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Is The Hurlers A Good Replacement For The Lodge? Students Speak Their Minds. Page 12.

# NEW SABBAT TEAM ELECTED



Written by **Darragh Roche**,  
Deputy Editor

Rockett, Kenny make polling history, Daly wins third term

THE Students' Union's new sabbatical officers were elected on Thursday, Week 9. The online polling saw a turnout of 3,865 and recording-breaking results.

Paddy Rockett was elected Campaigns and Services Officer with 2,428 votes to Alan O'Sullivan's 780. This is the highest number of votes any sabbatical candidate has ever received. Aoife Kenny was elected Education Officer with 2,367 votes to Barry Kennedy's 954. This is the second highest number

of votes any sabbatical candidate has received. Kelly O'Brien won the race for Communications Officer with 1,931 votes to Keith O'Neill's 1,292. Though the margin of victory is closer than the Education and CSO elections, Ms O'Brien's votes are still the fourth highest ever polled by a candidate and are just two votes short of incumbent CO Finn McDuffie's 2010 record.

Welfare Officer Derek Daly was elected president on the second count.

Mr Daly polled 1,411 votes, Keith Young polled 1,235 votes and Enda Gallery polled 999 on the first count. Following the elimination of Enda Gallery and the transfer of his votes, Mr Daly was deemed elected with the quota of 1,823 to Mr Young's 1,677. This will be Mr Daly's third year as a sabbatical officer. Tara Feeney was elected Welfare Officer on the second count, following the elimination of Thomas Cranley. On the first count, Ms

Feeney polled 1,461, Eamon Boland polled 1,039 and Mr Cranley polled 987 votes. Following the transfer of Mr Cranley's vote, Ms Feeney was deemed elected with 2,011 votes to Mr Boland's 1,288. The turnout was the highest ever recorded in an SU election and beats the record of 3,600 set by the referendum on repeat exams in 1996. The new sabbatical officers will take up office on 15 June.

## PROF BARRY ADDRESSES CLASS REPS COUNCIL

Written by **Colm Fitzgerald**,  
News Editor

UL PRESIDENT, Professor Don Barry addressed Class Representatives' Council on Tuesday, Week 10.

Professor Barry traditionally addresses Class Reps Council at its penultimate or final sitting before the summer recess, before taking questions from students in attendance. In a departure from tradition, Professor Barry announced he was not going to give any major formal address, and then proceeded to thank the reps for their hard work before taking questions from the floor.

Discussion about the current Student Service Charge (SSC), which is to be renamed to the "Student Contribution Fee" and controversially increased to €2000, dominated proceedings. Professor Barry said that less well off students and families would not be ones who would suffer financially from an increase, it would be those earning an amount "just too high" to qualify for a Higher Education Grant. "There is nothing I or the University can do", he said.

Professor Barry asked the meeting as a whole if the charge should be increased. Some students claimed that if services in the college were "student orientated" or more efficient, an increased charge may be acceptable, or they would at least be "comfortable with the current fee level".

The much mooted graduate tax proposal was raised, with many students siding with the idea. Professor Barry erred on the side of caution, saying that graduate tax system in the UK does not

necessarily see the awarding institution receiving its corresponding student's tax. Students said that it would be "good to give something back" providing their graduate tax paid actually went directly to UL. Professor Barry said Queen's University, Belfast receives roughly 60% more funding than UL for roughly the same student enrolment. The Higher Education Authority (HEA) has already informed management that funding to UL will be reduced by €5m next year, despite it costing upwards of €100m to run the college annually.

SU Deputy President, Derek Daly highlighted that if more funding were provided to institutions if students were to pay an increased charge, then surely it would be acceptable.

Responding to the questions, Prof Barry said he disagreed with Academic Council on the cap on grades for repeat exams. All repeats are currently capped at a C3 but Academic Council has the power to change this. President Barry said there was a 60/40 divide on the

issue and that he was in the minority. In other Irish universities, there is no such cap on repeat exams.

It was noted that the Central Applications Office (CAO) has reported a slightly lower than usual number of applications thus far this year.

BBS Class Reps aired their views on large class sizes, particularly for Business students, suggesting it was hard to feel part of a group in such a size class. A set tutorial is not assigned to students, and different tutorial groups exist for each module, making it difficult to both retain and keep serious friendships.

Professor Barry said that for the 2011/12 academic year first year BBS students would be grouped in such a way that the same groups would attend the tutorials for each module, hopefully addressing the concerns expressed.

Other items such as concern over wiping of QCA's in second year and potential teaching of classes by fourth years were also discussed.

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Printed by Impression Design and Print Ltd.



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1. Contributors please note:  
All submissions to An Focal are greatly valued. If you have submitted an article which has not been published in this issue, it is very likely that your piece has been retained for publication in future issues. If you are concerned that your article has not been published, please say so.

2. Editing:  
If you are unhappy with how your article appeared in An Focal, please discuss this with the Editor. A number of strict guidelines are followed in the production of An Focal, which means some articles may be altered to allow them to fit on the page and to improve readability.

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Finn McDuffie, Editor

## EDITORIAL

**CENSUS** [Cen"sus], n. An official enumeration of a country's population, often met by the same reaction "Oh bloody hell, not again."

So this weekend (on the night of Sunday, 10 April), we'll sit down and fill in the bloody census form. Oh no, you've got to. It's the law.

Everybody must be included; wherever you are, however you look. Whether you've planned to spend the night tuned into your favourite season of 24 or you're cramming, you'll have to drop the remote or get out of the books, because the census man beckons and he's got a piece of paper with a harp on it.

Last time we did it was five years ago. No need to answer the bit about how old you are then (dare I dream.) On that night, everybody in the State had to be accounted for.

The official website is quite funny really. There's a FAQ section which asks on your behalf, the poignant question; the one that's on everybody's mind "do I have to do it?"

And the website obliges with a response; a pithy answer riddled with excuses and self-legitimising rhetoric. Stuff like "but, if you think about it" and "if you're not included, you are invisible". It might be nice to be invisible. But I suppose I see where

they're coming from. It is important to fill out the wretched form, albeit begrudgingly. The future of our country depends on it, apparently.

At the very least, it'll be interesting to see, once all the boxes are ticked and we've gone back to watching 24, just how many of our generation have shipped off abroad.



## The Big Picture

On this day, in 1998, the Akashi-Kaikyo Bridge in Japan, which links Shikoku with Honshū and costing about \$3.8bn USD, opened to traffic, becoming the largest suspension bridge in the world.

## AN FOCAL ONLINE READERSHIP IS HIGHEST EVER

Written by **Darragh Roche,**  
**Deputy Editor**

AN FOCAL's online readership reached 2,500 in Week 9. This is the highest online readership An Focal has ever achieved. This means that the number of online views equals the number of print copies of the newspaper that are distributed every two weeks.

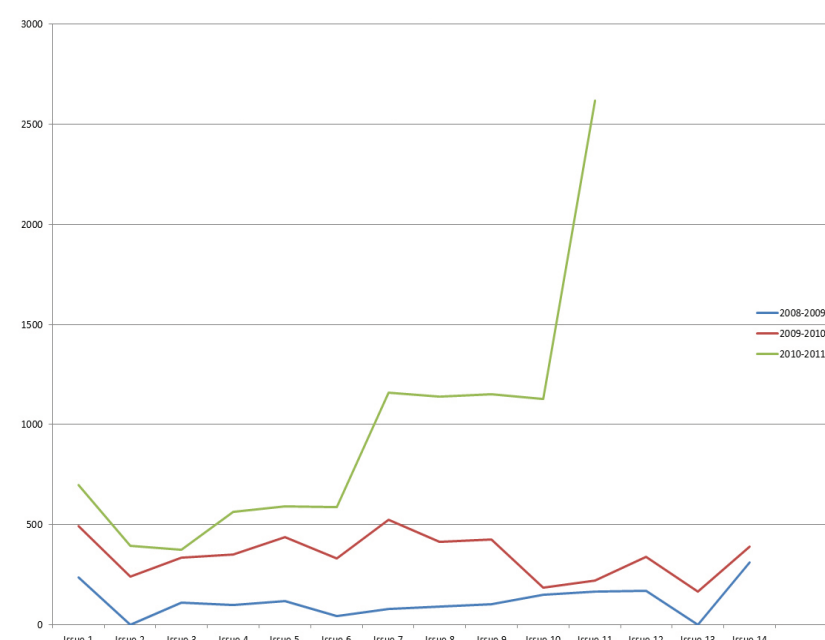
The online readership numbers jumped at the end of last semester following the TV3 Vincent Browne Student Newspaper of the Year Award. The readership reached a plateau of approximately 1,000 online views for several weeks but rose sharply following the publication of Week 9's edition (Issue 11).

This rise in online readership was unexpected and the editorial team is not entirely sure what may have prompted it. But Issue 11 contained profiles of the Sabbatical election candidates, which may go some way

to explain the increase in readership.

The election, which was entirely online, recorded an unprecedented 3,800 votes. The success of the online voting system and the viewership of An Focal may encourage the Students' Union to expand its use of new media.

Now you can view An Focal online through the SU's Issuu App on Facebook.



## News

# GARDAÍ WARN OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Written by **Darragh Roche**,  
Deputy Editor

GARDAÍ in Castletroy have issued a warning to students that they will take a more serious approach to anti-social behaviour in estates around the University. This harder line comes after several complaints from residents during Charity Week (Week 6) and St Patrick's Day.

Gardaí issued several fines for anti-social behaviour and arrested some students for drink driving offences during Charity Week. They are also concerned about serious littering of gardens and footpaths and drinking in public. A Garda has the power to issue

an on the spot fine of €150 for littering and €80 for drinking in a public place.

If an officer considers a person to be a danger to themselves and others, to be verbally abusing others or causing a public nuisance, they have the power either to arrest the individual or fine them. While the Gardaí have been more inclined to issue fines, the decision to arrest someone is at the individual officer's discretion.

Community Garda Eoin O'Connor wished to remind students that if a drunk person is in their car with their keys, they can be arrested whether they

are actually driving or not and that most Gardaí routinely carry breathalysers. Garda O'Connor also stressed that those living in a house are responsible for any litter in their gardens, whether they littered it or not.

The Gardaí have reminded students that as the end of term approaches and parties may take place, the same rules about public drinking, littering and anti-social behaviour will apply and there will be stricter enforcement.

# CAMPBELLS TO INCREASE FOOD PRICES ON CAMPUS

Written by **Darragh Roche**,  
Deputy Editor

CAMPBELLS Catering, the company which runs most of the campus restaurants, including Eden and the Red Raisins, will increase the price of some of its products in response to falling turnover and decreasing profit margins. This is one part of measures being taken by Aramark, the company that runs Campbells Catering on campus, to reduce costs and increase profits. The company has undertaken a price comparison with the other places to buy food on campus and in the surrounding area and has decided to raise its prices to bring them in line with their competition. While meals such as the Student Special in the Main

Building's Eden restaurant will not be affected, other popular products will see large increases. For example, the price of a hot chicken roll will rise from €3.00 to €3.50. This represents a 17.5% price increase. The price of a packet of crisps will rise by 10c from 75c to 85c. The price of tea and coffee will not change. "The challenges faced by Aramark are reflected by other outlets on campus" said SU President, Ruán Dillon McLoughlin. "The drop in consumer spending on campus has not been helped by the number of outlets on campus. Out of all the universities, UL has the most places to eat per student."

