

AN FOCAL

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Tuesday

Official Paper of the University of Limerick Students' Union

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FREE

New Sabbatical team elected

By Amy Murphy

March 11, 2010 saw the culmination of four days' campaigning. There is no doubt that all eleven candidates were delighted with the unprecedented turn out of voters with a total of 2786 votes in the Presidential election.

There were four positions being campaigned for: Communications Officer, the officer in charge of informing students of the actions of the Union, Campaigns and Services Officer, in charge of mobilising students in campaigns and ensuring they are adequately provided for by the college, Welfare Officer, ensuring the contentment and well being of all students and finally the President, who is responsible for leading and overseeing everything within the union.

The count took place in the SU Common Room after the polling booths closed. Voting closed at 6:30pm in the Students' Union; other voting booths included the Health and Sciences building, Red Raisins, the Kemmy Business School and the Library - thus all students were accommodated for.

The results were counted by students from Mary Immaculate College to ensure impartiality, while at least one member from each campaign team tallied the results on each candidate's behalf.

The first results announced were those for the Communications Officer. There were 2762 votes, of which 31 were spoilt. Finn McDuffie received 1933 votes, Eoghan O'Brien: 798 votes. McDuffie was elected on first count.

Next to be announced was Campaigns and Services Officer (CSO). The total votes were 2771, 36 were spoilt. Vivion Grisewood was elected on first count with 1424 votes to Grisewood and 1311 to Lorcan O'Neill. A recount was requested, which went ahead after the Presidential election however the results did not change.

Following the election of CSO was the election of the Welfare Officer. There was a total of 2783 votes, 46 were spoilt. Derek Daly received 1728 votes and Daniel Reid received 1009. Derek Daly was elected on first count.

Finally the Students' Union President was announced. The total of 2786 votes were split thus, 15 Spoilt, Sharon Brosnan 308, Louise Clohessy 171, Ruán Dillon McLoughlin 1323, Paddy Rockett 782 and Nicholas Ryan 187. Brosnan, Clohessy and Ryan eliminated on first count and the second, third, fourth and fifth preferences from their votes were distributed between Rockett and Dillon McLoughlin. After second count Ruán Dillon McLoughlin was deemed elected. Education Officer was elected unopposed at close of nominations on Friday of Week 6. The results mean three of the current Sabbatical team will hold office for another year.

Following the final count congratulations and commiserations were distributed in Stables. All the campaigners, campaign managers and candidate were commended on a great week and everyone wishes the new Sabbatical Officers every success in their term next year.



Some of the candidates from the SU elections

University supports Charity Week re-brand

By Aoife Ní Raghallaigh – Editor

The University has commended the work of the Students' Union on the rebranding and re-launching of their Charity Week, formerly known as Rag Week, which is currently taking place.

The University of Limerick as well as members of An Garda Síochána, Limerick County Council, and the local Residents' Association have been part of a Community Forum which has supported and aided the Students' Union in refocusing the emphasis of Charity Week on worthy fundraising activities and working towards ensuring good relations with the local community during the week of activities. This year, in the run up to the event

and during Charity Week, the Students' Union introduced a wide range of new non-alcohol events and sporting competitions to encourage students to support the causes which Charity Week is promoting without the use of alcohol. These events included a Tag Rugby, a 5-a-side soccer tournament and a duck race. There will be no drinking games during the daytime activities either. Speaking about Charity Week, Students' Union President Ruán Dillon McLoughlin said "Each day of the week will be dedicated to one of the charities we are supporting and that charity and their work will be highlighted at all activities that will take place that day to keep the fundraising message

at the forefront for students." University of Limerick President, Professor Don Barry has applauded the fundraising goals the Students' Union has set for Charity Week and the new focus on activities that raise much-needed funds for charity. "We have a very fine body of active and energetic students at the University of Limerick and we wish them well in putting their energies towards fundraising for very deserving causes during Charity Week. An Garda Síochána are working closely with the student representative and local residents to ensure that this year's event is successful. We are particularly pleased that this year sees a new initiative whereby student liaison officers will

work very closely with students and residents," said Superintendent O'Brien, Henry St. Garda Station.

To show their support of the initiative the University presented the Students' Union with a cheque to help them towards their fundraising goal. The year's chosen Raising and Giving Charities are the Limerick Youth Service, Mid West Simon Community the Irish Heart Foundation and Make a Wish Ireland. The charities were chosen last semester by the Students' Union Executive.

More information about Charity Week and the events can be seen at www.ulsu.ie or www.facebook.com/ulstudentsunion

An Focal Digest

It's finally here!

AFTER months of planning and re-branding the new look Charity Week is finally here. I've been filled with equal parts excitement and dread for the past few weeks as the date drew nearer. On the one hand, I'm excited to see if all our hard work paid off and will result in an all round better behaved Charity Week for everyone. On the other hand I'm dreading the risk of everything going down the drain and things being worse than ever before.

We've said it a thousand times but I don't think anyone really believes us when we

say that if this week doesn't go well then Charity Week will be a thing of the past. Unfortunately this is completely true. If there is any trouble this year the University could easily pull the plug. As most of the events are held on their land they can very easily put a stop to proceedings. We all know how much you enjoy Charity Week so why would you do something that could result in having it cancelled forever?

One of the biggest issues with the week is that students seem to forget what it's all about and think that Charity Week is only here for you do whatever you want whenever

you want. Don't get me wrong, Charity Week is a great opportunity to try new things, like entering a pizza eating competition or rolling down a hill in a big inflatable ball but as with everything there are limits. While you are enjoying the week everyone else still has to get up early for work or class and they shouldn't be kept awake all night by house parties who by you running up and down the street screaming for no reason.

Local residents should also be able to sleep soundly at night without worrying about whether their car or property will be damaged or whether the house party down

the road will get out of control. Basically, if you wouldn't do it any other week, don't do it this week. So, if you wouldn't normally drink a shoulder of vodka in one night, don't. If you wouldn't kick someone's car window in normally, then why is that ok during Charity Week?

Remember that the main aim of this week is to raise money for charity. It's not about you so don't make about you, and don't be the one person who ruins the week for everyone. That said, go out and have fun. Make memories that will last a time but use your brain at the same time.



And thanks to...

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 Enda Dowling
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 Mark Connolly
 Daniel Bridge
 Stephen Kelly
 James Enright
 Alan Keane
 John Fitzgerald

Michael Considine
 Tommy Crea ...and anyone else
 Fiona Reidy I've forgotten

Next An Focal deadline is Friday, April 2 for Opinion/Features/Columns/Arts/C&S and Sport. News deadline is Monday, April 5. Email submissions to sucommunications@ul.ie



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Councillors propose name change for University of Limerick

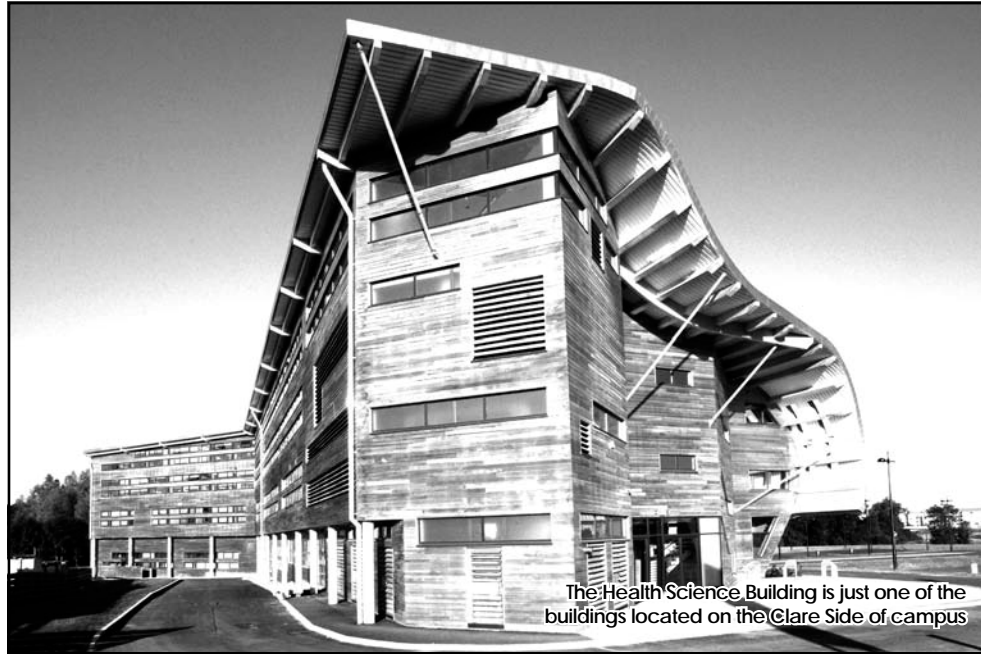
By Aisling Hussey

CLARE County Councillors have proposed that the University of Limerick should be re-named in order to incorporate Clare in the title.

This is due to the recent expansion of the University into the neighbouring county. Thomond and Cappavilla Student Villages are both located on the Clare side of the campus, along with the Health Science Building and the new Irish Centre of Music and Dance. The Clare campus is also home to the Irish Chamber Orchestra and the Medical School is currently in development, along with the President's new residence.

Cllr Cathal Crowe, who is a UL graduate, tabled the motion at a Clare County Council meeting. He received the full support of his fellow councillors, who are now in the process of appealing to the University's governing authority.

He doesn't expect immediate action; however he hopes to see the name changed within a decade, to "reflect its dual county status. Over the coming years, as much as half of the overall university could be built on the Clare side



of the river Shannon. It's only right that this should be acknowledged in a meaningful and highly symbolic way. Re-naming the university

would achieve this." Cllr Crowe also pointed out how Galway Regional Technical College changed its name to Galway-Mayo Institute of

Technology (GMIT) in 1998 to represent the Mayo campus. Mayor of Clare, Tony Mulcahy, also supports the motion for the name change, however the issue is not "top of his agenda" at the moment.

He stated that asking the University to change the name "is one thing, but getting it passed it quite another."

One of the University's founding members, Dr Edward Walsh, believes that re-naming the University is unnecessary and will weaken its international status. "The University of Limerick is a strong name and any addition to its name is likely to diminish rather than strengthen its international standing."

Limerick County Councillor and UL graduate, Diarmuid Scully, believes that Clare county council's claims are unfounded, particularly since there is no campus in Ennis, the county's main town. He also fears that the addition of Clare in the title would have a negative effect on Limerick city. The Mayor of Limerick agrees with Walsh and Scully, stating: "It was named the University of Limerick and should remain as such."

Sweet Like "Chocláid"

By Gavin Ó' Murchadha

THE recent Chocláid fundraiser, which took place on Wednesday of Week 7, aimed to not only to raise funds, but to raise the profile of the work of Student Counselling Services, a service that welcomed over 750 students this academic year alone. Both of these targets were reached with the event grabbing the attention of approximately 20 student volunteers and the Irish Examiner, as well as being advertised on 2FM, Spin South West and Seachtain na Gaeilge's official website; raising a sensational €380 for the service which was immediately injected into the facility.

The fundraiser was held at two venues and celebrated Seachtain na Gaeilge. Cappavilla Common Room kicked off the fundraiser with a "Bake and Buy" and a visit from Spin South West's Spinnies. With the help of the village staff, volunteer bakers and volunteers to sell the chocolate treats, the bulk of the money fundraised was generated from this student-centric initiative at Cappavilla, which was important as this fundraiser was for an "on-campus" cause. The second event, although a quieter affair, took place at The Scholars with hot chocolates and pastries sold in aid of the service with the help of the manager, Corman Mac Canna.

The unprecedented success of the event, "a first of its kind for Student Counselling Services" as Head of Counselling, Declan Aherne, states, combined with the offer of the Psychology Society to lend a helping hand in the organising of future events for this notable cause means that Chocláid will become an annual event moving to the Students' Union Common Room next year, with an even wider campaign to recruit more volunteers. The organisers of the event would like to extend an enormous thanks to Cappavilla Village staff, Connect, The Scholars, Aonad na Gaeilge, Student Counselling Services and especially the student volunteers and those who managed to buy some of the delicious chocolate produce on the day including truffles, brownies, cakes and buns!

Student Counselling Services operate free drop-in sessions from Monday to Friday between 11.00 and 12.00 and 15.00 and 16.00, providing professionally trained and widely experienced counsellors, clinical psychologists and psychotherapists for under-graduate and post-graduate students alike. The service can be contacted via telephone at 061-202327, or in their offices at CM 073. All information is also readily available online.

Clubs and Societies for Haiti

By Jason Kennedy - News Editor

VARIOUS Clubs and Societies in UL have raising nearly €3,000 for Haiti, following up from the recent earthquake in the country. A total of 12 Clubs and Societies volunteered for the weeklong campaign, which involved a variety of activities, such as bake sales and welly throwing.

Clubs and Socs Development Officer, Paul Lee said that there was a great effort put in from all clubs and socs members involved. "The brilliant thing about Clubs and Societies is that if you ask any of the dedicated members to do something, you can be relatively confident that the job will be done.

Members were very intuitive wit their ideas and they were very well received. We would also like to thank Declan Collins, the manager of the Stables, for providing and on campus location for events."

