

I also had the good fortune to work under two excellent An Focal editors, Seamus and Aoife. The door was always open for me to call in and discuss whatever I had to and, even when I made a proper hash of things now and again, they took no notice. They were at all times very supportive and I gladly accept their appreciation of what I have done for An Focal as sports editor. If they were not so tolerant and genuinely pleasurable to liaise with, I would have found the editorial job a lot more difficult. Thanks a thousand times over, Seamus and Aoife!

Finally I want to commend anyone else who provided assistance during my rein as sports editor. The UL GAA club, in particular, proved to be very helpful when I came to them wondering about results, fixtures, etc. Patsy has far better things to be doing than giving me match reports, but he always obliged whenever I asked for them. Also, the support I got from An Focal readers was quite encouraging and it's always great to hear people commending the work I put into making the sports section as professional as possible. So now I take my leave of the sports editor job. It was a fantastic experience for me and I wish my successor, as well as all the other An Focal writers, the very best in the coming months.

# Magic Numbers

Liam Togher

**12,000** Estimated number of Polish fans at Croke Park for the Ireland-Poland friendly. That figure looks even more impressive when you realise that the total attendance was around 51,000.

**5** Minutes left when Joe Rokocoko spoiled the Thomond Park party. Nonetheless it was a memorable night to be a Munster fan.

**3** Goals in as many minutes at the end of Ireland's 2-3 defeat to Poland. This doesn't make good reading for the hundreds who left with the score at 2-0 to the Poles.

**100** Amount (in millions) that Lyon president Jean-Michel Aulas is demanding before he even considers the sale of striker Karim Benzema. That's nearly double the present world record transfer fee.

**50** Occasions on which Brian O'Driscoll has captained Ireland. Many better players wouldn't get 50 international caps, captain or not.

**4** First-half goals for Samuel Eto'o as Barcelona thumped Real Valladolid 6-0. Hat-tricks simply aren't enough anymore, it seems.

**0** Points dropped by Chelsea in their first seven away league games this season. Just as well three teams have come away with Stamford Bridge with results, so.

# Quotes of the Edition

Liam Togher

**"Jeff, this goalie is absolutely shocking. He could have saved that with his cap!"**

Chris Kamara is disbelieving at Heurelho Gomes' latest error which gave Fulham their opening goal in their 2-1 win over Spurs.

**"Still 0-0, Jeff."** Kamara giving an update on the game ten minutes after Gomes' howler

**"80 feckin quid?!?! I wouldn't pay 20 cent to watch that lot!"**

Indeed ☐80 is a lot to be forking out on a ticket to watch Ireland getting thumped by the All Blacks.

**"Robbie Keane doing what he does best"**

One reaction to the Dubliner's shocking two-yard miss against Bolton

**"You're s\*\*\*, ah!"**

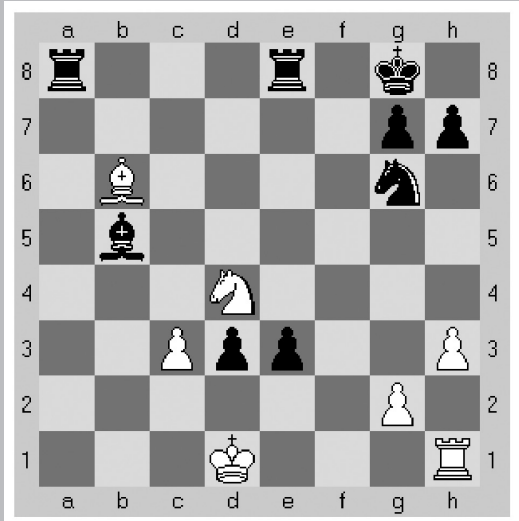
New Zealand fly-half Stephen Donald gets the taunts in the Stables during the Munster-All Blacks game.

**"Snorted his talent up his nose, then? I must have completely imagined 1986, then."**

Liam Mackey's response to an 'Angry Fan' who clearly dislikes Diego Maradona

**"If he sees a Stoke win, it really would be against all odds now... Sorry about that."**

Guy Mowbray comments on Phil Collins' presence at the Man U-Stoke mismatch. Stick to the day job, lad.



V. Anand – P. O’Flaherty Limerick Open 2008

White hasn’t castled and is now in a terrible position, Black can checkmate, but how?

The UL Chess club meets every Thursday from 6pm to 7pm. Training offered to all members and beginners.

Solution: 1. Ra1#





# Christmas Ball

Sunday - meal 8pm - South Court Hotel  
**21st Dec 2008** tickets €50 from SU

**Dress Formal**  
**Buses from Stables 6-7.30pm**



**ULSU ENTS**

Sponsored by

**✱ Ulster Bank**

Survival's a little easier with the Ulster Bank student account