# IRISH TIMES EDITOR WARNS OF JOURNALISTIC DECLINE

Written by **Darragh Roche**,  
Deputy Editor

THE Editor of the Irish Times, Geraldine Kennedy, spoke of the decline in journalistic standards in the IWA on Wednesday, Week 9. She was speaking as part of the Journalism School's seminar series 'Issues in Irish Media'. Ms Kennedy said that print media was important but foresaw difficult times ahead. "I'd worry about standards of journalism," Ms Kennedy said. "By and large, standards have gone down and down and down. I think there have been gross invasions of privacy for prurient reasons. I think the standard of language, grammar and sub-editing has gone down and a lot of it has to do with the introduction of Irish editions of English newspapers," she added. Ms Kennedy discussed the Recession: "I suppose the newspapers are as guilty as some others of not wanting to believe

that all this would end. We don't need to the wealthy Ireland that we were. I'm confident that the country has to get back on its feet. I think we have the resilience to do it." Responding to a question about the decline of print media, Ms Kennedy said, "I hope print is not a dying trade. I absolutely love newspapers and the feel of newspapers and that you can curse at them and tear them up! The world has changed a lot, regrettably."

"We have to publish a newspaper for the island of Ireland free from political, commercial, religious, sectarian or other interests," Ms Kennedy said. "There'll be complaints made about you, that's just journalism. The day a government, a company or a bank think they're doing the same job of work as we are, the game is over."

Ms Kennedy discussed how her telephone was tapped in the 1980s by Charles Haughey's government while she was a reporter in the Dáil: "I find it hard to describe the fear that absorbed the place [Dáil Éireann]. It was a gross infringement. Yes, I was surprised. What was disturbing was that you were a reporter going in and out of Dáil Éireann. It's not like I was running guns over the border!"

Ms Kennedy has been Editor of the Irish Times since 2002 and plans to retire in September. She said she has no plans for retirement. "There is a time in the affairs of men and there must be a time in the affairs of women, as well. I'm not making a selfish decision, I wish the Irish Times well."



Irish Times Editor, Geraldine Kennedy, at the Irish World Academy building a fortnight ago.

# UL RAISES MORE THAN €2,500 FOR JAPAN

Written by **Darragh Roche**,  
Deputy Editor

A JAPAN earthquake appeal organised by the Japanese Section of UL's School of Languages, Literatures, Culture and Communications raised €2,632.99 for Japan. The money has been lodged to the Ireland-Japan Association's account for earthquake relief.

Collections in the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance (IWA) following two lunchtime concerts, including a special concert for the appeal on Wednesday, 23 March, raised €938.69. The Japanese Section has expressed its gratitude to all the musicians who took part in what was described as a "special and moving event" and Ellie Byrne for organising it.

The earthquake appeal organisers have also expressed their gratitude to the staff at Main Reception, Elaine Kirwan in Plassey House, Annette

McElligott in the Computer Science Building, Gráinne O'Connell in the Department of Economics, Chaplain Patricia Hanna, staff at the Foundation Building, Sharon Aherne in the Language Centre and Claire Ryan and Jess Beeley in the School of Languages, Literatures, Culture and Communication for taking care of the bucket collection, which raised €1133.52.

The UL branch of the Unite union also donated €500, while other contributions came from groups of students and anonymous donors. The members of the Japanese Section who organised the event were Barbara Geraghty, Hiroko Uno and Sachiko Kurihara.

# AHEARNE CANDIDACY SPARKS CONTROVERSY IN NUIG

Written by **Josh Lee**

PLANS to appoint former Government advisor, Dr Alan Ahearne, to a senior economic position at NUI Galway has sparked controversy.

Concern and distrust have been expressed over his past involvement in the Fianna Fáil/Green Party coalition.

Dr Ahearne, who served as an economic advisor to former Finance Minister Brian Lenihan, is one of several candidates competing for a professorship in NUIG's JE Cairnes School of Business and Economics.

With a position of such importance at stake, concerns are being raised about Dr Ahearne's suitability as a candidate, because of his association with the last government.

Dr Ahearne, who previously taught economics at UL, is accused by some of being unfairly "lined up" by powers within NUIG because of his

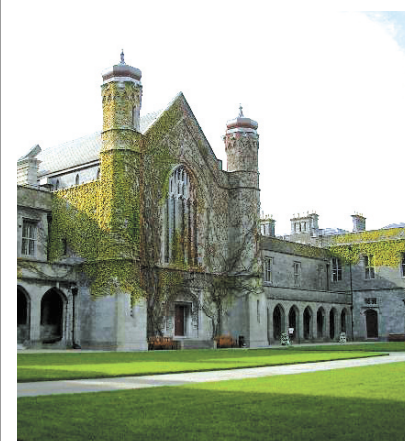
prominence and reputation. An NUIG source said "Some feel he is politically toxic, but certainly there is a feeling that some are trying to capitalise on his star quality"

NUIG president, Dr Jim Browne, attempted to allay concerns of improper conduct.

"I have heard the rumours, too, but some political people don't like him and are trying to adversely affect a process, but I can assure you, as long as I am here, that won't happen. This will be done properly and totally above board", commented Dr Browne.

Supporters of Dr Ahearne point to his vast experience in key economic positions, which include a period as a senior economist of Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System in the US, and involvement with the Bank of Ireland Group Treasury.

"There is no doubt Ahearne is a heavyweight and has a pedigree and CV most others couldn't come close to. This is a cynical attempt to sully his name", said one anonymous supporter.



## News

# UNEMPLOYMENT IS STILL AT 14.7%

Written by **Darragh Roche**,  
Deputy Editor

UNEMPLOYMENT in Ireland remains at 14.7%. In March, the Central Statistics Office (CSO) which records the number of people who are claiming unemployment benefits, noted a rise of 1,100 people signing on to the Live Register. The total number of people unemployed in Ireland is now 442,000 but this number includes people who

are temporarily unemployed because of the seasonal nature of their work, such as fishermen, and casual and part-time workers. The highest level of unemployment was recorded in September. It was 448,800. Three times as many women as men joined the unemployment line in March and the number of part-time or casual workers

increased by 6,306 to 86,155, which is almost 20% of the total number unemployed.

Ireland faces more difficult times in the coming months with the banks currently undergoing stress tests to evaluate their stability. The Government may also have to take serious action to rescue Irish Life and Permanent (IL&P). The

Fine Gael plans to re-negotiate the terms of the EU/IMF bailout, specifically the issue of the interest rate and the inflexibility of Ireland's corporate tax, are becoming more and more difficult.

The collapse of the Portuguese government has led to fears that it will need a bailout, while electoral backlash against German Chancellor Dr Angela

Merkel's proposed European Stability Mechanism (ESM) mean that Ireland's difficulties are not an international priority.

# FAMOUS IRISH WAVE THREATENED BY HARBOUR DEVELOPMENT

Written by **Rob O'Rourke**

CLARE County Councillors have voted to go ahead with the construction of a controversial new pier at Doolin Co. Clare. Home to some of Ireland's most famous wave, Crab Island and Doolin Point have been surfed since the 1970's and have since become, along with the Bundoran reefs, the most surfed spots in the country. The Council has said construction work could begin within four to six months. The argument for the new pier is to facilitate larger and more frequent ferries to the Aran Islands. But campaigners who are against the pier's construction have voiced strong concern over the move.

"The new pier will have a serious negative impact on the surfing waves nearby including the famous Crab Island and Doolin Point waves. In addition surfers will be put in great danger; their current access to Crab Island will now be replaced by the pier and they will be forced to paddle from inside the new pier. This will create great risks with crossing ferries and the increase in currents which will make paddling extremely difficult." "The 32

Councillors of Clare County Council went against all warnings issued by the local surfing community and tourist-dependent business. They decided to grant permission for an extremely large pier." A source has told An Focal "The main reason the development has been pushed through at such speed, without full regard given to all concerned, is the deadline for using the €6 million in funding made available by the EU is fast approaching."

"In a case of money outweighing proper planning the result is locals will be faced with an extremely large pier that has a significant impact on the wave, surfer's safety and on the visual amenities of the area."

There is no option to appeal this decision to An Bord Pleanála, ruling out an easy route for an independent assessment. While some believe that the decision is final, this is not the case. The West Coast Surf Club, Irish Surfing Association and others are striving to have the pier re-designed to ensure it will not destroy the waves at Doolin Point and Crab Island. "The

wave modelling that accompanied the application confirmed that there would be an impact on the existing wave environment if the pier is built as proposed," said one representative of the West Coast Surf Club. "It is time for Ireland's officials to focus less on the money implications of development and more on the impact on the natural environment, the safety of leisure activities and the ability of the receiving environment to accommodate development without having serious repercussions."

Currently groups are being organised to support the surfers concerns regarding the proposed pier at Doolin, Co. Clare. One such group on Facebook that gained close to 4000 members after three days is the 'Save Crab Island and Doolin Point' campaign. Campaigners have urged those interested in helping to save Ireland's waves and protect our natural heritage join the group online.



Rick Wilmot surfs what is at risk. Image: Paudie Scanlon.

## STUDENTS WIN TRIP ACROSS EUROPE

Written by **Finn McDuffie**, Editor

TWO UL students, Trish Murphy and Michelle Ahern, have won an inter-railing trip which will take them through 10 European countries in 12 days. They will start their trip on 11 April.

The students, who are in fourth year, Digital Media Design, won a competition called 'Eurotrip2'. Run by Talktoeu, a programme funded by the European Commission Representation in Ireland, the competition aims to engage Irish citizens in the European project. "To enter the competition you had to say why you and your friend should be picked, you could enter any way you liked, such as a blog or a video etc," said Trish Murphy.

"We made a video showing ourselves doing various tasks, given to us by a donkey, around campus. It ended with us doing the river dance with a group of Japanese Students."

The prize winners are given tasks to do while inter railing in Europe. According to the lucky UL students, the video-making was a sort of test.

They will have to complete 12 tasks as they travel across Europe, one per day. They will also get the chance to win other prizes such as net books and smart phones if they complete the tasks.

Part of the task-based challenge involved the creation of video blogs and frequent updating of Twitter and Facebook as they inter-rail.

Their video can be found at the following URL: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=0Q4f1Y94PxU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=0Q4f1Y94PxU)

See the Talktoeu page at [www.facebook.com/talktoeu.ie](http://www.facebook.com/talktoeu.ie). The pair have asked students to follow their European adventure on Facebook.



Trish, Michelle and Task Donkey, Chris Ryan (Centre) posing with a group of Japanese students, studying in UL.

## AN FOCAL SMEDIAS NOMINATIONS HIGHEST EVER

Written by **James Crowe**

NOMINATIONS for An Focal writers and editors at the forthcoming Student Media Awards (commonly known as the "Smedias") are at their highest level ever.

Awards are presented for a number of categories including Editor of the Year, Journalist of the Year (National Press) and Website of the Year.

Students who have contributed to An Focal at both writer and editorial level have been nominated for the awards since their inception.

While a high number of students have been nominated for most of the awards, an equally commendable number have been further shortlisted for them.

An Focal has been shortlisted for the People's Choice Award, which it won in 2010 and 2005. Editor Finn McDuffie has been shortlisted for Editor of the Year, the ULSU Website has been shortlisted for Website of the Year, while News Editor Colm Fitzgerald and writer Evana Downes have both been shortlisted for the

Road Safety Authority Journalism on Road Safety award.

The Smedias also present awards for Best Radio Show, Best Society Production and TV Production of the Year, among others.

Sponsorship has been provided by the Irish Times, Irish Independent and Bus Éireann, among others.

Awards will be presented at the awards ceremony at 7pm Wednesday, Week 11 in the Mansion House, Dublin.

"Students who have contributed to An Focal at both writer and editorial level have been nominated for the awards."

## TWO CANDIDATES CONTEST PSA PRESIDENCY

Written by **Darragh Roche**,  
Deputy Editor

TWO candidates will run for President of the Postgraduate Students' Association (PSA) on 4 April. Marie Casey and Sarah-Jane Hennelly will canvass postgraduate students to succeed PSA President, Dan Comerford. Only postgraduates can vote in this election, though all students can vote in Students' Union elections. Ms Casey is studying for a Masters of Engineering in Information and Network Security and did her BSc in Computer Systems in UL. Ms Hennelly is studying for an MA in European Integration and completed her BA in Politics and Public Administration in UL. The race is expected to be close as both candidates are strong contenders with experience of student politics and organisational skills. Postgraduate elections are generally more sedate than SU elections due to the smaller number of postgraduate students and the more work-orientated approach taken by most Masters' students. There has not been a female president of the PSA since 2009.