The fundraising event was primarily organised because a number of Clubs and Societies' members have done volunteer work in AIDS orphanages in the deprived country. Clubs and Societies involved include: Music Soc, DJ society, Traditional Music Society, Anime and Manga Society, G Soc, Outdoor Pursuits Club, Trampoline Club, Tae kwon do club, Archery Club, Rowing Club, Mens Rugby and UL Boarders.

Meitheal na Mac Léinn

An Focal Reporter

THE Students' Union has launched a new service, Meitheal na Mac Léinn (MnM's) to increase student safety and security in the Castletroy area during Charity Week. The MnM's will work shifts from 8pm to 6am during the week and will keep an eye on the safety of students and on security area.

Students' Union Campaigns and Services Officer, Fergal Dempsey, explained that "the level of burglaries, assaults and general criminal behaviour happening to students during this week always goes up. It's the danger of people walking home by themselves, leaving windows or doors open after or during parties or people just too drunk to even know their own name." He hopes that the MnM's will work as an extra set of eyes in the off campus estates and will be in direct contact with the Community Gardaí in order to report any suspicious activity.

The system is very similar to successful campaigns which were organised for the UCC Raising and Giving Week and also in WIT which resulted in a decrease in crime in the area as well as enhancing student safety. The main interest of this group is student safety and they will be contactable by phone by concerned students or residents at any stage. They will also make students aware of Castletroy by-laws which make it illegal to drink in public. Students caught drinking in public will be liable for a €75 fine. Mr Dempsey explained the main aim of the MnM's is to provide a "happy face to help you enjoy your night" and encouraged students to report any suspicious activity or behaviour during the week.

CHARITY WEEK 2010



**You might think it's funny,
but the Gardai won't !**



Union Debrief

Postgrad News

It's Charity Week! There are gigs galore and tons of fun events around the campus all week. Here are some of the highlights:

Monday 22nd - Simon Community Day

- 8pm in the Stables – Battle of the Bands €10.
- 11.30pm in Trinity Rooms – Mauro Picotto €12.
- 12am the big Sleep Out in aid of the Simon Community in the Union Courtyard.

Tuesday 23rd - Make a Wish Day

- Rubber Bandits & Ray Foley from 7pm in the Union Courtyard - €9

Wednesday 24th - Limerick Youth Service Day

- All Day in the UL Pitches it's Zorb Ball!!
- 4pm in the Scholars it's Helium Karaoke.
- The Coronas and the Chapters from 7pm in the Union Courtyard - €10
- UV Rave with PHONO in Trinity Rooms for just €5

Thursday 25th – Irish Heart Foundation Day

- 3pm in the UL Pitches – Tag Rugby & 5-a-side Soccer Finals
- 4pm in the Union Courtyard – 3 legged race and egg & spoon race
- 7pm in the Union Courtyard – Shane McGowan & Guests €15.

There are plenty of other events to choose from so go to ULSU reception for tickets and any info you need. This year ULSU have rebranded Charity Week from the previous R.A.G. weeks as it was felt that there was little or no awareness of what R.A.G. stood for; Raising And Giving in case you were wondering. This year each day is targeted to a different charity and the aim is to raise more money than ever before so please give generously when you see the buckets come around.

In other news, congratulations to all of the ULSU officers-elect. I wish you all the best of luck for the forthcoming year and commiserations to the unsuccessful candidates – it was truly one of the most vibrant election weeks in memory so well done to all involved.

Nominations will open for the position of PSA President in the middle of April. After a great year as President, I will not be contesting the next election. While there are many projects that I would like to carry on I am happy at what I have achieved throughout the year and welcome any interested parties to contact me for more information on the position.

Slán,
Michael.

Ruán's Rundown

I WOULD like to begin by saying thanks for giving me the opportunity to work for you for another year. I would also like to say a big well done to all those who ran for election for the different positions.

It is great to see so many people so passionate about the Union. Some great ideas have come forward and we are looking forward to implementing them.

The Union is facing into one of it toughest years to date. With third level funding cuts increasing year on year students are going to see the effects more and more. The year ahead is bleak financially. Your student experience is being threatened by industrial action, further tutorial cuts, service charge hikes and service level cuts to name just a few. We as a Union have been working hard to prevent cuts to date and ultimately minimising the affect on students as much as possible. This includes preventing medical charges being introduced. Fighting such cuts to service or increase in costs is going to get much tougher. We need to fight this at two levels. First at a local front. The University need to know that cuts to tutorials and increased lecture sizes aren't an option. They need to know that we wont stand for it. We also need to fight this at a national front. Our local TDs need to know what the effects of such funding cuts are having on us, that we are suffering and our education is suffering and that it's not acceptable.

This will involve you getting to know your local TD who is going to be looking for your vote in the near future! You need to make sure they know what is actually happening and it is an issue that will cost votes.

We will be working with the other Students' Unions around the country to work out the best approaches to take. We will be calling on your support in the near future!

As always I am looking for your feedback and suggestions on anything and everything. Please send them to sufedback@ul.ie. Thanks.



Ruán, ULSU President

ULSU Nitelink
Timetable for Academic Year 2009/10

Route A 19:00, 20:30, 22:00		Route B 19:45, 21:15, 22:45	
Stop 1: Dromroe Village	Stop 7: Courtyard Student Village	Stop 1: Kilmurry Village	Stop 7: Annacotty (Synotts)
Stop 2: Thomand Village	Stop 8: Brookfield Hall	Stop 2: Elm Park	Stop 8: Spar (at University Court)
Stop 3: Cappavilla Village	Stop 9: Parkview Hall	Stop 3: Oaklawns	Stop 9: Courtyard/
Stop 4: Plassey Village	Stop 10: Park Mews (Clancy's)	Stop 4: Kilmurry Lodge	Brookfield Roundabout
Stop 5: College Court	Returns to UL	Stop 5: Brierfield (Back of the Estate)	Returns to UL
Stop 6: Groody Student Village	via Flag Pole Entrance	Stop 6: Woodhaven	via East Gate entrance
<hr/>			
Route C 23.30 Only			
Route A+B Stops on Request, Drop off only			

RAG Charity

Mid West Simon Community

THE Mid West Simon Community works in the Limerick, Clare and Tipperary regions and aims to reach out to people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or experiencing housing difficulties.

The charity provides long term and transitional housing to those affected by homelessness, and also takes those affected by homelessness out of emergency housing. The charity also supports self-sufficient living while also providing a tenancy officer who helps tenants to deal with bills and other such problems while allowing them to remain independent.

The Mid West Simon Community aims to break the cycle of homelessness by providing support and accommodation after the emergency housing stage. There are a number of emergency accommodation services in the Limerick region which provide temporary housing for homeless people. The Mid West

Simon Community provides assistance after this step by providing homeless people with independent accommodation.

The Community was founded in 2006 and now provides 22 units of accommodation in Limerick and Tipperary. The charity also provides a 14 bed high support unit in Thurles which includes 24 hour support for those with mental illness.

Mid West Simon Community Fundraising and Marketing Officer, Nadia Rahmoune, explained that it is hard to count the figures on homelessness in the region but stated that they are currently at full capacity. The emergency accommodation in the city is also currently at full capacity. She also explained that there are so many definitions of homelessness that it is hard to obtain definitive statistics. Some people may be homeless but staying with friends, some may only be on the streets for a

couple of nights while others may be homeless for weeks at a time. With regard to the recession, Ms Rahmoune stated that people do not become officially homeless immediately. Instead a ripple effect will occur and the true effects of the recession will not be seen for a number of years.

Ms Rahmoune also said that the Community has a number of plans for the future but these are becoming difficult to put in place due to smaller public donations and Government cutbacks. One of the main plans for the charity is to build accommodation for independent living

in Clare as the Community does not currently have buildings in the county. Every little donation helps bring the charity closer to achieving this plan. A donation of just €1 per student will soon add up allowing them to work towards the future by providing new services, and also to maintain the current services on offer.

Ms Rahmoune has commended UL students for agreeing to take part in the Mid West Simon Community Sleepout which was due to take place during Charity Week but unfortunately it had to be cancelled due to safety concerns. This is something Ms Rahmoune has experienced before as she explained said that this a sleepout was the charity had often wanted to do themselves but with so many Health and Safety issues, in addition to all the uncontrollable variables in a city centre, they were unable to go ahead with the plan. She also explained that

if students have an opportunity to partake in similar events in future they should jump at the chance as it is a great way for students to get involved in something different with their friends, especially something which they may

not have a chance to do again.

In addition to fundraising during Charity Week, Ms Rahmoune also encouraged students to fundraise in other ways, such as participating in the Great Limerick Run, which takes place on the May Bank Holiday Weekend, of the Flora Women's

Mini Marathon, which takes place in Dublin on the June Bank Holiday Weekend. Any help, whether big or small, is greatly appreciated by the charity.

Charity Week is currently taking place. This year, be more, donate more, and make a real difference in the lives of the people around you. Register to take part in one of the Charity Week Challenges, throw your change in a collection box during the week or just leave a donation when you pick up condoms from the SU Reception.

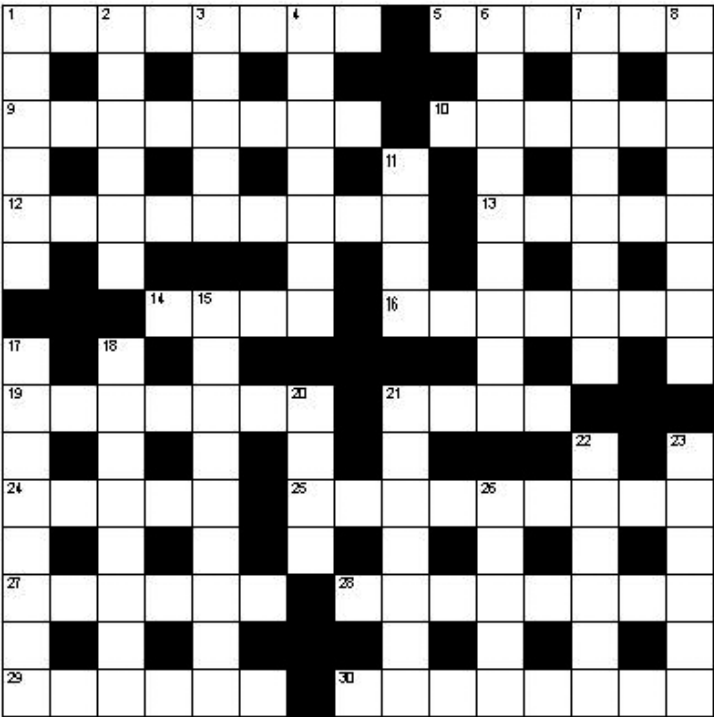
Every little helps but we need everyone to get out and donate if we want to make a real difference this Charity Week.

Anyone who wishes to get more information about the Mid West Simon Community can visit www.midwestsimon.ie or call 061 608980. They can also contact Ms Rahmoune by emailing fund@midwestsimon.ie



Fun Page!

Crossword



- Across
1. Legendary underwater kingdom
5. Son of a Monarch
9. A person not present
10. Concurred
12. Opportunities to evade a rule or law
13. Girl's name
14. Refute
16. Female performer
19. City in North West England
21. Morse or binary
24. One who lays tiles
25. Risk taker
27. Feller of trees
28. No longer married
29. Show excessive love or kindness
30. Took or received something
- Down
1. Capable of producing crops
2. Thing to be learnt
3. Coming after eighth
4. Perfectly
6. Felt sorrow
7. Pointless
10. Put at risk
11. Continent home to China
15. Amuse
17. Country in the North of the UK
18. Recklessly determined
20. Travel by horseback
21. Of the heart
22. Type of bird
23. Evaded
26. Male Bee

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In Numbers

- €10,000
- The amount raised by LIT students during their RAG Week. Can UL students beat that during Charity Week?
- 2780+
- Total number of votes cast in the Students' Union elections. That's almost a quarter of the entire student population!
- €3000
- The amount raised by Clubs and Societies for Haiti
- 6 weeks
- Time left before exams start. Better hit the library!

Word of the Issue

"Ubiquitous"

Exisiting or being everywhere at the same time.
"Ubiquitous" comes from the noun "ubiquity" meaning "presence everywhere or in many places simultaneously."
As exams loom students will undoubtedly wish they could be ubiquitous.

Sudoku

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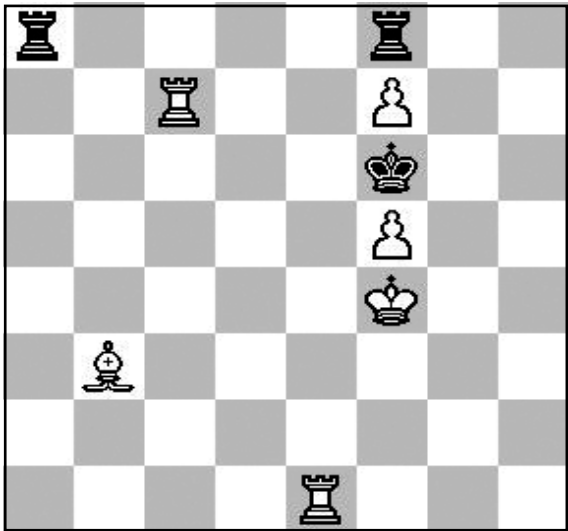
1	9		5	2		4	
				1			
3	6						
4	1		3			7	6
	5		6			8	
2	8			9		3	1
						2	3
			7				
	4		2	9		5	8

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Instructions:
The objective of the game is to fill all the blank squares in a game with the correct numbers. There are three very simple constraints to follow in a 9 by 9 square Sudoku game:
* Every row of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order.
* Every column of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order.
* Every 3 by 3 subsection of the 9 by 9 square must include all digits 1 through 9.