## Opinion

# AN APP THAT 'CURES' THE GAY?

Written by **Róisín Peddle**

NEED to check how many calories were in your lunch? There's an app for that. Want to remember exactly where you parked your car? There's an app for that. Are you a closeted homosexual who just wants to be straight and 'normal'? Well, good news... there's an app for that too.

There are over 350,000 apps for the iPhone in the Apple store, from the extremely useful to the incredibly useless. It's understandable that the good people at Apple might let one or two slip through the vetting process. But one in particular has caused Apple a nasty headache over the last week or so and this is the app from Exodus International, purporting to cure people of their inconvenient sexual desires.

Firstly, I would bracket this particular app in the 'incredibly useless' category. People's sexual orientation cannot be changed; though I hesitate to quote Lady Gaga in this (or any) context, we were really 'born this way', whichever way that might be. No less a personage than

Sigmund Freud believed that 'curing' homosexuality was a completely futile process (despite many attempts by his contemporaries). "Homosexuality is assuredly no advantage, but it is nothing to be ashamed of," he told the mother of one gay patient. So if the ultimate chauvinist believed that gays couldn't be 'cured' because there was nothing wrong with them, why does Exodus International?

Psychiatrists all over the world recognise the damage that repressing one's true sexual orientation can cause. Aversion techniques- such as electroconvulsive therapy- were used in the past in order to help people eliminate same-sex desire. Such 'therapy' could only lead to lives of misery and repression.

A glance on the Exodus International website shows the supposedly Christian group's sole objective is to 'cure' homosexuality. No mention of global poverty or child labour or any of the usual charitable works that mainstream

churches bother themselves about. There are much bigger problems in the world besides the natural occurrence of homosexuality in human beings.

Exodus International was founded by a group of 'ex-gay' Christians, who decided they could pray like-minded souls straight. Interestingly, two founding members of the organisation, Michael Bussee and Gary Cooper, left in 1979... to be with each other. Bussee has said himself that not a single person has been 'cured' by Exodus. Another former leader, John Paulk, was pictured falling out of a gay bar.

Apple, under fire from gay-rights organisations and others, finally removed the controversial app on 25 March. They are currently facing the opprobrium of Exodus who is calling "for Apple to recognise the diversity of beliefs within its customer base". Luckily for any young, vulnerable gay people, there's no longer an app for the 'gay cure'.



Sigmund Freud, who believed 'curing' homosexuality was completely futile.

## HEAD TO HEAD

### SHOULD DAVID NORRIS BE ELECTED PRESIDENT OF IRELAND?

If you would like a topic discussed here, please email [sucommunications@ul.ie](mailto:sucommunications@ul.ie)

Written by **Aoife Coughlan**

## YES!

YOU would be forgiven for believing the political exhilaration of the past few weeks is over, however a race of equal excitement is looming. The presidential elections will be most interesting mainly due to one Senator David Norris.

His decision to seek nomination for the presidential election has been subject to debate. I find myself siding with his supporters. I am not an avid Norris enthusiast nor am I vehemently engaged with his policies. I defend more than support. I believe the presidency is an office which should be filled by one with experience, passion and eloquence.

We need personality in our president at this time of national stagnation. David Norris delivers bounteously. Our nation should be

characterised by positivity and optimism; I believe Norris has ample attributes to inspire our nation to more hopeful expectations. Norris has been a senator since 1987; he has shown himself to be one of Ireland's intellectual elite, a joycean scholar, eloquent, and witty. Those who err on the side of caution may forget these attributes. Opposition may see him as brash. But I disagree strongly with this reason for his unsuitability for office. The senator is not luridly camp so much as flamboyant, he is neither vulgar nor flashy. Norris is no Graham Norton. He is more than intelligent enough to differentiate between the times for stately seriousness and the times for humour.

It seems the major point of contention is his sexual orientation. One would think that the Ireland which demeans all non-liberals for being closed minded, archaic catholic relics would support the notion of an openly gay president. But this doesn't seem to be the

case. He has acknowledged that he does not want to be "a gay president" but "a president that happens to be gay". I believe that Norris, gay or straight, is perfectly entitled to run for the position, perhaps even to win the election out right. Even if it is just to challenge the Irish belief that we are an accepting country. It is time Ireland proved our tolerance credentials. Actions speak louder than words, and voting is the most powerful of actions.

David Norris, as a candidate for president, challenges us to define instead of redefine what we consider proper, conventional or acceptable. He does not pose a controversial figure when one takes his merits as a Politian into account. His persuasive power, belief in human rights, inspiring oratory and hope for our small island are what one should focus on. David Norris is a figure we could be proud of as our representative and one who would be proud of us.

Written by **James Bradshaw**

## NO!

JUST as I reached the queue, a familiar little man walked in in front of me. Shortly after the Student Media Awards ceremony began, our host introduced one of the celebrity guests; Senator David Norris.

Norris delivered a fine speech, and received a warm reception from the crowd, who immediately recognised a politician who seems to spend more time on television than Jim Carrey's character in The Truman Show. And why not? I mean it's not as if he has a job to go to.

His position in the most useless institution in history not only earns him a cool 70 grand each year; it also gives him ample time to cultivate his media contacts throughout Ireland. Over the last few years, he has shrewdly utilised these resources to propel himself

towards the Presidency. The abundant media coverage has helped him to establish himself as the front runner in a contest that will not be decided until October. Of course, his prospective opponents haven't had the luxury of spending all this time on the stump. Alas for that sad reality of life; not everyone gets to have a seat in Seanad Eireann.

Media aside, Norris should not be President. Firstly, his personality prevents him from holding this office. His website declares he wishes to create a "new and dynamic Presidency." No doubt, he is a partisan and a divisive figure, unsuited to a job best left to those content to spend seven years visiting schools, playing golf and not rocking the boat. The President represents us, all of us, not just one section of society. Can anyone as outspoken, self-centred and loud as Norris suit the role?

And what of his identity? Norris is, let's face it, culturally British. He has referred to the heroes of 1916 as "terrorists"

(how could he play President during the Centennial celebrations?) and he publicly objected when Folens ceased to use the term 'British Isles' in its textbooks. Our President represent us abroad, so what would foreigners think when President Norris arrived on official duties? I'll tell you what they'd think; where is the Irish President, and why is this noisy little Englishman impersonating him?

Of course, the opposing column will be based around Mr. Norris' sexuality. He has based his campaign on this. 'Elect me,' he says 'and Ireland will show that it is a pluralistic and tolerant society.' Like most people, I couldn't care less about his sexual preferences, but I really hate being guilt tripped like that. We don't need Norris to tell us we're tolerant and pluralistic, nor do we need to elect him to show it. There are better candidates than Norris, you just haven't heard much from them yet.

After all, some people have to work for a living.

## Opinion

## LIMERICK'S HUB OF LEARNING

Written by **Alana Walsh**

DO you have some spare time you would like to put to better use? Are you currently searching for a Co-op position? Or maybe you are looking for a way to share your super skills or talents with others or even pick up new ones? I realise I sound like an advert, but stick with me, if you answered yes to any of those questions then I may have just the solution for you. It is simple, volunteer work! I'll even be more specific than that, volunteering at the Northside Learning Hub. If you have not heard about the NLH before then continue reading because I am about to tell you what you need to know.

The Learning Hub is an activity and project based centre situated in Kileely, Limerick. There are currently eight UL students, including myself, on Co-Op in the NLH, as well as three students from Mary I. We volunteer full time as "Learning Buddies" which means we mentor projects with children from the area and the local schools. Many, many other people volunteer their time

whenever they can; offering even a few hours of your time makes a difference. The projects we are involved in include; Orienteering, TEFL, Dance, Music workshops, Ceramics, Online Magazines, Sports, Kickboxing, Storyhub, Claymation, Film making and the list of fun projects goes on and on. There's something for everyone and our ideas for new projects are always welcomed.

A great example I can give you is of one of our biggest projects, our float in the St. Patrick's Day parade. From the start of our placement in January, we were involved in weekly parade workshops with participating children and other mentors. Our entry this year was circus themed. During the workshops, we helped the children make costumes ranging from clowns to monkeys. Another aspect of our float was a six foot elephant and a horse, (which you may have seen around campus borrowed as a part of Keith Young's campaign for president) that were constructed from wire and then

paper machéd and decorated. We were delighted to be awarded best float in the parade for our efforts but it was merely the icing on the cake after seeing how much fun the children had working on the float and how they enjoyed themselves on the day.

Every day is different in Learning Hub. Prior to St. Patrick's Day we got to meet Presidential candidate David Norris when he visited the facility. Senator Norris was in awe of the amount of volunteers on site and seemed to thoroughly enjoy his visit. I came across a great quote recently, "Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless". The most valuable thing that you can offer a fantastic service like the NLH is your time so if you even the tiniest bit curious why not check out the Learning Hub page on Facebook or their website at [www.learninghub.ie](http://www.learninghub.ie) or alternatively contact Jennifer Moroney-Ward on 061 453099.



The Hub, Limerick

## REBECCA BLACK, A FITTING SCAPEGOAT FOR A SOULLESS INDUSTRY

Written by **Oisín Bates**

HAVING reached number 13 on the i-Tunes charts, and amassed thousands of dollars in royalties, Rebecca Black's single Friday has proved an unexpected commercial success. Black's rise to fame has proven less conventional than most: while her video received attention as a consequence of its poor lyrics, the resulting bad press has proven a marketing phenomenon in itself. Having already amassed 61 million YouTube hits by the time of going to press, Black has enjoyed greater publicity than any PR manager could provide. While this success may easily frustrate her critics, what will come as a further frustration is that, in watching and spreading her video they have helped contribute to more than \$40,000 which Black has already received in YouTube royalties alone.

Consistent criticism has had little effect on her success, merely fuelling her unorthodox publicity campaign and boosting record sales. Jethro Tull's Ian Anderson once claimed "A lot of pop music is about stealing pocket money from children". The record industry is obliging, meeting a demand with

generic four-chord 'hits' coupled with relatively meaningless lyrics. But is this so wrong? The average child or early teen doesn't care about lyrics recounting civil rights movements or angst-ridden relationships; their opinions are based upon an artist's image and a song's initial catchiness. Is Black the real culprit or is it the pop music industry in general? While her song is terrible, it is merely an exaggerated caricature of modern pop music's most recurrent and dislikeable features: auto-tune, pointless lyrics and overly produced backing tracks.

It is frustrating that her producers have managed to escape most criticism. Amid the barrage of hate, Black merely sang the song: she was given lyrics and a melody by her producers. Friday was penned as part of a song package for clients as opposed to artists; conceived not as a piece of art but as a business deal. Her record label is a further caricature of the mass produced pop industry, but it wastes no effort attempting to disguise its nature: Ark Music Factory is, in all essence, a factory: creating generic, production-

heavy pop for the fame hungry children of rich American parents. Black's lyrics are terrible, but that is not to say that she does not enjoy some competition for song writing's coveted wooden spoon: though Friday goes some way in reciting the days of the week, the Black Eyed Peas song I Gotta Feeling, in stressing their penchant for partying every day, managed to list all seven in a single verse. Furthermore, Madonna, the top-selling female artist of all time, graced us with such insightful lyrics as "I don't like cities but I like New York, other places make me feel like a dork."

Why bother scavenging for silver linings anyway? Friday has inspired some of the funniest parodies, covers and photo shopped images the internet has seen in months. Though the song captivated an international audience for all the wrong reasons, we're hardly worse off for it. And soon, the global bandwagon of internet critics will have long since moved on.