Illustration: Amy Murphy



1. Rc6+ Kg7 2. Rg6+ Kh7 3. Rh1++

Diary of a Co-Op Student

By Nicole Ni Ríordáin

I FEEL as though I’m in a time warp as I write this, during another four day weekend, for another independence day! Yep, Lithuania has two independence days, both national holidays, within a month of each other. Bonkers, but I’m not complaining! It’s perfect timing actually, as my friend from Dublin came to visit for a few days.

So last weekend, the Kaziukas Fair was on in Vilnius, and I spent the most of the weekend exploring that.

It’s a huge craft fair that happens every year in March. Most of the main streets in the city centre are barricaded off to make room for all the stalls and the place is packed with people.

There were hundreds of stalls selling pretty much everything under the sun, like

souvenirs, wooden toys, decorative Easter Eggs, gingerbread (they seem mad about their gingerbread here...) and traditional food. Oh, and there was lots and lots of beer too.

I think one of the things I like most about my Co-Op is getting the chance to live in a city, which I’ve never done before. I love the atmosphere, and the fact that there’s always something going on. And so much to do!

After two months I haven’t yet seen all I want to see in Vilnius; and I haven’t really ventured out of Vilnius to see the rest of the country yet either.

Work this fortnight was fantastic, as some of the older classes get a break from English grammar to learn some Irish from yours truly.

They really enjoyed learning a few basic phrases, and their pronunciation was pretty good! Although, Gaeilge with a Lithuanian

accent is a bit crazy. It was such an odd feeling to hear a chorus of “Cad is ainm duit?” in the corridor.

It’s finally beginning to feel like spring here, as the weather gets a bit warmer. It’s still snowing constantly, but the sun is shining and it’s actually possible to go

outside without a hat, and not have to worry about frostbitten ears! Also, the inches of hardened snow that has covered the city since I got here has begun to melt, which makes everything look so different. I still can’t believe how beautiful Vilnius is...

Right now I’m looking forward to spending the weekend with my friend...we’ve already planned a trip to the ballet and an Erasmus party, so it’s shaping up to be good fun!

“There were hundreds of stalls selling pretty much everything under the sun”

First Year Diary

By Amy Murphy

I FINALLY made it to the Lodge last week; after the election count, I think it was warranted. Apart from being almost killed by newly coupled couples diving for the shady nooks and crannies, I had a good time. I had been campaigning all week and after our success I was in a genuine celebratory mood although everyone was, regardless of whether their candidate had been elected or not – because there was more to celebrate than that. There’s a lot to be said for a job well done and I want to congratulate every campaigner involved last week. I have never seen the campus so enlivened and its all down to your relentless enthusiasm.

My own relentlessness – seeing me appear in the face of many an unsuspecting, Red Raisin bound soul, has won me some new friends, for which I have never been

more grateful. The independence I spoke of last time can sometimes come with a few hiccups and there are some amazing people around campus ever ready to give you a pat on the back when that happens. There does seem to be a lot of hiccups at the moment, whether academic or personal but I suppose the year is beginning to come to a close, which means a lot of loose ends need to be tied up – and some of them might be prickly!

That’s not to say things have wrapped up on campus just yet! We still have Charity Week which I hope will be every bit as exciting as election week but for the right reasons and I’m off to the C&S ball this Thursday due to a much welcomed twist of fate. I missed by debs because of orientation day, so in an unprecedented burst of girly excitement on my part, I can’t wait!

Recipe of the Fortnight

Cheesy potato with garlic

Ingredients:

- 2 cloves of garlic
- About 4 medium potatoes
- 4 oz of cheese
- Salt and pepper
- A little nutmeg
- Half a pint of milk or cream

Method:

Peel and slice the potatoes before layering the potatoes and cheese in a casserole dish. Finish with cheese. Mix milk with garlic, nutmeg and salt and pepper and pour over the potatoes. Cover with foil or lid and bake in oven at 180 for about an hour to an hour and half. Take off foil for last 10 minutes or so.



A Chinese Irishman

By Diarmuid Lucey

NI HAO, all my fellow students. It’s crazy how the weeks cruise by, it’ll be Easter time (a week off!!) in a matter of days. Well, while UL prepares for Charity week, night became day in Beijing and I was adopted by a Chinese family for an evening.

Last week, the Chinese celebrated the Lantern festival. There are many different beliefs about the origin of the Lantern Festival but one thing for sure is that it had something to do with celebrating and cultivating positive relationship between people, families, nature and the higher beings they believed were responsible for bringing/returning the light each year. The Lantern festival marks the official end to the Chinese New Year and saw Beijing lit up by fireworks, symbolising good fortune.

In my previous articles, I rightfully criticised myself for not integrating into the Chinese culture. Well, this week I took the plunge and was invited by a Chinese student to spend an evening with his family. We got a public bus into the neighbouring province, which was a bit of a nightmare, as the phrase “sardines in a tin” springs to mind. Nevertheless, the family were so very curious and even the neighbours were invited into the house, to see me. Even though, we were only about two hours from westernised Beijing, it seemed worlds apart. The Chinese family were very welcoming and prepared five plates of Chinese delicatessens for me to choose from. I was the only person eating while the rest of the family and neighbours

looked on in awe as I struggled with my chopsticks.

Although my Chinese friend had proficient English, his family hadn’t a word and expected that I had fluent Mandarin so they spoke to me in Mandarin and wondered why I was so quiet and smiled a lot. Then, after some awkward moments, my Chinese friend saved the embarrassment by saying I was Irish. However, the Chinese parents’ eyes lit up as they misunderstood and thought I was a Chinese Irishman and continued speaking in Mandarin, this time in a more curious tone.

Another fun trial this week was sorting out our hot water (or lack of it) problem. After attempting to ring the gas people and not being understood, I took it upon myself to draw a picture of the canister and then set off on a mission to find a Chinese person to ring up for us. As I left the apartment, I bumped into a Chinese student on the stairs and asked her. She spoke no English but with the help of my pictures and (bad) acting skills, we went to her apartment upstairs where she rang a number for gas, and spoke loudly down the phone, then wrote something for me in Chinese characters, of which I understood nothing, but nodded, smiled and said thank you a lot, as my present Mandarin vocabulary was of no use. Within half an hour I had a phone call from someone speaking Chinese and I figured they were probably trying to find our apartment. I went down and lo and behold, there were the gas men! I’ll leave ye with a useful phrase: Qing shuo man dian = Can you speak slower please.

Y easayer - Odd Blood

By Eoghan O' Sullivan

"NOT another Brooklyn band?!", I hear you shout as you read the band biography concurrently with this review. But readers wait! This band is different. They are beloved of the blogs and will be at the top of the best of lists in December!

Ok, so maybe that is not far off every other Brooklyn band of the past five years, but that is no bad thing. Why begrudge a band success just because of their birthplace or because the album comes across as having just listened to Animal Collective's "Merriweather Post-Pavillion"?

Hmm, so you have to separate a few things from Odd Blood before you can fully enjoy it. Yeasayer are from Brooklyn and are American college rock's wet dream. Everything you read about them, before actually listening to the music, may put you off. So, let's try and ignore everything else and get down to the music. The wonderful, eclectic, challenging music.

Odd Blood is Yeasayer's sophomore effort following in the footsteps of 2008's All Hour Cymbals. The band themselves admit that the differences between the albums is significant. Whereas their debut sounded like one long experiment that the world had to love or else face being ostracised from the music world, Odd Blood tries its best to invite everyone in and find something to love.

Opening track The Children opens with sound effects akin to every Animal Collective song ever, and the distorted vocals do not help the idea that this band has changed tact. They sing

the harmonies through a fan and used other studio techniques that no band signed to a major label would be allowed to do. And yes, before you ask, Odd Blood was self-produced. But then it kicks into Ambling Alp, about the boxing career of Joe Louis. With its chorus of "Stick up for yourself son/ Never mind what anybody else done", the band have created their first bonafide hit.

From then on, there are hooks and choruses for everyone to enjoy, from the casual listener to the Pitchfork-lover. Madder Red tells of love and loss, while Rome sings that "It's gonna be mine/It's just a matter of time".

ONE, meanwhile, is the track that perked the internet up to the new Yeasayer 2.0 model. It changes gear so many times that it is impossible to pin down any one genre that it sticks to. The bass is pure 1970's disco; the keyboards sparingly used; the lyrics are echoed to sound like singer Anand Wilder was locked in a hall to record the vocals all alone. It is a beast of a song that exemplifies the band's new found ability to create what we like to call a "choooooon". ONE could be heard hundreds of times and still could present new things for the listener to love.

At ten tracks long, Odd Blood certainly does not overstay its welcome. Currently on tour around Europe Yeasayer could be the word of mouth hit that dominates the festivals this year. Better get on them early though, before it becomes uncool to like them.

Odd Blood is out now.



Two Door Cinema Club – Tourist History



By Liam Corcoran

"TOURIST History" is the debut album from the Bangor based indie-rock trio Two Door Cinema Club and was released in Ireland at the end of February.

The band's rise to fame, or at least vague recognition in public music consciousness since the new year has meant that the organisers of Oxegen felt they were worthy of inclusion in the initial line up announcement for this year's festival.

Heralded by many in the industry as a Great Hope for 2010, the band had a lot of expectation riding on the album's release and I think that they managed to live up to the billing with relative success.

"Tourist History" is made up of 10 short, punchy pieces infused with synth, catchy guitar riffs and keyboard

melodies. From the hugely popular rhythmical indie tempo of "I Can Talk" to the popular rhythmical indie tempo of "You're Not Stubborn", Tourist History manages to come across as a perfectly acceptable piece of up-beat, guitar-driven modern music.

However, therein lies the one apparent problem with the release. A full listening will see tracks come across as being repetitive or lacking depth of meaning. The music means little when it's all blended together in such a regimented format, with no excursions into more slowed down experiments in sound. Unless the band manages to capitalise on their current exposure, it is easy to see this

album fade quietly and deftly into obscurity. Perhaps it has to do with the absence of a permanent living drummer in the band's line-up?

In any case, Two Door Cinema Club has a considerable way to go in the indie world and a growing fan base will undoubtedly accompany them in that. At their recent gig in Dolan's they proved to be an energetic live act.

Thankfully, the drum-machine was left in the recording studio and the band went through their set efficiently and to roaring appreciation from the crowd. Just some interesting things that I noticed about the

"...a perfectly acceptable piece of up-beat, guitar-driven modern music"

band at that gig included the lead singers apparent obsession with his guitar tone (going through three beautiful different guitars within the first three songs), the band's (sinisterly) uniform hairstyles and the rhythm guitar and keyboard playing equipment guy lurking in the shadows of the amps at the back of the stage, bringing the personnel involved in a live performance to five (40% are not officially "in the band").

What effect, if any, that these searing insights will have on the band's progress remains to be seen. Departing on a tour to take in performances throughout Europe, the UK, America and Canada over the next two months, Two Door Cinema Club's return to Ireland for Oxegen could very well see them do so as a seasoned and better rounded act.

Our diary of Down Under

By Keith Beegan & Danielle O' Driscoll

IN 3rd year we decided that we would make the most of Erasmus and go to Australia. We jetted off expecting to be greeted by the cast of Home and Away, sipping cosmos on the beach with sun beams splitting the rocks but what we got was rather different!

Much to our disgust we arrived to the longest winter in 95 years. Of course, the Irish were blamed for bringing the thunderstorms with us. Let us paint you a picture: our very first purchase was a hot water bottle and a hoodie. Just our luck. As we know from nature documentaries and travel TV specials, most of Australia is semi-arid and desert although the metropolitan capitals of Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane give visitors a truly different experience.

We resided in the less-populated, less bustling, and more laid-back city of Perth, in the State of Western Australia. When flying there, prepare for excessive queues, tedious waiting periods, exhaustion, continuous security checks, visa investigations, exhaustion, profound discomfort, aching necks, legs, and bottoms, and more exhaustions but 27 hours later and you will arrive in Australia, living eight hours into the future and a million billion miles away from your friends and families

Murdoch University

While on Erasmus we studied at Murdoch University and picked three modules each. This resulted in us only having three days of college a week which made it difficult to interact with Australian and other study-abroad students. The Clubs and Societies, of which there were very few, didn't provide any outlet to meet other students. Unlike UL, the college itself did nothing to help any new students, academically or socially. Don't be surprised if the on-campus bar closes at 5pm due to lack of business.

It was a modern-day ghost town! I know that if the Stables closed at 5pm, the heart-failure rate among students would sky-rocket. The public transport system (Transperth – witty eh?) was very effective and efficient, unlike Bus Éireann, where you could be waiting all your life for a bus to arrive.

In Australia, buses are prompt and come when due. Students can acquire a student Transperth Smart-Rider Card which you can top-up and simply tag-on and tag-off when using all methods of transportation in Perth. It's very useful if you run out of change, plus there's a double discount.

Murdoch Uni did provide a very "useful" service, where by which students can log onto their student account and listen to the lectures live through a "lectopia" service. Considering classes begin at 8a.m there's essentially no motivation for students to leave their cosy beds and go to college. However, a benefit

of going to Murdoch was the chance to avail of the multi-cultural cuisine. Australia, in general, has a myriad food-courts throughout the city, which are comprised of many different restaurants and cafes, with one communal seating area. So regardless of your taste, you can all enjoy different foods together.

It is noteworthy to mention also that Murdoch provides the opportunity to go on a "North West Trip", whereby students get to experience and see the best of Western Australia. We decided not to avail of it however as the trip costs in excess of \$800 for 10days. Instead we planned our own tour of WA, which was ultimately was more enjoyable and more cost effective.

The Adventures of Coolbellup

Believe us when we tell you that if two neighbourhoods seem close on a map, in reality, they are two bus rides and a train away. We learned that the hard way. However, in spite of an awkward distance to college every morning, our house was pretty awesome. However our landlady neglected to inform us that, up until five years ago, Coolbellup was one of the roughest places to be found in Perth.

If seeking off-campus accommodation, ensure that the house is fully furnished, as most houses are vacant. We would also recommend renting a house in Kardinya. We believe on-campus student accommodation is more worthwhile than finding your own place off campus. Personal freedom and independence at the expense of meeting fellow study abroad students and building a social network is a true

shame and a regrettable decision that hindered some of our experiences. You should also decide whether or not you want to live with a friend. From our experience, sometimes even the best of friends may not be compatible housemates, and remember you will mostly like spend the majority of your time with this person for the duration of your study abroad. The exclusivity of the friendship can have unfavourable consequences on the friendship.

The Official Survival Guide of Perth (Spoken like a true Aussie, mate):

- Don't use your smart-rider card in Perth city, as there is a Central Area Transit (CAT) service that goes in all directions for free in the Central Business District. Just jump on and jump off the buses.
- Be vigilant and don't scream when cockroaches, flies, bugs and insects in general gain access into your home through the drainage system, open doors and windows and/or cracks in the walls.
- Sun cream is a must. Douse yourself every morning before exposure, and don't forget unexpected areas like underarms and knees, because you will get an embarrassing tan-line.
- Make sure you experience the orgasmic sensation and fulfilment of an Australian version of a Chocolate Lava Cake available at every Dominos outlet. Also, Cole's brand of mint chocolate is worth a purchase, and with each king-size bar only costing \$1, you might as well buy seven.



Danielle and Brian enjoying the sights in Oz

Eat, Pray, Love

By Ruth Whittle

THIS 2006 bestseller has been hailed as a globe trotting Sex and the City narrative, cut loose from the confines of New York on a journey of self discovery across the world. However the author, Elizabeth Gilbert, who embarks on the year long trip after a personal crisis, offers an intimate account of her experience, rich in spiritual insight and full of depth, which succeeds to surpass the chick-lit genre.

Eat, Pray, Love is a venture which was initiated by the author's unhappy circumstances; after a divorce and a failed relationship, she is left world weary and seeking divine inspiration. She decides to take control of her life and seek meaning and a sense of balance by taking off on a trilogy of three places – Italy, India and Indonesia. In Italy, she spends four months in pursuit of pleasure by learning the Italian language and devouring the Italian cuisine. In India, she practises devotion by staying in an Ashram for four months where she practises meditation and scrubs temple floors, bringing her on the path to enlightenment. And in Indonesia, the pursuit of pleasure and spirituality merge as she spends four months there, learning to find equilibrium in her life from a Balinese medicine man, where the story has a somewhat predictable ending of her finding love.

This book is no conventional travelogue. The author thrives in managing to write some of the most dense and complex issues in a light, engaging and witty manner. For instance, she gives a frank description of her troubles with meditating, how she is burdened with the monkey mind and thoughts that "swing from limb to limb, stopping only to scratch themselves, spit and howl." When she does experience another level of consciousness through meditation, she describes it as "a soft, blue electrical energy pulsing through my body". In addition, she playfully personifies two of her negative emotions: "Depression has a firm hand on my shoulder and Loneliness harangues me with his interrogation." Her ability to give a coherent and insightful account of her experiences is easily one of her best merits.

Overall, Gilbert provides us with an entertaining yet insightful account of her year long voyage across the globe. It is well worth a read for its detailed descriptions of the pleasures of living in Italy, its intimate details of meditation and devotion in an Indian ashram and the rebalancing of her life in Indonesia.

Italia!

By Louise Hollywood

CIAO bella! Comas stai? These are just some of the things my friend Lauramarie has been spouting off since she's been back on the island. Obsessed with the culture, cuisine and of course the men, she can't wait to get back in the summer to continue her Italian adventure that was, much to her dismay, cut so abruptly by UL.

So what is the fascination with Italy and what has it got to offer to us students, who, and I may only be speaking for myself, are broke and completely in debt?

Let's start with Venice.. The city was once described as "undoubtedly the most beautiful city built by man" and that isn't far wrong. The city is world renowned for its canals and the unique structure of the city. There are no roads so absolutely all transport is done by foot or boat as the islands on which Venice is built are connected by a system of bridges. From these bridges one can look at the passing gondolas, which are plush velvet covered rowing boats operated by gondoliers (who have to be Venetian by law). These are quite expensive to travel in at up to €60 per gondola, but if you have a big group I would definitely advise it.

If you walk through Venice to the harbour, you will reach St. Mark's Basilica. This is situated in Piazza San Marco and directly opposite lies Doge's Palace, both of which are beautiful examples of Byzantine architecture. If you are travelling in the summer get there early as the queues are crazy. There is nothing worse than standing in a massive queue with thirty degree heat pumping down on your head. If you walk around St. Mark's Square, an abundance of coffee shops and restaurants are situated. I would advise any student to steer clear of these as one can pay up to €6 for a coffee. My second destination, and my personal favourite, is Florence. This city, known as the "cradle of the Renaissance", is an architect's dream, with beautifully constructed monuments, cathedrals and buildings. The centre piece of this beauty is the world renowned, Duomo. This is open to tourists all year round and it is a marvel to behold. Florence is also home to Michelangelo's Statue of David, located at Piazza della Signoria. The original, which every traveler should see, is located in Galleria dell'Accademia. Again, I would recommend people who

are travelling during the summer to attend early as queues can be up to six hours long. Uffizi, home to artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, Donatello, Michelangelo and Raphael is an excellent museum to visit. It is beautifully constructed lying in the heart of Florence. Tickets are €10 and it is open from Monday to Friday from 8.30 til 6.30 and Saturday 8.30 til 12.30. My next stop is Bologna,

a place I haven't personally visited but to whom my friend Lauramarie holds great acclaim to. Situated only one hour from Florence this city is "student friendly and lots of fun". Home to the most beautiful architecture in Europe, such as the Palazzo dei Banchi, San Petronio Basilica, Palazzo dei Notai, and Palazzo d'Accursio, Bologna is definitely a backpacker's paradise. With a wide selection of places to eat, go clubbing and just relax "Bologna was a fantastic Erasmus spot", according to Lauramarie. When night time hits in Bologna, one will find a rake of people drinking, eating and celebrating in the two squares that are centred on the city before they hit the clubs until the early hours.

As I have already said, Italy is renowned for being really expensive and some say it's difficult to enjoy yourself there. If you are going backpacking this summer, here are

a few tips that will save your Euros. Religiously stay away from shops, restaurants and bars that are located in the centre of a city as they will always charge higher than the ones located a few metres away. There you can find a traditional Italian meal for only €6 and a coffee for a €1. If times are really tough and you're near starving, at 5pm most bars and restaurants give "Apertivos", which are a selection of ham, bread, bruschetta and olives entirely free to customers. Always take Regionale trains rather than Intercity trains as they will be much cheaper. Every Friday throughout Italy markets are held where cheap jewellery, fashion and food can be bought. PLUS hostels are a brilliant place to stay, and which I can personally recommend. They offer cheap, comfortable accommodation with a wide range of facilities and are usually located near the city centre.



St Mark's Basilica in Venice

Cosmic cords from Mick Flannery's magnificent performance

By Sonja Eisenberg

UL students were lucky enough to have the opportunity to experience a unique gig by Cork born singer and songwriter Mick Flannery in the Jean Monnet recently.

Along with his five piece band, Mick performed a gig which certainly relaxed you to your very core. The main man himself was intriguing from the very get go and by the end of the gig you felt completely at ease. He used his surprisingly witty nature to break those awkward silences between songs and sometimes it felt like he was almost totally oblivious to the crowd he performed in front of. As one fellow viewer mentioned, "he could easily have been playing for a family member and not a theatre filled with college students".

The easy going atmosphere in the theatre lasted for a good hour and a half, well

worth the price of the ticket! It was clear by the end of the performance that the entire hall was spell-bound by the magical performance. The band has a kind of Damien Rice/Johnny Cash-esque feel to them and were extremely tight in every way. It's certain that they had the audience hooked. How the band moved their set from foot tapping beats to mellow melodies was effortless; they could have easily been in the recording studio practising a new set. The mix of Mick's husky vocals and piano for some tunes, along with some excellent drumming and guitar playing from the others, made this an unforgettable performance. I'll definitely be on the lookout for this mellow musician's upcoming gigs. For now I'll settle with his album "White Lies", especially the songs "Tomorrow's Paper" and "Safety Rope".

Leonard Cohen is back to enthrall a new generation

By Ruth Whittle

AMIDST the ancient Roman ruins of the French city, Viane, under the twilight sky, 74 year old music legend Leonard Cohen made a sweeping entrance on to the stage, greeting his fans, young and old alike.

Probably best known for his song, Hallelujah, the Canadian is hailed as a poetic and literary genius. His songs and poetry are riddled with Jewish foundations, Christian imagery and the detachment of Buddhism. This suits his persona, frequently associated with mystique. A recluse in a Californian Buddhist Monastery, Cohen left in 2008 to embark on a world tour. Since returning to the world stage after a 15 year fallow period, he has embraced a whole new generation; one more familiar with Jeff Buckley's version of Hallelujah. But with that husky voice, sprightly dance and altogether dazzling stage presence, Cohen demonstrated

his all encompassing appeal, to old and young; pious and atheist. If you are in despair, you may find him depressing.

If you are bereaving you will find some solace. If you are in love he will fill you with euphoria. "Ring the bells that still can ring/ Forget your perfect offering/ There is a crack, a crack in everything/ That's how the light gets in".



Leonard Cohen is back to enthrall a new generation

UL Softball triumph at UCD IV's

By Andrew O'Doherty

UCD hosted the second weekend tournament of the intervarsity season in glorious sunshine on March 6 and 7. UCD followed the UL's lead and introduced their alumni team, the UCD Seniors, for the first time in this tournament, bringing the total number of teams from each of the universities to three.

The upset of the weekend came when the UL DTs defeated the UL 55s, ending their three year unbeaten run. This opened the door for the UCD Wildcats to overtake the 55s at the top of the league table when they met in the following set of games. The Wildcats gladly took their opportunity with a 7-6 victory over the Limerick side.

After the IV league games were out of the way on Saturday, attention turned to the UCD Blitz silverware on Sunday morning. The UCD Wildcats and Kittens and the UL 55s and Ori-ginals played a round robin for places in the Cup and Plate finals, while the DTs defeated the UCD Seniors in a 3-game series to claim the Bowl. The 55s overcame their Saturday woes to claim the Plate, defeating the Kittens in the final. That left the centrepiece of the weekend to contend for as the Ori-ginals took on the UCD Wildcats in the cup final. It was a close encounter at the beginning, with the Ori-ginals leading 4-3 after five complete innings.



The three teams who competed at the UCD IV's

The top of the sixth was the decisive inning for the Ori-ginals as their bats came alive to put up an impressive nine runs. The Wildcats had no answer to the Ori-ginals' massive rally and failed to put up any more runs while the Ori-

ginals added one more run in the final inning to finish the game on a 14-3 scoreline.

UCD completed the weekends formalities announcing Barry Casey of the Ori-ginals and Lauren Cormican of the DTs as the tournament

MVPs. The final leg of the season will be held in Limerick on April 17 and 18, and with the UCD Wildcats carrying a one win advantage over the UL 55s into the tournament, it promises to be an exciting end to the league.

Kayak Club clean up at intervarsities and river bank

By Amy Murphy

AFTER huge success at the intervarsities in Galway, UL Kayak Club cleaned up, winning the entire event to claim the varsities cup this year! UL won second place in the Polo Event with Maynooth placing first but UL only missed out by 2 points on claiming the title.

In the Long Distance Woman's Event, Eimear O'Donnell placed first and in the Men's Long Distance event Sean McTiernan placed first also. Barry Sunderland and Marc Carroll came in third and fourth.