## SCRAP BUSINESS STUDIES, TEACH PHILOSOPHY INSTEAD

Written by **Darragh Roche**, Deputy Editor

IN the most practical fashion, my chosen Leaving Cert options were Economics, German and Business Studies. Though I adored the language and happily scribbled demand and supply curves, I abhorred Business. If you haven't experienced Business as a subject, then you've never had to list the skills and qualities of an entrepreneur, draw the supply chain of a small company or even reel off sections of the Sale of Goods and Supply of Services Act, 1980. But the evils of rote learning are only one reason why this subject should be abolished.

The real trouble with Business is that it presents vague, wishy-washy concepts as if they were unimpeachable fact. The "skills" and "qualities" of an entrepreneur, the nature of "risk takers" and "risk evaders" are, contrary to my LC Business text book, indefinable, based on unsupportable presumptions and, often, purely disingenuous. Presumably, the introduction of this subject was designed to create more entrepreneurs, but it is impossible to make someone a businessman, neither should that be the aim of school. A far better use of class time would be lessons in philosophy.

Too often today the focus is on money making and commercialism. Vast swathes of society seem to have forgotten that human beings are more than their jobs and income. It is far better that school children learn to ask life's great questions: "Where does the world come from?" and "What is the meaning of life?" Human experience is so much deeper and more rewarding than CV adjusting and profit making. It is philosophy, which has always permeated human thought and discourse, which allows us to begin the journey to understanding ourselves and the world around us. There are no skills Business teaches which cannot be picked up elsewhere but if society does not nurture curiosity, the search for self-fulfilment and philosophical discourse

in school, we may lose people to the conveyor belt forever.

But why philosophy? Many people forget that the things that make our society great, such as free speech, equality, intellectual curiosity and the pursuit of happiness, are grounded in centuries of work by philosophers. Our very political system, our very method of thought on all subjects and the things that we intrinsically believe are based primarily, if not solely, on philosophy. We teach our children that man is born free and has inalienable rights but we never bother to show them why we owe Spinoza, Rousseau and Mill for the fulfilment of those ideas. When we lose the understanding of where our truest beliefs come from, we erode those beliefs.

Some will argue that practicality is more important and that to build Ireland's "knowledge economy" children should learn to be business people. But understanding our place in the world is more important than making money. In an Ireland where religion no longer gives us the answers, we need to give the next generation a means to find their place in the grand scheme of existence.

## Travel

# FAMILY SKIING, THE BULGARIAN WAY

Written by **Keira Maher**

AS our flight descended into the beautiful city of Sophia, I was never so excited to see so much snowfall. My family and I set out on our journey on the 28 December and arrived at our final destination eight hours later. Bulgaria is typically known as a summer destination, as a lot of Irish tend to hit the fabulous Sunny Beach resort. The ski resort we stayed at was a far cry from Sunny Beach! Although the sun shone, temperatures went as low as -17°C.

Though I was horrendously tired (nearly worse than any hangover I have ever experienced), I waited in anticipation to get going on the ski slopes. We were put into a group that consisted of our family and a family from Kerry. Little did we know that we would get on so well! We were appointed a ski instructor who went by the name of Pascal. Tall, dark and handsome, Pascal was every girl's dream. How unfortunate for me, his English was very poor, the marriage would have never worked. It was clear from the beginning my sisters and I took a liking to Pascal. For Dad it took him most of the week to appreciate Pascal's teaching abilities. By the end of the week Pascal had him sliding down the slopes as if he had been doing it for years! The feeling of skiing down the slopes was amazing to say the least. The adrenaline rush was so exhilarating that time passed all too quickly and before I knew it, it was time to go back to the hotel. The hotel facilities were top notch. Each evening we took

to the swimming pool to unwind. The hotel offered steam rooms, saunas and Jacuzzis; virtually everything that could help you relax after a long day of skiing. After a session in the pool, dinner would be ready in the dining room. It is fair to say that the food here was not exactly the best cuisine I had ever tasted in my entire life, but it filled the gap in my stomach all the same. Because we were there for New Years, the hotel hosted a New Years party for all its guests. The party included local singers and dancers. After listening to a man playing the bagpipes for 10 minutes, a well deserved drink was in order! The hotel management were kind enough to give every table a bottle of champagne and a glass of their version of poteen. While the champagne was drinkable, the "poteen" was a disaster! Towards the last few days of our holidays, we began to get the hang of skiing. The craic was had each day racing down the slopes. Although the skiing was thoroughly enjoyable, you would be exhausted each night!

This relatively new ski resort is making its way up the ski destination ladders. It is a charming place with charming people and I would definitely recommend to anyone. This holiday was probably the best holiday I have ever been on and great memories were made. Skiing is just one of the things a person should do in their life-time.



"We were appointed a ski instructor, Pascal. Tall, dark and handsome, he was every girl's dream. Unfortunately, his English was very poor; the marriage would never have worked."

## STUDY ABROAD IN NEWFOUNDLAND

Written by **Jason Kennedy**

ON St Patrick's Day, I met so many people who claimed their Irish heritage defines who they are. I also met a load of people who just dressed in green and got plastered drunk. Either way, I was surprised how big Paddy's Day is in Newfoundland.

NEWFOUNDLAND is one of only two places outside of Ireland that celebrates St Patrick's Day as a public holiday and they celebrate it on a massive scale. Since late February, the college was decked in plastic leprechauns and shamrocks.

In the week running up to Paddy's Day, countless people came up to me and actually said "Top of the morning to you, and a happy St Patty's Day".

I never responded. On the day, the two college bars, The Breezeway and Bitters, were packed to capacity. The music playing was a mix of the Pogues, Saw Doctors and other, more traditional music. The even played 'Fairytale of New York', which I thought was more than a little odd for the middle of March.

However, the most disappointing thing about the night was the fact that they were only serving Guinness out of cans. Sacrilege! The extremely low prices almost made up for it though. A vodka and coke cost as little as \$1 and three, local brewed beers cost \$5. I couldn't believe the low prices. Just like at home, things got very messy very quickly.

From the early hours of the day, people were getting sick, starting fights and generally making themselves look like idiots. It was much messier than any Paddy's Day I've ever seen at home.

One good thing that came out of Paddy's Day is that I met another real Irish person. One of my Canadian buddies told me that there was another Irish person around the bar, wearing a t-shirt that said 'I'm REALLY Irish'. I spent around 20 minutes looking for

her. By the time I found her she was already falling all over the place. She was from Mallow and studying full-time in UCD. We took pictures, had a laugh and then parted. It was nice while it lasted.

Three weeks until home time though! I will be looking forward to having my first pint of Bulmers in nearly five months.



## CO-OP IN CLARE

Written by **Keira Maher**

THREE months down, three to go. If the last three months go as fast as the first three, it will be summer before I know it. I'm still working with the non verbal man and his communication book. I've been taking loads pictures with him around Ennis. It almost feels like I am a tourist on holidays! It's a great project and the staff are delighted that I am doing it. Along with this, I'm still working on the long-term leasing project. This programme allows service users in the Brothers of Charity the opportunity to live alone. So far, we have selected two houses that we feel would be appropriate for the service users.

My supervisor has put my name forward for two training days which are coming up. Before you get excited, these training days are in the area of manual handling and record and file keeping. There is a free lunch though!

Thanks to the nice weather, I have continued jogging. It's great to get out of the house and get fit. I do worry about my health, however, as I tend to wear my Tipperary jacket while I am running. Not the safest thing to do in Clare. Luckily, no-one has said anything to me yet.

As I was saying in my last instalment, there are a lot of young people working here and it's hard to meet everyone. I was introduced to a lovely girl called Aisling who brought me along to football training last week in Crusheen (ten minutes outside Ennis). Although

the training was tough, it was great fun. Aisling also suggested I play camogie so I am looking forward to that. I am also meant to go to Kinvara and Galway city soon which will be great.

As for Ennis; I think I have taken a shine to the place. The people here are so inviting. I love where I live and although I live on my own, I think I have finally got used to it. The staff here is lovely and I feel so lucky to have experienced this placement. I have three months left and hopefully they'll be as good as the first three.

Back in UL, it's week 11! Friends of mine are stressed about exams and assignments. This is my last article so I want to take the chance to wish all of you the best of luck in the summer exams!



## Lifestyle

## WHAT'S ALL THIS THEN?

Written by **Jennifer Armstrong,**

Feature writer, Jennifer Armstrong, lost an hour of her life last week. Is daylight saving time worth the hassle?

ACCORDING to Benjamin Franklin, 'Time is Money'. While this is ruthless, it is probably true.

But riddle me this Mr. Franklin! Why, after such an enlightened statement, did you have to go take a whole precious hour from us with your silly daylight saving business?

It may be sound like an uninformed almost ignorant view to reject this. After all, some believe daylight saving time is an extremely intelligent idea.

But when you're a student with essays to write and fun to have, a whole extra hour in bed is not a negotiable entity.

Even if society insists upon carrying on with this 'clever' idea, could they at least ensure reminders are blasted out the day before? This past Sunday, until three o'clock, I lived an entire hour behind the rest of the country! A whole hour! Just think of all the things I may have missed. I'm sure I'm not the only one. The bright side

(literally), if I feel forced to look at one, is annoyingly positive. Various studies have shown daylight saving time can actually save energy usage by a small, but significant amount, because people need less electricity for lighting and appliances. It has even been proved to reduce traffic accidents due to brighter early mornings. And of course if not for the economical purposes, most people generally enjoy having an extra hour of sunlight in the evening time.

It's true, I am partial to summer time pints outside. But I can't deny that it still doesn't seem a reasonable deal.

I look forward, eagerly, to 30 October, when I can finally regain the lost hour of my life. Then maybe Mr. Franklin, we can talk.



## SAVOUR YOUR SKIN

Written by **Sinéad Keane**

THE last few weeks in UL have been tough. Whether it's the stress of FYPs, midterms, SU Election Week or even recovering from Charity Week, we've been under a lot of pressure lately. Stress is unhealthy and can take its toll on the body after time; sleep deprivation and sore muscles are obvious results of this. However, there are other less obvious places in which stress can take its toll, one of these being your skin. The skin is the largest and thinnest organ in the body, therefore it can be extremely sensitive in times of stress and frustration. Other factors of unhealthy skin can be a bad diet, hot weather and hormone changes.

We only have a few weeks to get our skin glowing and healthy for the summer sun. Your skin is, suprisingly, one of the easiest organs to keep healthy. Having a good skin regime is simple and quick and results will show within a day! Below is a simple skin regime.

**Scrub yourself clean:** Your face collects dirt every single second, which is why its vital to cleanse twice a day, every day. Here, I believe a quality cleanser is important; Clarins may be tough on the pocket, but it lasts forever and is absolutely wonderful for your skin. Highly recommended!

**Moisturize:** Your skin is often very dry in the morning, after eight hours or so in bed. So a good brand moisturiser is important to keep your face and body soft. Choose carefully: some moisturisers can be very heavy and others can be too light for your skin. I recommend Johnsons and Johnsons

**Exfoliate:** Your skin is contantly breaking up and renewing itself every day, which is why exfoliation is a vital part of your basic skin regime. Invest in a loufah and a good exfoliating shower gel and scrub down in the shower every morning. Job done.

**Clear off that glitter:** Never go to bed with make-up on! No matter how tempting bed looks after that night out. A quick scrub with a make up wipe takes thirty seconds and is essential in the long run for clear skin.

**Mask yourself:** There are hundreds of homemade remedies you can use that will help exfoliate and clear your skin. A lovely one is honey and flour; mixed together and placed on the face for a few minutes, will exfoliate and cleanse at the same time. And it tastes great too!

**Home facial:** All you need is a towel, a bowl of hot water and some tea tree oil. Place a few drops of tea tree oil in the hot water and hold your face over the steam for ten minutes. It's simple and really opens up all pores and clears the face.