Kim Siekerman, Tommy O'Donaghue, Dave O'Sullivan and Conor Bredin all took part in the free style competition with outstanding results, as they won the event. This undoubtedly helped UL claim the

title of Irish Varsity winners 2010.

In other news, the Kayak Club also held a breakfast morning on Wednesday, February 24, in aid of the ISPCC. We had an excellent turn out, due to its success, we plan on holding the event on a weekly basis.

UL Kayak Club will also be travelling to Sligo from March 12 to 14 to further our river and surf skills both for people who joined this year and our existing members.

UL Kayak Club are taking part in a world wide beach, lake and river clean up weekend on Saturday, March 20, this is important to us as we'll be cleaning up our home stretch of whitewater in Castleconnell, which we paddle regularly.

THERE IS NO SMALL POLLUTION

FROM THE 18TH TO THE 21ST OF MARCH
JOIN US AS WE CLEAN BEACHES, LAKES AND RIVERS FOR THE 15TH EDITION OF THE OCEAN INITIATIVES. www.initiativeoceanes.org

HELP US KEEP THE OCEAN CLEAN

Join  in the **Ocean Initiatives** worldwide beach, lake and river clean-up weekend!

On Saturday 20 March the Kayak Club will be cleaning up their home run on the lower Shannon at Castleconnell.

There will be some class II-III paddling involved, but if you just want to help you can also participate without getting wet.

Start: 10.00
(meeting at Boat House)
Finish: 15.00

Sign up on ulkayak.com or organize your own club clean-up with the Surfrider Foundation (www.initiativeoceanes.org)

UL Archery aim for a new record

OH HOLY Jeebus! UL Archery has just survived the most intense nine days of archery that any team from UL has ever seen.

With four competitions over nine days, ranging from Carlow to Galway, National and Collegial, podium finishes at every shoot, a National Junior Compound Champion and new Personal Bests being shot at every shoot, it has been intense to say the least, not to mention the Shoot for Haiti fundraiser held on the lawns of the White House in between competitions.

IT Carlow's InterVarsity, held on February 27, saw a team of eight archers bring home seven medals, our five top archers bringing home 3rd place team, Craig Tyner bringing home 2nd place in the Advanced Barebow category, and Phil Ryan taking 1st place in the Advanced Recurve category with a new Personal Best score of 529 (from a possible 600). The following day saw four of our best shooters take on Ireland's senior archers at the Dolmen Archers' shoot and succeed in bringing home 1st and 2nd place medals for Rory Thornburgh and Steffan Ashe in the Over 550 Category.

The following week was the Big Weekend in Irish Archery. March 6 and 7 saw the GMIT InterVarsity and the Irish Nationals being shot back to back. With a Record Team score of 2500 for this season, and only 25 points short of the Club record score shot back in 2002, UL Archery took 3rd place by the narrowest of margins. With an equal score as the UCD team the decision for 2nd place went to the number of tens shot by each team – UL with 62 and UCD with 63. Chris Noonan brought home 1st place in the Beginner Recurve section with a score of 485, an amazing feat for his first competition as a recurve shooter.

Craig Tyner can always be counted on for a podium finish in his category and didn't disappoint on this occasion with a 2nd place score to bring our medal tally up to seven on the day. In total, out of 12 shooters who competed on the day, seven new Personal Bests were set. With our archers in top form and with a

hunger for more medals they set out for the Irish Nationals on Sunday, March 7.

UL Archery, with nine competitors, was one of the largest teams competing at the Irish Nationals. The competition format was a 60 arrow qualifier in the morning followed by 12 arrow Head2Head shoot offs. With a new Personal Best of 529, Steffan Ashe qualified first in his category with Phil Ryan hot on his tail in second place. Also competing on the day was Rory Thornburgh, Cian O'Sullivan, Dave Cunningham, Michael Curtin, Alan

“UL Archery has...a record team score of 2500 for this season, only 25 points short of the club record score”

Jeffs, Donna McKenny, and Niall Boland. As the Head2Heads got underway the atmosphere began to get tense. Donna McKenny put up an amazing fight and made it to the quarter finals only to be knocked out by Ireland's #2 female shooter, Maeve Reidy. Steffan Ashe and Phil Ryan made it to the Junior Recurve Semi Finals without suffering any casualties but the pressure of the Head2Head format became too much and unfortunately Steffan lost his match by a narrow margin and was pushed into the Bronze Match shoot off, which he won with ease. Phil Ryan however was still shooting up a storm and made it to the Finals, securing us a second

place finish for UL Archery but the icing on the cake came from Niall Boland, the 2010 National Junior Compound Champion. With new Personal Best scores being shot at every competition he enters, Niall is becoming the one to watch in Junior Compound in Ireland. Along with Craig, the 2010 National Barebow Champion, UL is becoming one of the strongest archery clubs in Ireland at the moment.

In between both of these hectic weekends UL Archery still found the time to set up a Shoot for Haiti fundraiser with an outdoor range on the lawns of the White House. With shooting demonstrations going on all afternoon and a “Have a Go” stand set up so members of the public could try their hand at some shooting it was wonderful stress relief and some fun for all involved. We would like to thank Jury's Inn for sponsoring the “Have a Go” prize of two nights B&B in any Jury's Inn. This prize was awarded for the highest score from 3 arrows by a member of the public and went to Aiden Casey with a score of 28 from a possible 30.

Nine days, four competitions, 19 medals, 12 Personal Best scores, another National Champion for UL Archery, a fundraiser and Steffan Ashe being scouted for the National Squad after his phenomenal shooting at the Irish Nationals, and the Irish Student Archery Association InterVarsity Finals being held here in UL on April 10, the question on every UL Archer's lips is “Will we set a new team record score, will we bring home a podium finish in the ISAA Leagues, and is our trophy cabinet big enough for all these medals and plaques?”.



The UL team at the GMIT InterVarsities

Competitive season draws to a close for UL Badminton



Competitive season draws to a close for UL Badminton

THE competitive season is nearly finished for the UL Badminton players. County Championships were held in the Arena Sunday, March 7 and numerous UL players registered for this event which saw great successes for club participants.

In Grade 6 (entry level), Harry Van Haaren (1st year Music Media and Performance Technology) won Men's Singles and Men's Doubles with Michael Moore (2nd Yr Pharmaceutical and Industrial Chemistry). Bridie Welsh (2nd Yr Mechanical Engineer) and Rachel Harrison (2nd Yr Mathematical Sciences) were runner-ups in the Ladies Doubles. Rachel and Harry were also runner ups in the mixed doubles competition. Furthermore, in Grade 5 (more experienced players) Richard McEvoy (Postgrad M&AE) and James Scully (Postgrad M&AE) were crowned Limerick county Men's Doubles Champions. The winners of all categories qualify for the Munster Province Championships to be held in April. Overall, the club was very successful with UL represented in finals in most categories and three teams/individuals qualified at province level.

The season is also coming to

an end in the Limerick County Badminton League. During the college year, UL teams played on a home and away basis against opposition from Limerick city, Effin, Foynes Newcastle West and Trinity. Within each fixture, seven games are played: ladies singles and doubles, men's singles and doubles and three mixed doubles. The Grade 5 UL team finished second overall in its category and qualified for the semi-final against Effin. This semi-final game was played on Wednesday, March 10 in a neutral venue. The six people strong team, lead by Captain Helen Dempsey (2nd Yr BBS and French), won men and ladies singles, two of the mixed doubles and narrowly lost the three other games.

Numerous games were very close but overall UL came away with a 4-3 victory. This win qualifies the team for the county final where they will face Mungret B, one of the Limerick city teams.

The game will be played in Week 9 or Week 10 in a neutral venue which is to be determined. This is an excellent result for the club and the team hopes to emulate the 2009 Grade 4 players who were crowned County Champions last year.

Fitzgibbon Report

NUIG end thirty year wait

NUIG claimed their first Fitzgibbon Cup since 1980 in Pearse Stadium on March 6 after a remarkable weekend of hurling.

By Tommy Crean & Tomás McCarthy – Sports Editor

**NUIG 1-24
LIT 1-23 (AET)**

NUI Galway caused one the biggest upsets in Fitzgibbon Cup history as they overcame a disappointing LIT side in the first semi-final played at Dangan. The hosts and major underdogs were by far the hungrier team throughout, showing genuine determination against the odds in a fantastic match.

LIT struck first blood via a fine Niall Quinn strike before NUIG gave the best possible response a seconds later. Cormac O'Donovan struck the game's first goal hockey style at the ball spilled to him metres out, giving keeper Matthew Ryan no chance. David Barrett added the Galway-based side's first point before LIT levelled with three unanswered scores via Willie Hyland (2) and Sean Collins. The only major scare of the half was on 20 minutes where LIT's Ryan made an impressive goalmouth block with his foot. The sides then exchanged scores for the rest of the half, never being more than two points apart at any stage and went in level 1-8 to 0-11. Neutrals anticipated an onslaught from the Limerick side in the second period and what a surprise they got as neither side could pull away from each other. It was a perfect hurling advertisement, with a mix of skill and physicality. For LIT Canning was striking over sublime sideline cuts and

freed from impressive angles with Timmy Dalton also netting a crucial goal. NUIG's Seamus Hennessey summed up the fight with some exceptional catches and defensive work in the half back line. It was he who leveled the game with a minute to spare before his teammate David Barrett was shown red to set up a tense last minute attempt for the Limerick men. Canning surprisingly missed the injury time free which resulted in extra time being required, the sides tied at 1-17 apiece.

Extra time was again a close affair. The two more memorable scores came courtesy of Canning, one magical sideline cut and a free from the halfway line. NUIG were still managing to answer all the questions LIT asked of their defence. However, they gave away a soft close-range free at the death. Only being two points ahead, the moan of the crowd typified the opinion that their heroic defensive work had probably been all for nothing at this stage. It was Canning who stepped up to take the last ditch shot at goal, but gave it too much air, managing to raise a worthless white flag. The home crowd erupted. NUIG had earned a well deserved victory.

Their key man was Galway star John Lee. He was specifically assigned to mark Joe Canning out of the game and did so more effectively than any player in the country has to date. Canning only managed one score from play in 80 minutes despite finishing with 0-13. Hennessey gave a heroic performance at centre back, and Finian Coone was also a constant scoring threat. LIT's James McNerney also gave a good account of himself.

**NUIG 1-17
WIT 1-16 (AET)**

John Conlon emerged as the NUIG hero with a last gasp winner in injury time of extra time to secure Fitzgibbon glory for the hosts at Pearse Stadium. NUIG, who started as 15/2 outsiders at the outset of the weekend, endured extra time for a second day in succession and came from nine points down to edge out WIT.

For so long such a script appeared unlikely. NUIG struggled to get out of the traps with WIT suffocating their forwards. Colm Bonnar's side utterly dominated the opening period. Their efficient defensive play led by Noel Connors and Shane Fives was converted into scores through Brian O'Meara, Ray McLoughney and Timmy Hammersley. It got worse for the hosts on 21 minutes with Hammersley flicking the ball inside two Galway backs before rifling to the net. NUIG's wide count mounted with their only first half scores being attributed to Finian Coone placed balls as they trailed 1-7 to 0-4.

This final was meandering to a predictable conclusion with only eight minutes gone in the second half. WIT looked to have the game secure leading 1-11 to 0-5 again through the majestic accuracy of Hammersley.

Against all odds NUIG lifted their game with Caimin Morey firing a crucial goal on 42 minutes a low drive from 21 metres out to fuel their comeback. Further scores from Coone, a monstrous free from Hennessey inside his own 65 and one from Conlon brought it back to two.

The comeback appeared to fall short at this point but again they gave the crowd some late drama. Coone pointed from play on the stroke of full time and then Seamus Hennessey, inspirational all through the afternoon, angled over an equalising point two minutes into injury time. WIT with the title in their grasp had failed to score in the last 22 minutes of the second half leaving it 1-11 apiece at full time. Man of the match Hammersley helped himself another four points in extra time and substitute Henry Vaughan also added one to leave WIT 1-16 to 1-15 ahead with four minutes remaining.

And although WIT still led by a point with moments left in extra time again NUIG's character showed with James O'Gorman levelling before Conlon's late, late intervention.



Fitzgibbon Cup 2010 statistics

Compiled by Liam Togher

**NUI Galway 1-24
LIT 1-23
(after extra time)**

Wides: NUIG 17 LIT 9

Frees: NUIG 14 LIT 16

65s: NUIG 0 LIT 1

Yellow cards: NUIG 1 LIT 1

Red cards: NUIG 1 LIT 0

UL 0-14 Waterford IT 1-15

Wides: UL 7 WIT 6

Frees: UL 15 WIT 16

65s: UL 1 WIT 0

Yellow cards: UL 1 WIT 3

Red cards: UL 0 WIT 0

**NUI Galway 1-17
Waterford IT 1-16
(after extra time)**

Wides: NUIG 17 WIT 9

Frees: NUIG 21 WIT 14

65s: NUIG 1 WIT 0

Yellow cards: NUIG 3 WIT 1

Red cards: NUIG 0 WIT 0

Fitzgibbon Report

Hammer blow to UL's Fitzgibbon hopes

By Tomás McCarthy at Dangan

WIT 1-15
UL 0-14

A TIMMY Hammersley inspired Waterford IT edged past a below par UL challenge in the Ulster Bank Fitzgibbon Cup semi-final at Dangan on March 5. Although the early signs were encouraging from Ger Cunningham's side they were unable to cope with a resurgent second half display from a side who always find their best form on Fitzgibbon weekend.

UL were forced to start without the injured Willie Ryan with Andrew Quinn taking his place in the full forward line. From the throw in the exchanges were physical and tough with referee Johnny Ryan kept busy throughout. Despite this UL made a rapid fire start. They found themselves 0-3 to 0-0 up after seven minutes and by the 17th minute were 0-6 to 0-2 ahead. By half time UL registered six different names on the score sheet. The pick of these scores were a magnificent long range effort from Seamus Hickey and a classy Andrew Quinn point after an accurate delivery from the outstanding Kieran Joyce. Shane Dooley was also in confident form with four points two from frees, a 65 and one from play. With the UL forwards in razor sharp form WIT could count themselves lucky to be only 0-9 to 0-5 down at the break. They were heavily reliant on Hammersley who fired all their first half scores while others around him looked low on confidence.

UL again started the second period brightly through a Dooley free and looked capable of pulling away at this juncture. However WIT made some vital moves bringing in Richard McCarthy to full back switching Shane Fives to centre back and also introducing Brian O'Meara to full forward. Shane Dooley also missed two frees to extend UL's advantage. In addition the UL backs started conceding too many scoreable frees. Hammersley was more than willing to oblige and the margin was reduced to two points 0-10 to 0-8.

Then the game changing score arrived on 41 minutes. Substitute O'Meara broke the ball

into the path of Hammersley who ran into the open space and finished with aplomb low into the bottom corner past UL goalkeeper Thomas Lowry. Dooley levelled soon after but WIT's gander was up. Hammersley landed another massive free from 65 metres and O'Meara pointed after a close in save by Lowry. All of their changes were working superbly as well and UL's forwards were suffocated by a back line led by Shane Fives. By the end three of the starting forward sextet had been withdrawn with Dooley's five frees the only UL scores of the second half. Still UL hung in there with Dooley recovering from his misses and led by a point with five minutes to go 0-14 to 1-10. In the end though Colm Bonnar's side showed the determination and hunger for the battle when required as UL wilted. They fired the last five scores with four from Hammersley, who finished with 1-13, and a single from O'Meara.

Although the WIT team sheet didn't sparkle with county names their team spirit and work ethic was never in question and in the end that was the difference between the sides. UL looked comfortable at the break but could never steer clear of the Waterford outfit and the team appeared to lose its way when the game was up for grabs. After a season that promised so much these players will again reflect with regret on a Fitzgibbon that failed to deliver the ultimate prize.

WIT: Adrian Power, Brendan Kenny, Shane Fives, Noel Connors, Wayne Hutchinson, Enda Barrett, PJ Rowe, William O'Dwyer, Mark Molloy, Fintan O'Leary, Kieran Reade, Ronan Good, Timmy Hammersley (1-13 11f), Kieran Grehan, Ray McLoughney.

Subs: Richard McCarthy for O'Dwyer, Brian O'Meara (0-2) for Reade, Barry Johnson for Mark Molloy, Stephen Power for Good.

UL: Thomas Lowry, Paddy Stapleton, Michael Malone, Conor Fogarty, Kieran Joyce, John Devane, Seamus Hickey (0-1), Martin Walsh, Noel O'Murchu, Thomas Connors (0-1), Ryan O'Dwyer, Brian Carroll (0-1), Andrew Quinn (0-1), Matthew Ruth (0-1), Shane Dooley (0-9 7f, 1 65').

Subs: Dylan Hayden for Joyce, Paddy Murphy for Quinn, Michael Heffernan for O'Murchu, David Burke for Ruth.



An Focal Fitzgibbon All Stars

By Liam Togher & Tomás McCarthy – Sports Editor



1. Donal Tuohy (NUIG)

It was a close call between the Clare man and WIT's Adrian Power but we plumped for Tuohy. He pulled off some key saves on the finals weekend and was a model of consistency throughout the competition.

2. Kieran Joyce (UL)

Several UL players will be disappointed with their contribution in the semi-final but Joyce isn't one of them. Given his overall brilliance over the last few weeks it's no surprise he has All-Ireland medals in his back pocket.

3. Shane Fives (WIT)

The fearless and domineering youngster was one of the key reasons for WIT's run to the final. He kept the UL and NUIG forwards very quiet and his versatility means he is a cast-iron certainty to appear on the team sheet.

4. Noel Connors (WIT)

Along with Fives, the corner-back was instrumental in WIT's superb defensive displays on finals weekend. Andrew Quinn got absolutely no change off him during the semi-final and he was quietly effective for the runners-up.

5. Nicky O'Connell (LIT)

The Clare wing-back has hardly put a foot wrong at college, club and county level over the last year and a half. He picked off a fine point in the semi-final defeat to NUI Galway and showed for LIT why he is likely to be one of the finest hurlers to grace the game in the next few years.

6. Seamus Hennessy (NUIG)

The biggest of games can throw up the most unlikely of heroes and NUI Galway would simply not have won the 2010 Fitzgibbon Cup without Hennessy. He was exceptional at centre-back and twice scored 60th-minute points to take games into extra time. Pure class.

7. John Lee (NUIG)

Well he wore number eight and played at full-back in both games on finals weekend but we're sure Lee would have been just as effective on the wing. The Galway man stifled Joe Canning to the point where the LIT icon badly fluffed his lines in the dramatic semi-final.

8. Martin Walsh (UL)

The Kilkenny man and brother of 2009 Hurler of the Year, Tommy Walsh, went

about his business very effectively for UL, not just in the semi-finals but in all four matches in the competition. He was one of the few UL players to rise to the challenge in the defeat to WIT.

9. Domhnaill O'Donovan (NUIG)

O'Donovan's boundless energy and work rate secures him a place in this selection. The Clare under 21 All Ireland winner performed consistently throughout the campaign and rose to the occasion in the final even when the game seemed lost.

10. Mark Bergin (St Patrick's College)

The Kilkenny man carried his team on his shoulders up until their quarter final exit. His accuracy from play and placed balls left him with 0-26 from St Pat's three matches.

11. Neil McManus (UUJ)

Although UUJ were knocked out in the group stage their captain Neil McManus is worthy of inclusion here. He fired 5-12 in two games, scoring all 3-7 of his team's total against UL.

12. Willie Hyland (LIT)

The Laois man just edged out Barry Daly (NUIG) for this position due to his greater accuracy. He knocked over three points from play in the semi final against NUIG and was a solid target for Matthew Ryan's puck outs.

13. Timmy Hammersley (WIT)

Over the Fitzgibbon weekend Hammersley confirmed himself as a name to watch in the future keeping the scoreboard ticking over at an alarming rate. The Tipperary man scored no less than 2-24 on finals weekend (only missing one free) and earned the man of the match award in the final. His tally of 3-57 from six games left him top of the scoring charts.

14. Joe Canning (LIT)

John Lee muted Canning's influence in the semi final but the Portumna man still finished the Fitzgibbon campaign with a total of 4-51 from four games. The highlight came on the first day out finishing with 3-8 against UCC at the Mardyke.

15. Finian Coone (NUIG)

The NUIG captain concluded the campaign with an impressive haul of 1-43 from six matches. Coone encountered difficulties with his free taking in the semi final against LIT, but he recovered admirably to fire nine points in the final.

UL Ladies Rugby continue to set the pace

James Enright & Fiona Reidy

**UL 22 -
0 UCC**

UL's all-conquering Ladies Rugby Team continued their winning way with a comprehensive victory over UCC at the Bowl on March 3. Scoring four tries and keeping a clean sheet will be particularly pleasing for the ladies given the rain and wind which made ball-handling difficult throughout.

The visitors, keen not to let UL settle, began in determined fashion yet lacked the composure to convert possession to points. Slowly, UL began to exert their authority and Sarah-Jane Cody eventually crossed for a try to ease the home side's nerves in the 25th minute. The try was just desserts for a period of intense pressure that began with an Ashling Hutchings kick to touch deep in the UCC half. The ensuing lineout was the ideal platform for UL's forwards and some slick movement out wide from Bronagh O'Donovan and Claire Keohane led to Cody breaching UCC's resolute rearguard. UCC were rattled and when a 33rd minute kick downfield was caught by Hutchings, the full back willingly exploited the space she was afforded. Hutchings weaved past several tacklers before passing to Cody who touched down for her second try.

UL spent the remainder of the half camped in their opponents' 22 and almost increased their lead after Fiona Malone stole a UCC lineout.

The resulting maul came up just short and UL could not convert from an ensuing five metre scrum. A 10-0 half time lead was significant in murky conditions and UL were not going to surrender this to their rivals easily.

A brief UCC venture into UL's half after the restart was not an indication of renewed fervour from the Leesiders and it was UL who again seized the initiative.

A 42nd minute speculative kick by Anna Caplice skidded along the surface and led to some confusion on the UCC 10 metre line. Hutchings pounced, kicking the loose ball ahead and relying on her extraordinary pace to out-run the UCC backs over fifty yards before sliding in for a third try. There was no way back for UCC at this stage and their effort waned considerably as UL emptied their bench. The scoring was completed when a fluid passing exchange behind the scrum led to a line break from Cody who passed to Hutchings to touch down under the posts. Caplice added the conversion to cap a controlling display at out-half.

The pace of UL's backline was the difference between the sides and explains the comfortable 22-0 victory.

UL: Sarah Hogan, Liz Walsh, Katie Sullivan, Fiona Malone, Clodagh Lacey, Rosie Flanagan, Michelle Caffery, Fiona Reidy, Ailish Toner, Anna Caplice, Eileen Shanahan, Claire Keohane, Sarah Jane Cody, Bronagh O'Donovan, Ashling Hutchings

Subs used: Kate Frier, Leah Barber, Katy Byrnes, Niamh Lonergan, Sarah O'Sullivan.

**NUIG 5 -
54 UL**

UL travelled to Galway on March 10 to play NUIG in the last league game of the season. UL received the kick off and were on the attack from the beginning. UL built up some good phases and after applying a lot of pressure to NUIG's defence

"UL only conceded two tries in their entire league campaign"

UL scored out wide through full back Ashling Hutchings. This was a new look UL team with many new players starting for the first time and many more being tested in different positions. UL always appeared the dominant team and ten tries for the visitors sealed the win.

Those tries came from: Ashling Hutchings (3), Bronagh O'Donovan (3), Anna Caplice (1), Sarah Jane Cody (1), Claire Keohane (1) and Mary O'Regan (1). NUIG did apply pressure on the UL line in the opening quarter of the second half, UL defended excellently but eventually due to a UL error at the breakdown NUIG dived on a loose ball and scored their only try of the game, UL then raised their game once more and finished the game strongly. UL only conceded two tries in their entire league campaign and now face UCC in the final on Friday March 19 at a neutral venue.

UL Team: Katie Sullivan, Leah Barbour, Mary Crehan, Michelle Claffey, Sarah O'Sullivan, Anna Caplice, Mary-Rose Flanagan, Fiona Reidy, Eileen Shanahan, Ailish Toner, Niamh Lonergan, Maria Moran, Sarah Jane Cody, Bronagh O'Donovan, Ashling Hutchings.

Subs used: Katie Byrne, Elizabeth Cronin, Claire Keohane, Mary O'Regan, Aimee Reid.



Handball Club Compete Well At Worlds

By John Fitzgerald



AN EIGHT strong contingent from the University of Limerick recently returned from the world intercollegiate handball championships which ran from the February 17 to 21 at the Arizona State University. This tournament saw 120 collegiate players from the United States, Ireland and Mexico compete for both team and individual prizes.

The UL team of Deirdre Donohoe, Jamie Geraghty, Fiachra Hayes, Sean Egan, James Enright, Eamon Mc Nicholas, Ian O'Dwyer and John Fitzgerald arrived in Phoenix on Sunday night, allowing plenty of time to adapt to the American style courts. The first competition of the tournament was the Men's B Doubles in which UL was represented by three partnerships. In the first round Jamie Geraghty and Fiachra Hayes edged out Mark Austin and Paul Dodson of Missouri State in a thrilling encounter which saw the UL duo winning by the narrowest of margins in the tie breaker. Ian O'Dwyer and John Fitzgerald were also successful in their first round match defeating Tyson Maughen and Shaun Wagner of Utah State University in comfortable fashion. Unfortunately the third pair of James Enright and Sean Egan was beaten in the first round by eventual finalists Conner Bacon and Michael Wilbanks of Missouri State. The doubles competition ended for Ian O'Dwyer and John Fitzgerald losing to eventual champions Ger Murphy and Sean Walsh of NUIG. It was the unbeatable NUIG pair of Murphy and Walsh again who saw an end to UL's title hopes in this competition defeating Jamie Geraghty and Fiachra Hayes in the semi final.