Adding these simple steps to your daily timetable will really help banish those blemishes and spots and give you the perfect moggin. Only a couple of minutes tending to your natural coat every day will not only give you glowing soft skin; it is also extremely theraputic and will reduce stress and help you to relax. Vicious cycle busted!

## THE BEAUTY COLUMN

Written by **Meghann Scully**

APART from the obvious stress of exams, FYPs and projects, one other thing can suffer, your hair. From nights out, straightening, curling or back brushing, hair can become brittle and dry. Even the weather affects the gruaig. The sun dries and fades hair while hats make it greasy and static. And so, this week, hair care is in store.

We all fall victim to the GHD which may provide silky sleek locks or bouncy curls but dries the ends of our hair. The result for many is getting the scissors to sort the damaged ends. Having extremely long hair myself, the thoughts of chopping my waves away would be a nightmare. I recently came across a few products

to restore the split ends and soften the dry locks. The most vital part of hair restoration is shampoo and conditioner. L'Oreal Elvive gets my vote. The pink bottle contains a shine booster while illuminating and softening to give a mirror shine cashmere touch. Elvive is available in all good pharmacies and supermarkets. Every few weeks a hair mask is needed to give an extra boost to dry hair. Pantene pro-v has a two minute damage rescue treatment. This deep conditioning formula provides extra care to dry hair.

If you would like a more natural hair mask, then simply get some mayonnaise from your fridge and comb it through your hair. A half cup is all you need.

Then cover your hair with plastic and leave for 15 minutes. Rinse it out thoroughly to see the amazing results.

For itchy scalp or dandruff, Head and Shoulders without a doubt is the only remedy. Unfortunately, because the product cures dandruff, it does wash dye out so try it before you re-dye. The effects are noticed after one wash so no more itchy scalp and white dead skin cells. Finally, when washing your hair, try to let it dry naturally occasionally or half blow dry it to ease the heat damage and always before styling spray on heat protection spray.



"We all fall victim to the GHD."

## PORK STIR FRY

Written by **Elizabeth Neylon,**  
**Food Columnist**Serves Two  
Ingredients:

2 pork chops, cut into strips  
1tbsp soy sauce  
1 clove garlic, finely chopped  
Sesame oil, 2 handfuls of chopped veg of your choice  
1oz of cashew nuts/peanuts (optional)  
Egg noodles

Method:

Mix the soy sauce with the pork and set aside to marinade while you prepare your vegetables.

Heat a frying-pan, add the oil, then add the garlic and pork and stir-fry for 5-6mins.

Add the vegetables and nuts and stir-fry for a further 5mins, don't overcook you don't want the veg to be mushy but have a nice bite!

A drizzle of sesame oil over the meat and veg will give it a fantastic taste, (this is the secret ingredient that makes food taste like it actually came from a Chinese!!).

Serve on a bed of noodles and a spoonful of crème fraiche on the side.



This stir fry is fast, easy and delicious.



## Fashion

# THE NEW SEXY IS NATURAL, CONFIDENT, AND JUST A LITTLE UNKEMPT

Written by **Emily Maree**

SEXY has turned over a new leaf in terms of fashion and got our heads in a spin. Gone are the days of bodycon dresses, extensions and smouldering for the camera. The Paris Hiltons, Brad Pitts and Cristiano Ronaldos of the world are no longer the fashion forward and instead, people like Carey Mulligan and Alexa Chung are the new sexy instead of being categorised as alternative and bohemian.

THE new sexy isn't about looking as polished and perfect as is physically possible. The new sexy eludes intelligence, modesty and unpretentiousness. The new sexy is natural, confident and just a little unkempt. The new sexy, most importantly, is about keeping it buttoned up.

The designer who made this all possible is of course, the fashion veteran, Marc Jacobs. He has inspired numerous fashion

houses from Derek Lam to Stella McCartney to even high street stores like River Island to embrace the midi length skirt, sheer blouses and structured flares.

Christopher Kane, who brought neon twinsets with knee length skirts to the runway this season, names his inspirations as Princess Margaret and Marilyn Monroe to name but a few, "I've never seen Marilyn Monroe in a short dress, and people say she

was one of the sexiest women in the world".

Looking at the style icons of the moment, it becomes clear what the new sexy is all about. Emma Watson's understated nude Valentino at the Bafta's, Alexa Chung in that beautiful Peter Pan collared Chanel shift, even American Kate Bosworth in those beautiful Proenza Schouler shift dresses. Erdem, the new sexy brigade's design favourite, sums it up in a few



simple words, "They're not pretty, pretty, there's certain intelligence to them, and they're smart women. There is definitely a certain sexiness in keeping something back".

Watch out for sheer blouses, fitted flares and knee/midi length skirts this season, they'll be absolutely everywhere. Karl Lagerfeld opened his new Chanel couture show with flat pumps rather than dressing the models in heels, both creating

a stir in the fashion world and starting a new trend that would travel from high-end Chanel to high-street stores like Topshop.

The new sexy is a strict rebellion against the old sexy, and the perfection of it all. Could our skirts have got any shorter, or our shoes any higher? I think not, so why not go back to the drawing board and create something more function and fluid? Erdem says "Every woman wants to look

like the most beautiful version of herself and this [new sexy] is about being in touch with what she wants." In this case, we can really say that for the new season, less is most definitely more.

## SHADY CHARACTERS



Written by **Roisín Burke**

WEARING sunglasses in Limerick is like wearing a swimsuit to a rugby match: impractical and odd. There are some ways to pull off classy shades, but Limerick doesn't cater for them.

We don't appreciate political fashion statements and 'lofty aloof'. We think 'hung-over and hurting' or 'arrogant and over the top'. There is snobbery in our midst and an air of elitism amongst the throngs. And I'm sure I'm not the only one who wishes it wasn't so.

I ascend the Brown Thomas escalator gazing at the shiny loner shades aligning the

opposing wall. The varieties, colours, styles and gloss are as off limits as your best friend's boyfriend.

You can't purchase glamour glasses in Limerick without a prescription or a Ryanair ticket. Going abroad is the only accepted explanation, aside from being as blind as a bat. Hunter S Thompson, the legendary party animal journalist, was renowned for his constant aviator attire, indoors and out. I'm not encouraging all of HST's hobbies though because besides being a manic gambler, drinker, drug user and swindler, he wore some awful

shirts. However, I find his reckless disregard for opinion and perception refreshing and enlightening. His life looked like a lot of fun. In his own words, "I wouldn't recommend sex, drugs or insanity for everyone, but they have always worked for me".

Opinion is rightfully universal, but never forget, that is not so for choice. Freedom of expression is not something everyone enjoys. Our right to be different is very much a valuable one.

I don't recommend playing rugby in swimwear but Limerick sunglasses get my vote.

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Letters

**AN FOCAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

The Editor, UL Students' Union, Castletroy, Limerick. T: 0860435304 E: sucommunications@ul.ie W: www.ulsu.ie  
An Focal endeavours to accommodate all letters as far as legally possible. All parties have the right of reply to letters printed herein.

Sir, - It's that time of year again. Election time! Yes, you have all received the emails, seen them campaigning around campus, and probably nicked a few free sweets! It is expected, naturally. However, what is not expected (by me anyway) is the debacle witnessed in the Hurlers tonight (23 March 2011). At the time of writing this, it is the night before elections, and dear God they seem desperate for a vote! As some sort of twisted campaigning strategy, I witnessed several female SU candidates being straddled by two guys each on the back stage at the strong behest of the DJ and a handful of students. This was then followed by the DJ pressing the candidates to be (albeit jokingly) Tea-Bagged by several students on or near the stage. In an attempt to keep this article as clean as possible, I will not detail what Tea-Bagging means. There was more. But moral decency prevents me from continuing.

I was out to celebrate the completion of my Final Year Project, and was less than impressed with what I saw. This route taken to acquire a few votes by some candidates did not just bring down the tone of UL, but made me ashamed of the direction the student body is heading in. Maybe these students meant to just have a laugh with their dedicated supporters as it was so close to election time, or maybe it was the drink. Maybe the only way to get a vote is to show you are the biggest whore, I don't know!

Shockingly, I seemed to be the only one evenly slightly bothered by it. This made me, as an outsider to the campaigning group, extremely uncomfortable. Is this really the image the Student Union wants to portray? Has student life become that much of a joke to the Student Union? There is no excuse for this sort of carry on either on or off campus. The University of Limerick is better than this, and damn well deserves better than what was witnessed this night. Yes, you can make your excuses, say it was all a bit of fun, but what you did was public, seen by non-UL students and the general public, and was extremely harmful to our college.

I for one am thankful I will not be here next year to have someone with such low self-esteem allegedly looking out for the student body's well-being. Unfortunately, by the time you read this the votes have been cast, the ballots collected, the numbers tallied; there is no going back! Think long and hard before the next election, students. Don't make UL a joke. And clean up your act, SU.

Yours, etc,  
E. O'CARROLL

Sir, - As an attendee of the University and a peruser of your fine periodical, I bring it upon myself, from what I have observed thus far, to suggest an idea that I believe could be of benefit to the college in its on-going quest to becoming the foremost place of learning in the country. And if implemented successfully, as I firmly believe it could, would propel the University to the upper echelons of academia around the world, which no amount of grade inflation would comparably manage.

Unlike the majority of my contemporaries, I have taken it of my own volition to attend all my lectures, which has in effect brought me to many differing lecture theatres and chambers. I observed that all of these, as would be common in all places of learning, share a similar trait. The lecturer is placed in a setting that is well below the level that the students are placed, thus having to throw his or her voice well above acceptable sound levels in order to be heard. I am certain I do not need to delve into the gory details of acoustic levitation with your good self, but will offer this, when you are in a lecture and hear an intonation, it invariably comes from above and behind you, when this sound becomes a hamper to your learning experience it has been, as I have witnessed on many an occasion, taken upon the lecturer to stop and correct or silence this disruption. A simple calculation would show that almost five per cent of learning time is wasted doing this. Further totting up

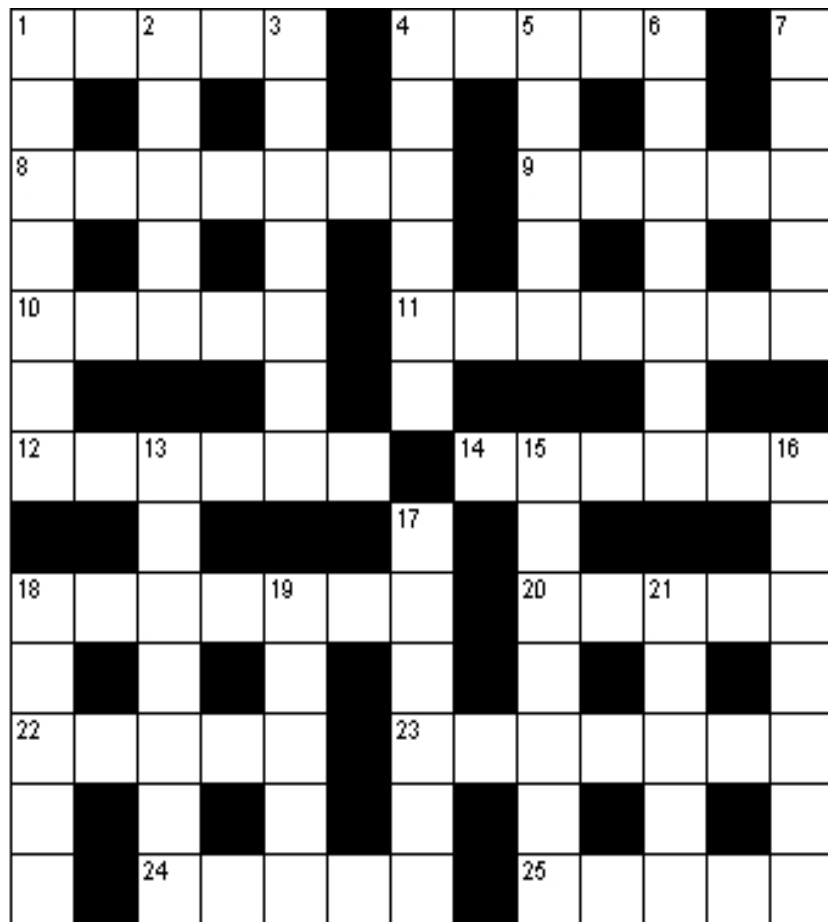
would present you with a frame of time that is obscene in its dissipation over the course of a semester.