In the Men's Division 1BC Intermediate singles competition UL were represented by Jamie Geraghty and John Fitzgerald. Jamie qualified for the semi-final of the Division 1C

category after victories over Michael Wilbanks of Missouri State and Dane Swanson of Minneapolis. In a hard fought semi-final Jamie lost to eventual champion Paul Dodson of Missouri State (17-21, 21-8, 11-2). John Fitzgerald qualified for the final of the Men's Division 1 Intermediate category. John needed a tie breaker to defeat Michael Wilbanks of Missouri in the semis; however in the final John met strong competition in the form of Declan Smith of UCD. Declan won on a score of (18-21, 21-13, 11-6).

Fiachra Hayes played admirably in Division 2A qualifying for the final despite illness. Fiachra had wins over Shane Mahon and Shane Broidy (both DCU) before succumbing to Colm Grace of DCU in the final (21-16, 21-15). In Division 2B Ian O'Dwyer had a very comfortable win over Jonathan Telles of Florida before losing out at the quarter final stage to Paul Ratarree of Texas. Eamon Mc Nicholas qualified for the last 16 of the same competition defeating Paul Dickhaus (Florida) and Tyson Maughan (Utah). James Enright and Sean Egan also made it to the last 16 of this competition. James started off well winning a closely contested game against Chris English (Texas) and Sean was unlucky to lose out to Daniel Guzman of California.

The Ladies Competition produced UL's greatest success as Deirdre Donohoe won the Women's Open spit. Deirdre saw off the challenge of Emily Mc Mahill of Missouri State in the semi before defeating Hilary Rushe of UCD in the final (10-21, 21-17, 11-8).

Overall this was a very successful tournament for the club and a memorable experience for all involved. For many of the UL Club it was their first taste of an international competition, but hopefully not the last.

Making sense of the Ramsey frenzy

By Stephen Kelly

IN THE aftermath of the reckless lunge by Ryan Shawcross that left Aaron Ramsey requiring surgery on a double leg fracture, the esteemed football pundits in the media were outraged.

“He has a real bitter and nasty streak,” said Stan Collymore while Lou Macari remarked “He should apologise”. It wasn’t the tackle that had provoked their ire, however. It was Arsene Wenger’s post-match description of the tackle as “horrendous and unacceptable”. Wenger had just seen a third Arsenal player suffer a leg-breaking tackle in less than four years. “I don’t believe in coincidence,” he said.

His comments in the circumstances seemed quite diplomatic and he at no point mentioned Shawcross or implied that the tackle was a deliberate assault. That didn’t stop the repeated character assassinations from the mouths-for-hire. Just Wenger whinging again. He wouldn’t have seen it if one of his own players did it. The whole episode was just another stark illustration of the dismal state of television punditry in English football. It’s resembles little more than an old boy’s club

of ex-players, many of whom are barely literate. Despite being in English football for over 14 years, Wenger is still seen as an outsider. Stan Collymore’s take on the matter summed of the attitude of many: “It is blatantly obvious the Frenchman wants to buck the trend and traditions of English football,” he asserted. No further comment necessary. As for the tackle itself, Sky chose not to show it. Are they suddenly the guardians of moral decency or did they just not want to have to answer some difficult questions? Wenger doesn’t believe in coincidences but Sky pundits apparently do.

There was more sympathy for Shawcross than Ramsey and the “he’s not that kind of player” mantra was repeated ad nauseam, as it had been for Dan Smith and Martin Taylor after the previous incidents involving Abou Diaby and Eduardo. Not only was such an argument completely irrelevant but those who bothered to look a bit deeper uncovered evidence that Ryan Shawcross is that kind of player. Not the kind of player who deliberately breaks opponents’ bones but a player who unnecessarily endangers them by launching himself

into tackles with complete disregard for their safety. Or with “excessive force” to quote the laws of the game. It emerged that he broke Francis Jeffers’ ankle with a tackle from behind in 2007. Emanuel Adebayor was lucky to escape without injury when Shawcross caught him with studs-up challenge a yard off the pitch in the corresponding Stoke-Arsenal fixture last season. There is even footage of a late two-footed assault he made while on loan at Manchester Utd feeder-club Royal Antwerp. None of this was ever discussed at any length on Sky.

It was significant that a more rational analysis of the incident and its implications took place in the print media. The excellent Patrick Barclay of the Independent was prepared to address the uncomfortable underlying questions. “There’s wildness and physicality about the English game that’s unhealthy,” he said. Other considered contributions came from the likes of Neil Custis, Martin Samuel and even Dara O’Brian, none of whom ever played the game at a serious level and thus receive next to zero television coverage.

They all discussed the possibility



that these injuries tend to happen against Arsenal because opposition players are encouraged to be as physical as possible against them. They’re told to “get amongst them”, and riled up with other euphemisms that essentially mean foul them as hard and as often as you can get away with.

French football writer Philippe Auclair was scathing in his analysis of English football punditry and

summed up the situation nicely. “You have a deficit of knowledge and understanding which is mixed with prejudice and dare I say it xenophobia,” he said. “In Britain almost every analyst is a former player - it’s as though ‘if you were a horse you could be a jockey’.” Anyone familiar with some of the big-mouthed, neighing loons working as pundits in England will appreciate the analogy.

Sigerson glory for DCU as UL reflect

By James Enright

STAR-studded DCU emerged as a real force in third level competition by capturing their second Sigerson Cup title in five years, edging out UCC in the decider in Leixlip on March 1. It was the Glasnevin outfit’s second significant success in the space of a week and will now follow the O’Byrne Cup into the college’s trophy cabinet for 2010.

DCU controlled proceedings from the throw-in and were good value for their 1-11 to 0-10 victory.

Brian Sheridan claimed the man of the match award for his contribution of 1-5. The Meath man was unerring from placed balls but it was his composed finish to the UCC net midway through the second half that gave the winners a six-point advantage and enabled them to hold off the defiant Leesiders in the final quarter. Watching this game live on TG4, UL’s Senior Footballers must

surely grimace and think what might have been with a little luck. Cast your mind back to last October and you will remember this same UCC team coming to Plassey and shipping a heavy defeat to UL in the league. Only a short few months later no fewer than nine of those who saw action for UCC that day were lining out in the final in Maynooth. UL were dumped out of the Sigerson Cup in Round 2 by Athlone IT. The margin and manner of this defeat was as surprising as it was disappointing. Athlone, bolstered by Cavan’s Ray Galligan and Offaly’s John Reynolds progressed to the semi finals before being dispatched with ease by UCC.

What happened in the intervening couple of months that a UCC team which UL so comfortably disposed of could march to the Sigerson Cup final whilst UL’s fortunes took such a nosedive? Perhaps, as alluded to by Alan Keane in the last edition,

the lack of satisfactory training facilities has hindered their progress. With various codes competing for training space on Maguire’s sod it is not ideal preparation for such a prestigious competition. It was encouraging to read the manifestos of some student union presidential candidates who pledged to improve the playing surfaces on campus. They are currently not adequate and the University’s sporting prosperity will suffer until such time as they are upgraded. UL have never won the Sigerson Cup and haven’t reached the decider since 1997. However, the breakthrough may be on the horizon over the next few years.

UL will take scant comfort from UCC’s progress since their league encounter but it surely must reassure them that with the right structures in place, reaching a Sigerson weekend at the very least is an achievable target.

UL Soccer Club retain Farquhar Cup

By Tomás McCarthy – Sports Editor

THE UL Men’s Soccer team won the Farquhar Cup for the second year running with a 3-1 win over Queens University Belfast. The scheduling of the competition during Week 6 (Monday to Thursday) was a source of annoyance for the UL soccer club as it forced many squad members to miss classes for that week.

Their campaign began on Tuesday with a game against NUIG. Despite high expectations of UL NUIG produced something of a shock. Managed by former Galway United striker, Billy Cleary, NUIG raced into a 4-1 lead. Ger Cheevers struck a double with other goals courtesy of Ciaran Foley and Sean Murphy. Brian Cleary’s lone strike seemed insufficient until NUIG were reduced to nine men. Foley and Shane Brown both saw red and UL clung to a glimmer of hope with 20 minutes left. David McGrath and Daniel Clinton both hit the back

of the net but UL ran out of time coming out on the wrong end of 4-3 score line.

The team were forced to pick themselves up from this disappointment and face a Farquhar semi final. Daniel Clinton and Dan Goggin were amongst the goals in an easy 4-0 victory over Trinity College to advance to the decider against Queens University Belfast. In the final Limerick FC striker David McGrath gave UL a slender advantage at half time with a goal on 30 minutes.

Jay Gardiner replied for Queens to set up a tense finish. UL pulled through however with late goals from McGrath and David Njuki. Although UL retained this trophy they will also reflect with disappointment that they didn’t go further in the Collingwood. NUIG eventually reached the final bringing the strong favourites UCD to penalties before losing out 4-2.

Time to support our sport

By Alan Keane

SPORT is massive in UL. Yep, every Tuesday and Wednesday night when there's Champion's League on the Stables is jammed. However if one was to venture up to playing pitches when any of the UL teams are in action, the crowd you'd find observing on the sidelines would probably fit into a couple of the cubicles in the Stables bathrooms. The sad fact is that sport is not as well supported as it should be in UL. Given the choice between sitting vegetating in front of Home and Away at half twelve in the afternoon or risking frostbite or pneumonia standing on the hill beside Pitch One, Alf and co. will always come out on top. I am not suggesting here that we blame Australian soap operas for the lack of interest in UL sport. Unfortunately the root of the problem lies much deeper than that. Take a look around campus. How many soccer jerseys do you see on a daily basis? How many county and club GAA jerseys? Now look again. How many people do you see wearing UL's sport paraphernalia? Discounting those directly involved in UL sport's clubs, you'd be hard pushed to find more than a handful of people wearing UL colours with pride. Many people wouldn't know where to go to buy a UL GAA jersey (the GAA office). I would venture so far as to say that a fair few wouldn't even know what colours UL wear. More needs to be done to promote

UL sport, both by the Students' Union and the clubs themselves. Only the most diehard of fans could tell when the next fixture for a UL team is. There needs to be more emphasis on getting bums on seats, so to speak. A stand would be nice for supporters but obviously getting the pitches in the proper condition for those playing has to take priority. And there's no point in having a stand if no one will turn up anyhow. Sharon Brosnan, who ran for Student's Union President this semester, proposed screening UL matches on campus. I feel this would be a step in the right direction, but what is needed first is students' presence on the sidelines. Anyone involved in UL sport would appreciate the support. Maybe free buses should be offered for away matches? The onus has to be on us students ourselves to get off the couches in the common room and make the short trek up to the playing fields or the arena to see our sports stars in action. We all have mountains of work to do, but that doesn't stop us from taking time out to play pool or mess around on Facebook. Forego Facebook for an hour or two, take advantage of the good weather we're having right now, and do your bit to support your college teams. Pom-poms out. Give me a U! Give me an L! Give me a... er that's it really. See you on the sidelines.



Poor turnout at another UL match

Togher's Top 20... surprise Champions League participants

By Liam Togher

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Lierse (Belgium, 97-98) | 8. Ferencvaros (Hungary, 95-96) | 15. Udinese (Italy, 05-06) |
| 2. Debrecen (Hungary, 09-10) | 9. Willem II (Netherlands, 99-00) | 16. Helsingborg (Sweden, 00-01) |
| 3. Molde (Norway, 99-00) | 10. Maribor (Slovenia, 99-00) | 17. Genk (Belgium, 02-03) |
| 4. Unirea Urziceni (Romania, 9-10) | 11. HJK Helsinki (Finland, 98-99) | 18. CFR Cluj (Romania, 08-09) |
| 5. Kosice (Slovakia, 97-98) | 12. Real Betis (Spain, 05-06) | 19. Real Mallorca (Spain, 01-02) |
| 6. AIK Solna (Sweden, 99-00) | 13. Heerenveen (Netherlands, 00-01) | 20. Rubin Kazan (Russia, 09-10) |
| 7. Thun (Switzerland, 05-06) | 14. BATE Borisov (Belarus, 08-09) | |

Who Are Ya?

Compiled by Daniel Bridge

Basics

Name: Damien Cahill. **Age:** 29.
UL Club: Skydive UL.
County: Limerick.
Position: Part of the Furniture.
Sporting Heroes: Ciaran Carey, Eric Cantona.
Biggest Sporting Achievement: Finally using the University as a landing area on my 400th skydive.
Best thing about the club: We get to jump out of perfectly good airplanes anywhere in the World.
Worst thing about the club: Irish weather.

Favourites

Food: Spag bol – quick, easy and microwavable.
Drink: Guinness.
Song: What's the story Morning Glory?
Movie: Independence Day.
Jersey: Black Manchester Utd. 1995 away jersey with Cantona 7 on the back.... the 'kung-fu jersey' hahaha!

Take your pick

Lodge or trinity rooms: Lodge
Lodge Lodge!

Dunphy or Giles: Dunphy.
Tea or coffee: Tea please.
Simpsons or Family Guy: Simpsons

Four to finish
Describe yourself in 3 words: I love UL.
Who will win the World Cup? Spain
Best chat up line you have heard: Take my number, quick, I have to go home now!
What will you be when you grow up? Older than I am now!