The glaringly obvious solution to this predicament, if you raise the location of the lecturer to a position above the pupils so as to better allow them to talk down to students it would increase the learning experience tenfold. Now I am well aware of the current financial climate and that it would be folly to try and undertake a wholesale rebuilding of all the lecture halls on campus immediately, so in the interim, in preparation for the progressive improvements to come, I propose we use whatever means we have of acclimatising students to this ameliorated way of learning.

If you stroll around the entirety of the college grounds, you cannot fail to see a number of erecting devices lying idle, whether leaning against a bulwark or shoved away in a dark dusty dispensary. Why just the other day, the entrance to the Glucksman Library building was festooned with a wooden graduation instrument and not a single man at the summit. Also, a small bright red truck with a raisable boom was left parked redundant by the approach to the Concert Hall, when it could be easily put to good use in the interior of the Jean Monnet theatre. I hope that the fair and proper use of this equipment in this new dawn of lecturing would promptly improve learning standards in the college.

These measures are not beyond the bounds of do ability for the University and I am also sure that when other institutions around the globe see the improvements made here they will quickly follow suit with the application of similar projects, but not before we have reaped the benefits of improving scholastic work and a subsequent increase in solicitations for attendance in our very own University of Limerick. Placing it firmly among the elite halls of ivy in the academic world. I would hope you would put your not unsubstantial weight behind such a noble endeavour.

Yours, etc,  
GARRY A. IRWIN



CLUES

<http://www.puzzlechoice.com/pc2/Ukp022x.html>

Across:

- 1. Extremely cold (5)
- 4. Boring, old hat (5)
- 8. It can be dangerous (7)
- 9. Unimportant actor (5)
- 10. The bride walks down it (5)
- 11. Unlawful (7)
- 12. Natural abilities or qualities (6)
- 14. Conundrum (6)
- 18. Malleable (7)
- 20. Irritated (5)
- 22. Medieval weapon (5)
- 23. Acute (7)
- 24. Stringed orchestral instrument (5)

ANSWERS

Across:

- 1. WEATHER
- 5. AWARD
- 8. END
- 9. SUBMARINE
- 10. CHORE
- 11. INITIAL
- 12. USHER
- 14. SEVEN
- 19. PLATEAU
- 21. CACHE
- 22. NEGLECTED
- 23. PEA
- 24. EVENT
- 25. EARNEST

25. Overheads (5)

Down:

- 1. A gentleman should be so (7)
- 2. Takes charge (5)
- 3. Distinguish (7)
- 4. Graphite implement (6)
- 5. Royal Dutch (5)
- 6. Lured (7)
- 7. Intended (5)
- 13. Curt (7)
- 15. Ludicrous (7)
- 16. Interminable (7)
- 17. Sheep known for its high quality fleece (6)
- 18. Fourth Greek letter (5)
- 19. Utopian (5)
- 21. The men who rule Spain and Norway (5)

Down:

- 1. WRENCH
- 2. ARDUOUS
- 3. HASTE
- 4. RABBIT
- 5. AVARICE
- 6. ALIBI
- 7. DWELLS
- 13. ELEMENT
- 15. ESCAPEE
- 16. SPONGE
- 17. TURTLE
- 18. DEPART
- 20. ANGLE
- 21. CEDAR

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## Union

THE  
PRESIDENT'S  
COLUMN

Written by **Ruán Dillon-McLoughlin**, ULSU President

HAVE you heard of Chuck Feeney? Ever wondered how UL became such an amazing campus? That's right. Chuck Feeney is the man behind the scenes.

Mr Feeney is an Irish American who made his money setting up "Duty Free's". After enjoying life with a few quid in his back pocket he wanted to give something back. He lived by the motto "Giving While Living" and established The Atlantic Philanthropies. He signed over the bulk of his wealth to the Foundation.

Luckily for UL, Mr Feeney took a liking to the Institution. Through his Foundation, he helped shape this amazing campus. Mr Feeney has a fantastic view of life. We should all take something from that. Mr. Feeney gave what he had. If all you have is time, then that should be your gift to someone. Whatever you do, give something. Check out "Secret Billionaire:

The Chuck Feeney Story" on YouTube. It's well worth a watch. There is a great section on UL.

"I had one idea that never changed in my mind—that you should use your wealth to help people. I try to live a normal life, the way I grew up," Chuck Feeney.

WELFARE  
WATCH

Written by **Derek Daly**, Welfare Officer

IT'S been a hectic week of highs and lows. I'll leave elections off for now and talk about the other bits and pieces.

Last week was a massive buzz around campus but I spent a lot of it indoors at Governing Authority and catching up on other bits and pieces of paperwork. Exciting, I know!

The Sabbats met to discuss the Alcohol Policy. This will be a body of work for the new Welfare Officer and for me up to handover. We have recommended to Exec that the Welfare Officer will work on reforms with the University through the Alcohol Working Group.

Last Thursday a fundraiser took place in the Stables and I have to pay a specific thanks to Orla O'Shea for that. This week is Organ Donor Awareness Week so pick up your organ donor card in the SU or grab one from the lads out and about on Tuesday, Week 11.

Anyhow, lots to do, and only another 11 weeks to get it done!

As always I'm here to guide you where I can. I'm best contacted by email on [Suelfare@ul.ie](mailto:Suelfare@ul.ie) if you need me for anything or have any ideas.

ENLIVENING  
EDUCATION

Written by **Aoife Finnerty**, Education Officer

WITH exams approaching, what better time to speak about I Grades? Here are some commonly asked questions:

**What is an I Grade?**

I Grades (which stand for Incomplete Grades) are given by the University to students who cannot complete module requirements (the exam, coursework, etc.) as a result of physical or mental illness, or family bereavement. Usually it means postponing the point when students sit their exams until the annual repeats in August.

**Can I get an illness I Grade if I haven't been seen by the University Medical Centre?**

Yes. You can apply for an I Grade with a certificate from your own GP. However, the cert must be presented to the University Medical Centre to apply for I Grades within a specific timeframe.

**Is there a set amount of time in which you can apply for an I Grade?**

Yes. University Regulations state that students can apply for I Grades up to five university days after the day that the last exam took place.

Remember I Grades are to help students in need, they are not to be used for anything else. If you need any information on getting I Grades, contact me on [Aoife.Finnerty@ul.ie](mailto:Aoife.Finnerty@ul.ie).

CAMPAIGNS  
BRIEF

Written by **Vivion Grisewood**, Campaigns and Services Officer

IT'S coming up to the end of semester and I hope you all are in a better position exam wise than I was last year. Just remember to keep the head down between now and the end of semester and you'll be fine!

Well done to everyone who went of the Union elections two weeks ago, it was a fantastic week and an absolute credit to everyone who helped out on the campaign teams. Congratulations to the newly elected Sabbats, and commiserations to the other candidates.

With the exams looming closer we will be having another Exam campaign with some information posters, free tea and coffee, free massages and one of the Sabbats to answer and questions you might have. Make sure to check out your exam timetable closer to the exams encase the timetable changes and you end up going to the wrong exam centre.

There is loads of stuff happening between now and the end of semester, including Equality week, the Education ball, The Coronas and loads of fundraisers in the Stables and around Campus. So keep your eye on ULSU.ie and the Stables' website as well.

WORDS  
FROM THE  
PSA

Written by **Dan Comerford**, PSA President

WITH the ULSU elections out of the way, it's time to focus on PSA Presidential Elections. This year we have two brave ladies putting themselves forward, Marie Casey and Sarah-Jane Hennelly. I wish both candidates the very best and I look forward to handover (by the time this is released, we will have our President – YAY!).

This year I have decided to have a celebration upon the results of the PSA elections, this is Monda, 4 April, be sure to keep an eye on the website and email for more info.

I'm currently looking for volunteers to help me out for the Special Olympics collection day on Friday, 15 April, if you would like to spare an hour of your time, contact me on the details below.

With exams just around the corner, I would like to wish you all the very best and remember if you are in a spot of bother to contact me immediately.

If any of you wish to contact me at any point please do so on [dan.comerford@ul.ie](mailto:dan.comerford@ul.ie), the website on [www.postgrads.ie](http://www.postgrads.ie) or find us on Facebook (PSAUL)

EQUALITY WEEK: COMING TO  
A UNIVERSITY NEAR YOU

Written by **Niall Curry**, SU Equality Officer

WEEK 12 will bring many things in tow, final classes, "midterms", extra tutorials and this year it also carries with it, "Equality Week". Last year's Equality Officer, Jason Kennedy, did us more than justice in carrying out the best Equality Week the campus had seen in many years.

I will strive, at the very least, to reiterate his triumph whilst hopefully adding to it, in order to make this Equality Week the best one yet. I want us to have an Equality Week to remember and to give the student population a nice send off before Easter and so in order to do that a number of themed events have been organised. We are going to create a bit of a buzz on campus as well as questioning you

in order to record your thoughts on a number of different equality related issues. So if you are asked to do a short survey, please do. Your answers will help advance UL and improve your experiences here. Throughout the week, be sure to keep an eye out for Drama's puppet show, Debu's equality debate, Out in UL's workshops, Dj soecs music set as well as many many more events to be held. Join the Face Book page, look out for posters and flyers and, most importantly, come to the events and get involved.

Equality week needs to, once again, be re-awoken and we need to see, how open to equal opportunities this university truly is and what areas really need to be addressed. In

raising awareness and carrying out the surveys, I hope to issue a report, which will give an evidential conclusion on the level of equality, in action and thought, here, in UL.

However, to do this I need your help. I need you to enjoy it, to get involved, to give your thoughts and, of course, if you have any projects which you would like to undertake in order to further improve Equality Week 2011, please do not hesitate to get in contact so that we may co-ordinate them. See you then. Contact me at [0853224@studentmail.ul.ie](mailto:0853224@studentmail.ul.ie). Thank you!



**Niall Curry**, Equality Officer.

## Student Speak

## STUDENT SPEAK



Do you miss the Lodge? Intrepid investigator, Ailbhe Kirwan, gauged the opinion on the Hurlers as the new Lodge.

**So, do you think the Hurlers is better than the Lodge?**

**Mike Bathke**

*There's the club/pub divide and in that I prefer the pub because it's less hectic. The Lodge was messy.*



**Donal Cooney and Friend** *Way better: good pints, cheap, good craic and they organise good themed nights.*



**Noel Rice** *Drinks are better and cheaper. Music's better, better DJ but it still doesn't have that Lodge flair: it's not an absolute shithole.*



**Zara Walsh** *The Hurlers is nicer, the Lodge was cramped. You'll only have a good time in the Lodge if you're langers*



**Megan McGinley and Niamh Broderick** *It definitely needs to get a late bar. It's small but twice the craic!*



**Niall Tuohy and Eoin Burke** *It's not quite the same but the odd event is good. I miss the handiness of the Lodge.*



**Louise Clohessy** *Hurlers doesn't compare. It's an old man pub, there's a depressing vibe.*



**Kieran O'Driscoll** *It's better but it's not a club. I wouldn't stay the whole night.*



**Ultan O'Connell** *I actually prefer Hurlers. I like all the different bars so there are options of where to stand and sit.*



**Ed Gleeson** *It's way better. I hated the Lodge.*

## Sport

# GAA ABROAD: A VITAL SOCIAL OUTLET

Written by **David Prendergast**

AS Ireland fights to recover from the economic stampede which has trampled our future, it is certain that the majority of our university graduates of 2011 will not be hanging around to lengthen the dole queues. Graduates from numerous degrees, are seeking opportunities to work abroad, and with the shadows of economic gloom darkening our traditional homes away from home, unconventional destinations are being courted instead.

Emirati's compose just 15% of the United Arab Emirate population due to the country's continuous development and dependence on foreign workers and Dubai is one of thriving cities in the UAE which is attracting Irish people to its skyline for privilege and opportunity. Traditionally Irish Diaspora has carried our culture and heritage wherever the tides have taken us and Dubai proves no different with a strong and vibrant GAA scene carved out against the backdrop of a more cricket and horse-

racing conscious nation. The first GAA match to take place in the Middle East dates back to a St. Patrick's Day in 1994 when employees of SA Kent and Aramco companies respectively, pulled hurleys out of somewhere and started a puck around in the Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. By 1995 flagpoles had been planted in the sands around Dubai with the emergence of the Dubai Celts. The GAA abroad is a significant social pillar for young Irish emigrants to lean against but the existence of the Dubai

Celts has offered more than just a social outlet during its brief history.

Since 2007, the club has hosted an annual seven aside international tournament with teams competing from Ireland, Britain, Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The tournament caters for both male and female teams, including camogie, and is divided into A, B, Social and Veteran sections to ensure everyone and anyone can compete for the craic. It is now one of the largest GAA tournaments held outside of

Ireland. Further signifying the wide reach of the GAA, the winners of the 2011 games Social section were the South Africa Gaels, who were formed no more than twelve months ago under the tutelage of an English carpenter, who first contacted the sport while working in Singapore.

So while job prospects at home in Ireland may now be as predictable as the colour of shite, fear not, for wherever you go abroad for work, chances are a GAA club is not too far away to curtail

your home sickness and welcome you with open arms. Importantly, not only players are sought after, but people as simply social members too. For anyone on their way to the UAE to earn some coin come May, visit [www.dubaicelts.com](http://www.dubaicelts.com) or [www.abudhabinafianna.com](http://www.abudhabinafianna.com) for information and contact details about GAA in the region.

## AMIR KHAN v PAUL MCCLOSKEY PREVIEW

Written by **James Enright**

James Enright profiles Irishman Paul McCloskey's upcoming World Title Fight against Amir Khan.

EUROPEAN Boxing Champion, Paul McCloskey faces the biggest challenge of his career when he fights WBA light welterweight champion, Amir Khan on 16 April. The bout will take place at the M.E.N arena in Manchester.

McCloskey is unbeaten in 22 bouts. He has won his last five fights by stoppage. One of these included a spectacular one punch knockout of Italian Giuseppe Lauri. Khan is also a man in form. He is coming off the back of a win against the much feared Marcos Maidana. This was the Ring Magazine's fight of the year. Khan dominated for most of it with his superior hand speed, movement and footwork, landing a series of punishing

combinations throughout the fight. However in the 11th round Khan was rocked by a crushing right hand from Maidana. Khan took a lot of punishment in that round but managed to survive. In the 12th round, the Englishman was conservative, and stayed out of Maidana's range. The judges gave Khan the win by a wide point's margin.

McCloskey is a southpaw boxer. He has got good footwork, decent head movement, and he can be difficult to hit. He has also got some power in that left hand as he illustrated with his one punch knockout of Lauri. He can take punches. His most glaring weakness is his unorthodox stance. He drops his left hand constantly. Against a fast accurate puncher like Khan this will get exploited. Amir Khan has improved immeasurably since he was knocked in the first round by Breidas Prescott with his decision to join up with trainer Freddie Roach at the Wild Card Gym

proving a wise move. Khan always had dazzling hand speed but Freddie Roach has tightened up his defence with the boxer now keeping his hands up. Roach has also worked on his footwork and head movement. Khan now moves into range, gets his punches off, and moves out again. Most importantly his chin seems to have improved.

Before this fight there was an opinion that Khan had a glass jaw after Prescott knocked him out so easily. But his real weakness is that he does not have devastating punching power.

My opinion is that Khan will dominate this fight. His incredible hand speed and movement will be too much for McCloskey. McCloskey defence is not tight enough and he will be caught with combinations while McCloskey lacks the hand speed or the power to worry the Briton. His best hope is that Khan takes this fight lightly. My verdict is Khan to win by unanimous decision.



Paul McCloskey

## DODGY DEALINGS: THE BLUFFER'S GUIDE TO THE FANTASY LEAGUE RUN IN

Written by **Robert McNamara**

COME on, admit it, you need help. The pressure of management is getting to you, players are letting you down, injuries are decimating your team and you have no funds to strengthen your paper thin squad. Well, here are a few tips to bolster your chances of taking the top spot and leave your colleagues stunned as you overtake them after months of mediocrity.

If you've got an expensive goalkeeper, get rid of him

Goalkeepers are neither major point's winners or points losers. Having an expensive net-minder is a waste.

They only earn four points for a clean sheet, five points if they save a penalty

and only one point is lost for every two goals conceded. Release those much needed funds and instead of Petr Cech or Edwin Van Der Sar, plump for a reliable mid-table man with a safe pair of hands. The extra cash can be put towards flair players.

Don't be afraid to take the hit

Some fantasy players stick to the one transfer a week in order to save the four points that must be paid to secure a second transfer.

This can go against you when certain players are off form or when you have plenty of injured players. You've got to speculate to accumulate so move them on and get in fresh legs, no point having passengers in the squad.

Read the form book

Just like horse racing, you've got to keep on top of what's going on. Check the Opta stats, check the points scoring and make sure you watch Match of the Day. You can name check all you want but you've got to know if Wigan's left back has the most interceptions in the league. It's the little details that win the

points. If you don't change your team week by week to reflect the fixtures, you're screwed. This will be even more important in the run in.

Change your captain when it suits

This one is straight out of the Fabio Capello guide to management but you won't face a backlash from the English press. Change your captain to suit the fixture.

It's all well and good having Dmitar Berbatov wearing the armband when United are at home to Blackburn, but when it comes to the Red Devils visiting the Emirates you need be realistic and give the armband to someone who has a better chance of playing and picking up the scores you need.

## Sport

# COPA LIBERTADORES 2011 UPDATE

Written by **Darren Mulryan**

An Focal brings you across the Atlantic for some of the very best action from South America's premier club competition.

It has been proved down the years that winning on the road in Copa Libertadores is never easy, and this week it so proved.

Nine of the eleven home teams won, and five of them, by at least a two goal margin. Only Paraguay's Libertad and Uruguay's Nacional were able to earn a valuable point on the road.

Brazilian outfit Cruzeiro maintained their impressive start to the competition with a 4-0 victory over Paraguay's Guarani. The prolific form of front man Wallyson was evident again this week as his brace was enough to put Guarani in their place. That makes it four in two games for the Brazilian.

Defending Copa Libertadores champions, Internacional, won convincingly at home against Mexico's Chiapas, on a 4-0 score. The holders looked impressive and are considered one of the favourites again this year with the trio of Ze Roberto, Leandro Damiao and Fernando Cavenaghi continuing to create headaches for the opposition. Independiente came up tops this week with a seasoned performance against traditional rivals Peñarol from Uruguay, winning 3-0.

The Argentinians are seven time champions of the Copa Libertadores and look to be showing the form needed to progress to the knockout stages. Their last title came in 1984, and they have not come close since then.

This year's team should not be confused with the great champions of the past. Last season the "Diablos Rojos" finished bottom in Argentina's Clausura, and only managed to crawl into the Copa Libertadores by winning the Copa Sudamericana.

So this week left Cruzeiro on top of the pile in Group Seven after another lopsided win, which leaves the Raposa with nine goals scored and none conceded in the first two matches. Meanwhile, Gremio exit the top five after losing to Colombia's Junior.

Estudiantes, in spite of playing badly, manage to exit the bottom five after winning at home while Paraguay's Guarani swap bottom spot with Bolivia's Oriente Petrolero. Playing against Cruzeiro seems to be the surest way to kill off any hopes of success in this year's competition. Unsurprisingly, the back pages were dominated by the

mass brawl that occurred at the game between Independiente and Peñarol. Uruguayan international Octavio Darío Rodríguez Peña was aggrieved when he was shoved to the ground by Independiente striker Facundo Parra, during the match which the Argentine club won 3-0.

After the match ended, Rodríguez hounded Parra and punched him in the stomach, but the players were separated. He later followed Parra into the tunnel leading to the dressing rooms (Jason Bourne Style) and sucker-punched him in the face. The action led to a free-for-all fight involving several players from both clubs, which was only stopped when the police intervened. Entertaining stuff! South American football never disappoints on or off the pitch.

# EXCITING AND UNPREDICTABLE; MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL 2011

Written by **Robert McNamara**

RIDICULOUS wages for overpaid mercenaries, controversial moves, flash pads, ownership problems, intriguing battles between the big guns and a whole host of mediocre teams looking for a piece of the pie. No, I'm not writing about the English Premier League. I'm referring to the 2011 Major League Baseball season.

110th MLB year is about to get underway and is heating up to be one of the most memorable seasons of all time. The San Francisco Giants led by Brian Wilson and his beard to be feared were victorious in 2010 and they have been busy securing their squad for the new season with Aubrey Huff signing a two year contract to remain at the franchise. They should be in the mix again come the playoffs along with, National League West rivals, the Colorado Rockies who are leading the charge against them. A young and talented Los Angeles Dodgers are the Arsenal of baseball and need to turn their promise into a playoff place posthaste.

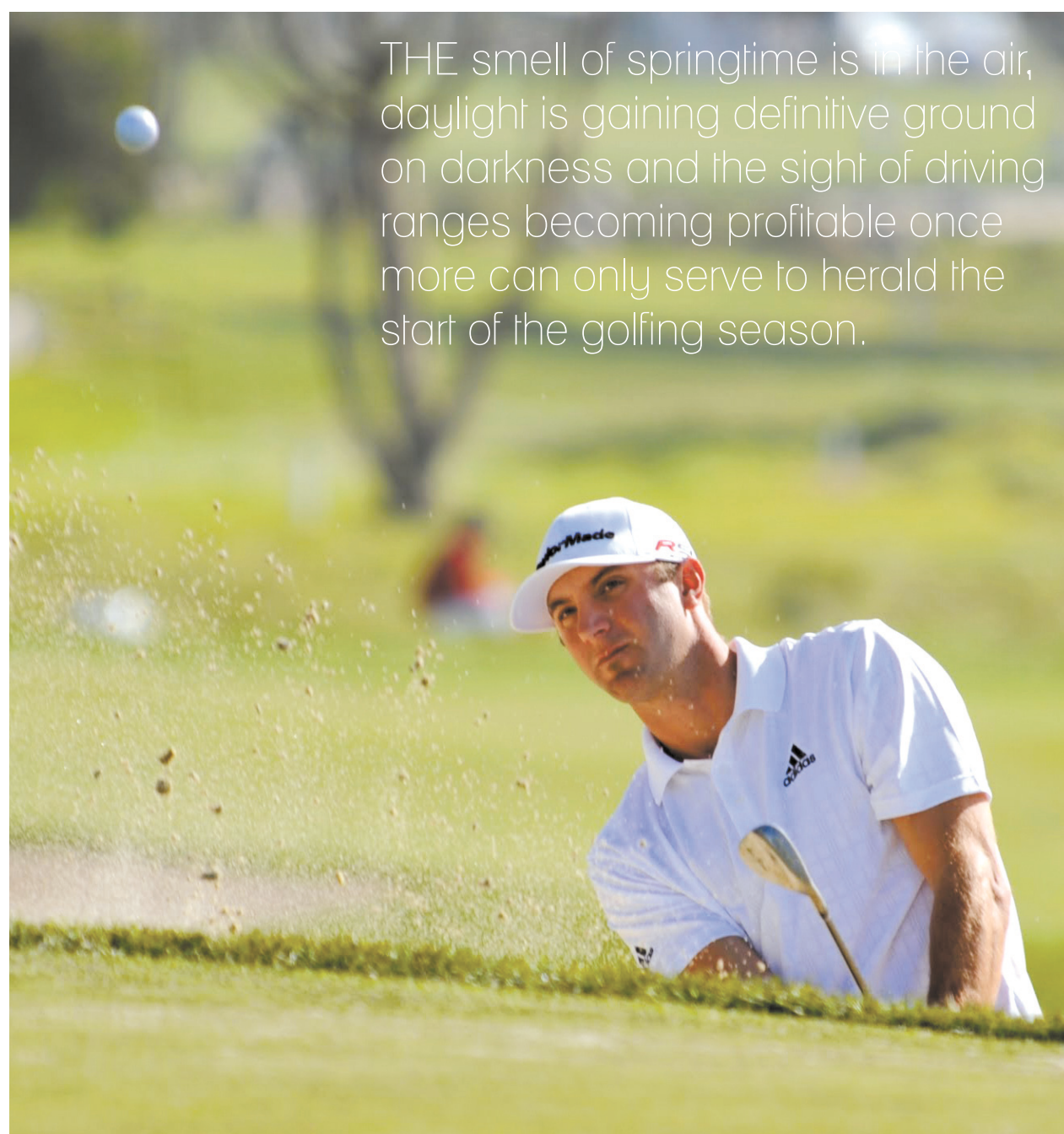
In the American League East, the Boston Red Sox owned by John Henry, the new main man at Liverpool FC, have traded catcher Victor Martinez to the Detroit Tigers and replaced him with Jared Saltalamacchia. They are expected to vie for a playoff place with The New York Yankees as the Tampa Bay Rays, Toronto Blue Jays