Damien Cahill

Sports Writers Diary

By Tomás McCarthy - Sports Editor

27 February
Unbelievable scenes in The Stables as Tommy Bowe strikes late to defeat England!

28 February
A certain housemate in Thomond is unhappy with the result of the League Cup final. What can you expect with Emile Heskey in your team!

1 March
March starts slowly for yours truly who is laid low by a touch of the flu.

2 March
From watching Ireland v Brazil we learn that Shay Given is a decent keeper, Paul McShane still can't defend and Robbie Keane can play up front. What a pointless exercise!

3 March
The second ever An Focal sport mastermind quiz takes place. "Finding Nemo Rangers" is the answer one sports writer gave to the question "Who won the All Ireland Club Football Championship in 2009?" Unbelievable!

4 March
Time to pack the bags for the trip to Galway while writing a classic conclusion to an Irish Literature essay!

5 March
With another essay deadline out of the way it's an early start to set off for the Fitzgibbon! Unfortunately it ends up in disappointment from a UL point of view after a dramatic day of hurling.

6 March
Myself and Togher are shown briefly during TG4's Fitzgibbon coverage. Fame at last!

7 March
Did it ever cross your mind that Bus Eireann are useless? I travel on a bus from Galway with University written on the top of it but we are incredibly dropped off outside the main gate. It would only take a minute or two to drop us at The Stables like. Rant over.

8 March
The sun is shining but the Sports Editor sees none of it camped inside slaving away at the dreaded FYP.

9 March
Nicklas Bendtner shows his quality firing a hat trick in the Champions League while I quickly turn over to watch Fiorentina v Bayern Munich in case I start firing objects at the television.

10 March
An Focal sports reporter Mark Connolly sees his accumulator tripped up as Real Madrid draw with Lyon! Bamburys welcome the business however.

11 March
Another shambles by Liverpool in Lille and Gerrard simply doesn't seem to care anymore. Togher says they will turn it around in the second leg but it's far too late to turn around the damage Benitez has done to that club.

12 March
Another long day of FYP as another week comes to an end. The Lodge rings me to find out where I am. One more week I tell them! Don't forget to check out the An Focal Sport Facebook page for all the latest news, results and pictures!

Forgotten Footballer - Gary Doherty

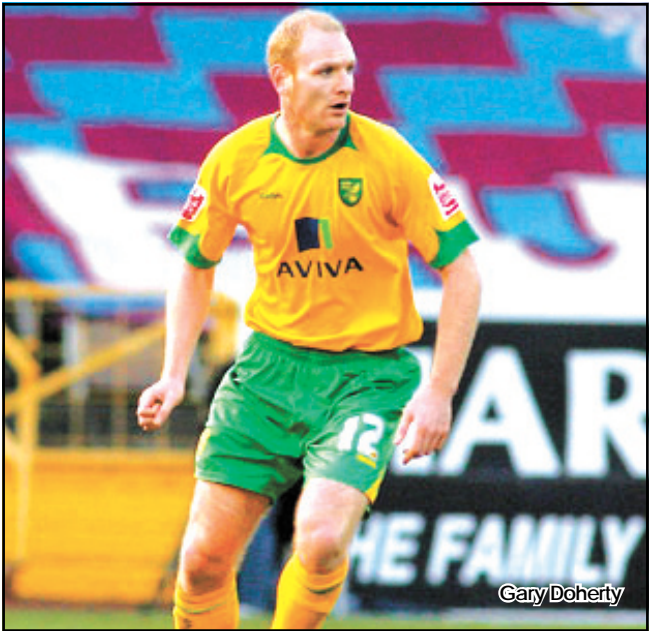
By Mark Connolly

FORMER Republic of Ireland striker Gary Doherty was a favourite of manager Brian Kerr before falling out of favour under Steve Staunton and Giovanni Trapattoni despite An Focal Sport's very own "Bring back Gary Doherty" campaign.

Having impressed at Luton Town, where he started his career, Doherty, also affectionately known as "the ginger Pele" was signed up by David Pleat in 2000 who saw Doherty as a potentially integral part of the project he was building at Tottenham. Yet the ginger giant's spell at White Hart Lane proved a frustrating one as he failed to make the required impression in the scoring charts. Before departing north London, he was also tried out as a centre-half in an experiment that went terribly awry. That precipitated the Doc's 2004 sale to Norwich City.

This period coincided with Doherty's most successful spell in international football and when he garnered most of his 34 Irish caps. The Doc was frequently used by Brian Kerr as the last throw of the dice in the Republic of Ireland's ill-fated bid to qualify for the 2006 World Cup in Germany. This use of the Doc was heavily criticised in the Irish football media. Eamonn Dunphy likened the introduction of Doherty to the Irish attack as "throwing away the key to knock down the door".

Unfortunately the critics were vindicated by the Doc's failure to produce the goals that would have led us to Germany and perhaps explain the giant striker's subsequent and current languishing in the international football wilderness. Yet he remains a hero at Carrow Road where his 12 goals in 192 appearances will never be forgotten.



The Rumour Mill

By Conor McGrath

THE famous, if controversial, Woody Allen once stated that "gossip is the new pornography", in relation to the tabloid papers that hovered menacingly around his private life some twenty years ago. Well, we do have a sizeable proportion of potential tabloid correspondents on our campus who are able to bury a reputation as fast as one can utter the word Uggs.

Shockwaves reverberated around the Lodge last week with the news of the scandal concerning the water polo squad. Apparently, quite a few members of the club are still learning to swim. "Sure I'm still using a float and the auld doggy paddle to keep me going" was the honest reply from a young member of the club who declined to comment on whether he could swim the full length of the Olympic pool. One has to wonder how the team will intimidate the opposition with some members wearing armbands in the face of intense competition. "We're still training the young wans but don't fret, this club is dedicated to staying afloat" was the club captain's stance on the revelation. But for how long is the question...

Quotes of the Edition

By Liam Togher

"Carlow IT will now meet NUI May...sorry, DCU in the final of the Ryan Cup."

The PA announcer at the Fitzgibbon Cup had a moment to forget at Dangan. He later went on to state that the Fitz final would start at 3pm, then 2pm and eventually 3pm again!

"See you next week on Top Gear!"

Tommy Crean shows off while driving past two NUI Galway students just after pulling a rather insane stunt with his Astra. We'll be watching, Tommy!

"I wanted to be captain for a bit."

Paul O'Connell explains his accidental collision with Ireland skipper Brian O'Driscoll at Twickenham. What Paul O'Connell wants, you'd hope Paul O'Connell gets.

"Drag him out onto the street and beat him with a Wavin pipe!"

Yours truly was not impressed with John Terry's well-publicised antics and even less so with his performance against Man City, where I had hoped Roberto Mancini's team would drop points to boost Liverpool's fight for fourth.

"Plucky Laois go down fighting at Portlaoise with Clare winning by 2-111 to 1-10."

This report on rte.ie had me very excited until I realised Clare actually scored 100 less and scraped to a four-point win.

"Funny how Liverpool finished 4th in that table. You can't fool me, Togher!"

The sports editor reckons I wasn't entirely honest with my BBC results predictor which culminated in the Reds claiming a Champions League spot. I wonder if Man Utd came top in his, by any chance?

"With Trapattoni every Irish player knows his position. In Stephen Ireland's case, that means left at home."

An Focal Sport writer Alan Keane brilliantly takes up a point made by Arsene Wenger after the Ireland-Brazil match. And Trap is not one for radical changes of heart, either.

Give It A Lash Quiz

By Enda Dowling

1. What Irish league club did Paul McGrath play for?
2. Who is England's all time record try scorer?
3. Who did Clare beat in the 1997 All Ireland hurling final?
4. Who won the 2009 Superbowl?
5. Which Oscar winner, has also been capped for his country in Rugby?
6. Prior to this year, when was the last time NUIG won a Fitzgibbon cup?
7. What player has scored in two separate European Cup Finals for Liverpool?
8. Who won the 2009 Gaelic Football All Ireland club championship?
9. Who won a gold medal for Ireland in the 92 Olympics in Barcelona in Boxing?
10. Thus far, how many International sides has Guus Hiddink managed?

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 1. St Patrick's Athletic | 5. Javier Bardem (Spain) | 9. Michael Carruth |
| 2. Rory Underwood | 6. 1980 | 10. 4 (Holland, Russia, South Korea, Australia) |
| 3. Tipperary | 7. Alan Kennedy | |
| 4. Pittsburgh Steelers | 8. Kilmacud Crokes | |

AN FOCAL SPORT

Three and easy for UL ladies soccer

By Tomás McCarthy – Sports Editor

THE UL ladies soccer team secured a remarkable third intervarsity title in a row at Turners Cross on March 7, leaving it late to defeat UCD in the final. Kacey O'Driscoll headed home the winner in injury time to bring home another cup for the team who cannot stop winning.

UL's road to the decider proved effortless. They were paired in Group A alongside Athlone IT and Waterford IT. On day one at The Farm venue in UCC Athlone were dispatched 3-0 courtesy of a double from Aoife Herbert and one from Ruth Fahy. A day later, also at The Farm, UL toppled WIT 7-0 with Herbert (2), Kacey O'Driscoll (2), Jenny Critchley, Karen Duggan and Richael O'Brien all finding the target.

The afternoon brought the semi finals into view with DCU providing the opposition. UL maintained their impressive scoring form in an 8-0 demolition. Julie Ann Russell and Duggan both struck hat tricks with Herbert and Critchley also getting in on the act. UL took a break from their hectic schedule on the Saturday preparing for Sunday's showdown

with UCD. Despite their favourites tag UL didn't hit top form on the day. However, they did take an early lead through Siobhan O'Sullivan on 18 minutes.

A Sarah Considine free kick wasn't dealt with properly and defender O'Sullivan proved the unlikely beneficiary. UCD frustrated UL with their defensive formation and also raised their game eyeing the lucrative silverware. Their reward arrived on 40 minutes with an equaliser from a Louise Quinn free kick.

UL introduced Jenny Critchley and Richael O'Brien to boost their attacking options in the second period but extra time loomed large until the dying moments.

Julie Ann Russell's free kick found the head of Kacey O'Driscoll a minute into injury time to secure a 2-1 and spark scenes of wild jubilation and relief.

An outstanding achievement for a richly talented group of players led by manager Mike Considine who concluded his tenure in charge on the best possible note.

To add icing to a great season Sarah Crotty, Catherine Power, Julie Ann Russell, Kacey

O'Driscoll, Karen Duggan and Aoife Herbert have all been awarded league all stars.

UL team v UCD : Laoise O'Driscoll, Amy Jordan, Lorna O'Connell, Siobhan O'Sullivan, Sarah Crotty, Sarah Considine, Julie Ann Russell, Kacey O'Driscoll, Karen Duggan,

Ruth Fahy, Aoife Herbert. Subs Catherine Power for Jordan (h/t), Jenny Critchley for Considine (68mins), Richael O'Brien for Herbert (81mins), Saoirse Lenihan, Maria McMahon, Karen Burke.

Manager: Mike Considine.



The victorious UL Ladies Soccer team

Cunningham considering his future

By Liam Togher

WHILE speaking to An Focal Sport after UL's anti-climactic defeat to Waterford IT in the Fitzgibbon Cup semi-finals, senior hurling manager, Ger Cunningham, dropped a major bombshell when revealing that he intends to stand down from the post. "I have to look at the situation and wonder if the time is right to move on.

It's time for a new voice to come in and take over. As well as that I probably need a break from it. It's not good having the same person for too long, but I've really enjoyed it and I'll still be involved with UL hurling. It may be time for someone else to come in and take over the team. I seem to be hogging it all the time! A fresh voice could do the lads a world

of good." Considering that UL began the game as favourites and led at half-time, Cunningham felt his team left it behind them. "Obviously we're very disappointed and it's hard to try and summarise what happened. Losing Willie Ryan [to injury] after what he contributed in the UCC game was a big blow to us but the cold truth is we didn't score from play in the second half. That's the bottom line and tactically we got it a bit wrong. The conditions probably suited them better and they crowded our hurlers so we couldn't get going."

Cunningham paid tribute to a solid WIT performance, in particular that of top scorer Timmy Hammersley, while voicing his displeasure at referee Johnny Ryan. "We knew

Timmy was a top-class forward. Their tactics were to stop us from hurling and they did that. We have to give them credit but we needed to be able to rise above that and we did against UCC but we just never got going in the second half today. I would be critical of the referee. He bottled a massive decision when we were three points up and they should have had a player sent off. It's very disappointing when something like that happens. However we can't blame the referee for everything. We didn't rise to the challenge in the second half."

Cunningham also pointed out UL's lack of Fitzgibbon Cup tradition in his post-match analysis. "A lot of it has to do with tradition. Even when we won the competition in 2002

we never really built on that success. You need tradition to win a Fitzgibbon because players are only in for a short period and they don't have much to work off. It kills me to say it being a UL man but it's true. The colleges that are winning year in, year out have plenty of tradition."

If Ger Cunningham follows up on his word and resigns as UL senior hurling manager, An Focal Sport would like to wish him the very best. He did great work with the team for several years and is a true gentleman, particularly in agreeing unreservedly to give an interview just minutes after the semi-final defeat. The Fitzgibbon success he deserved just wasn't to be, unfortunately.