and Baltimore Orioles are unlikely to challenge the big two. The Yankees continue to offer huge sums of money to players. Derek Jeter has had a \$48m deal put in front of him, while Philadelphia pitcher Cliff Lee has also seen huge amounts thrown at him by the Big Apple franchise.

In the National League East, the Philadelphia Phillies are the big guns and will hope Cliff Lee is not tempted by the Yankees big bucks. The New York Mets are in disarray due to ownership problems while the Florida Marlins are not expected to be in the running but the Washington Nationals may have an outside chance.

The National League Central could be interesting with a better season expected from the Chicago Cubs although the Cincinnati Reds, The St. Louis Cardinals and the Milwaukee Brewers are the front runners.

The American League Central is intriguing. The Minnesota Twins have won the last two division championships but 2005 World Series winners, the Chicago White Sox will look to stop their path to the playoffs. The Oakland Athletics and the Texas Rangers are the big hitters in the four team American League West. This season promises to be as exciting as it is unpredictable.



THE smell of springtime is in the air, daylight is gaining definitive ground on darkness and the sight of driving ranges becoming profitable once more can only serve to herald the start of the golfing season.

# JOHNSON'S TIME TO COME AT 2011 MASTERS

Written by **Conor McGrath**

However, The Masters Tournament in Augusta National, Georgia is considered by many to be the true annual starting point for the professional and amateur golfer. Predicting the eventual winner is a different beast altogether.

Tiger is usually the first port of call for the cautious gambler. However, he remains a tough proposition in the winter of his discontent as that mentality of routinely committing adultery and doling out bouts of 'Tigeritis' now belongs to a different age. I think victory here is too soon for him, even though the lack of rough at Augusta won't hamper his erratic driving. Big Phil Mickelson is the defending champion and a grave threat considering his no holds barred attitude to the coveted skills of shot making. He'll threaten the leaders but a top ten finish is the realistic picture.

However, Martin Kaymer is the real deal with a penchant for closing out victories like no other. His confidence is rocking at the minute and he's great value for a tidy sum. In terms of Irish interest, Padraig Harrington looks like a shell of his former self and those never ending swing changes have produced the reverse effect on his game. Rory McIlroy's impending success is seen as

a fashionable topic by most within the golfing community and unlike Sergio Garcia, it will happen for him later this year. His inability to remain consistent for four days needs to be addressed. Graeme McDowell is in the year of that difficult second album. His gritty nature isn't suited to the length of Augusta and I think it'll cost him. The British interest is served by the usual Casey/Rose/Poulter/Donald combo who'll stay in touch but will again fail to offer that elusive inspirational touch that's demanded in major championship golf. I still remain unconvinced about Lee Westwood. Sure, his game fits Augusta like a nappy on a baby but like his compatriots, he lacks bite and guile. I hope his time hasn't passed.

For me, it's all about Dustin Johnson this week. Yes, he had his foibles last year but he's shrugged them off as his current form suggests. He's young, he's aggressive off the tee and he'll thrive in the key area of victory at Augusta, consistently birdying the par fives. In a cringe worthy reference to a Robbie Williams tune from a bygone era, will Augusta National 'Rock To This DJ' come Sunday night? I firmly believe so.

Dustin Johnson, who was controversially denied the US PGA, is set to return as a leading force in world golf.

## Sport

# FORGOTTEN FOOTBALLER, FREDDY ADU



A typical moment of frustration for Freddy Adu, while playing for the United States.

Written by **Robert McNamara**

ONCE the great hope of American soccer, Freddy Adu has become a victim of huge expectation and media hype. Where once it was a question of which great European club he would eventually grace, now it is a question of can he even sustain a career in top flight football? The signs are not good.

Adu is the Macaulay Culkin of the football world. Like the Home Alone star, Adu will always be viewed in a Peter Pan like manner, the boy who never grew up or got any taller. Incidentally, Adu hasn't grown an inch in six years leading some to question his real age. It seems like he has been around for years, yet Adu is still only 21 and already labeled a failure.

It all started so well. Adu was a child prodigy. His football skills soon came to prominence and a tournament played for the US Olympic development programme against academies from

Italy saw him garner attention from a host of top clubs. Inter Milan and Manchester United were rumoured to be interested at the time.

Major League Soccer USA was not going to let the little gem out of their hands though and the franchise quickly signed him to a contract. He was drafted in 2004 to DC United and became the youngest ever American professional sports person at the age of 14 when he made his debut for the club.

An MLS Cup victory followed and frequent flashes of brilliance made Adu a star. He was in demand and an appearance on the David Letterman Show and a 60 minutes profile sealed his fame. He was recruited to sell products, appearing in advertisements with Pelé and won a Nike sponsorship contract. However, all was not well. Adu, clearly distracted by his celebrity, had a poor scoring record at DC and

a move to Real Salt Lake City didn't work out. In 2007 he decided to have a crack at Europe and Benfica came calling with a multi-million euro deal after Manchester United had turned Adu down following a two week trial. He failed to make an impact at the Portuguese club and was soon loaned out to Monaco in France and then Belenenses in Portugal, failing to score a single goal at either club.

The fall from grace was complete last summer when Adu was left out of the USA national team squad for the World Cup. A stint in Greece with Aris was notable only for another barren run in front of goal. He is now warming the subs bench at Turkish second flight side Caykur Rizespor. At 21, Adu must hope for a second wind.

## SPORTS QUIZ

Written by **Mark Connolly**,  
Sports Editor

- Who captained South Africa to glory at the 2007 Rugby World Cup?
- Who is the current manager of Serie A side, AS Roma?
- Samuel Eto'o joined an exclusive club of footballers in winning successive Champions League medals with different clubs. Before Eto'o who was the most recent player to achieve that feat?
- Who is the current Mayo senior football manager?
- Ireland defeated Pakistan in the 2007 Cricket World Cup. Which other major cricketing scalp did the Irish team take during that World Cup?
- Who was the subject of the most expensive transfer for a goalkeeper in world football history?
- In which county would you find yourself if you were watching a game from the stands of O'Connor Park?
- Kingsholm Stadium is the home of which Guinness Rugby Premiership side?
- Which Cuban did Vitali Klitschko knock out in one round to retain the WBC World Heavyweight Boxing Championship?
- Who is the current Wexford Senior Hurling manager?

ANSWERS  
1 John Smit  
2 Vicenzo Montella  
3 Gerard Pique (Man Utd 2008, Barcelona)  
4 James Horan  
5 Bangladesh  
6 Gianluigi Buffon  
7 O'Fally  
8 Gloucester  
9 Odlanier Solis  
10 Colm Bonnar

# EUROPEAN FOOTBALL: IT'S A FUNNY OLD GAME

Written by **Darren Mulryan**

An Focal brings you a lighter look at recent football developments on the continent.

## SPAIN

Whilst Barca and Los Blancos bullfight to the end, Atletico Madrid players seem to have given up and resorted to embarrassing tricks to entertain their fans. Luis Filipe dropped his shorts and seemed proud of it against Real Madrid. Sliding in to pip Mesut Ozil to the ball, the Atletico left-back managed to lose his

shorts and underwear leaving the TV cameras with more than they bargained for. In other La Liga news, Deportivo goalkeeper Dani Aranzubia scored a dramatic last minute header to salvage a point against Almeria.

The header was nodded home with the conviction of a striker and placed Aranzubia in the hall of fame as the only Spanish 'keeper to score with his head in the Primera Division.

## FRANCE

The president of a French village side has been given a three-month suspension for attempting to lodge a formal bid to sign Lionel Messi. Cédric

Enjolras, president of Ligue 2 team FC Borne, decided to table a cheeky offer for the Ballon D'Or winner as a joke.

But the last laugh was on him when the bid was intercepted by a French Football Federation official.

The killjoy refused to pass it to the Spanish FA leaving Pep Guardiola and Co unaware of the opportunity to cash-in on their top starlet. Pity, could have been a shrewd piece of business for the Catalans.

## GERMANY

It is always hard to find something entertaining in Germany. However ex-Chelsea man Michael Ballack gave us

something to smile about when he used a megaphone to lead Leverkusen fans in chants against local rivals Cologne. Unfortunately, he had to apologise for his behaviour and is now under investigation by the German Football Association (DFB)

## ITALY

There must be something in the spaghetti sauce because even our An Focal front line would have tapped in this two yard opportunity.

Cesena's Emanuele Giaccherini missed a seemingly impossible double chance in their 2-2 draw with Juventus. He was later quoted by Italian media

as saying, "I was too certain I would score". That says it all about Italian football at the moment. Close but no cigar.

## HOLLAND

What was he smoking? FC Twente defender, Douglas, has been handed a six-match ban by the Dutch Football Association (KNVB) for his conduct against AZ recently. He was shown a red card during his side's 2-1 loss after punching forward Pontus Wernbloom. Douglas then lost his cool and shoved referee Ruud Bossen away before lashing out further at Wernbloom.

## Sport

## IS KIDNEY JUST IMPROVISING?

Written by **Mark Connolly**,  
Sports Editor

'It will take more than kicking down a rotting English door to convince us of Kidney's merits to lead us to success in New Zealand'

FROM being rescued in Rome to annihilating England with a slick performance at the Aviva Stadium, will the real Ireland please stand up?

The chief problem that is plaguing the Irish team now is consistency. We performed against New Zealand in autumn and then against England in spring but offered nothing else to inspire confidence in any of the other six games over those periods. Which

Ireland will we see in the World Cup? I still don't know. In truth, I don't even know what type of game we will try to play in New Zealand and this is the essence of the problem. Declan Kidney vacillated horrendously between two out-halves who manage the game in completely different ways. At first, he seemed happy to play a running game directed by Johnny Sexton before later opting for a more controlled territory

based game with the boot of Ronan O'Gara as its fulcrum. Then he went back to Sexton for England and made a whole series of bizarre substitutions at various points in between without either having played badly at any stage. Kidney has similarly vacillated with regard to how he uses his replacements' bench. A raft of early substitutions were made against Scotland following the avalanche of media criticism that followed his failure to deploy virtually any fresh legs at appropriate times during the French encounter. This all leads me to question if the Cork man actually has philosophy or principles about how to coach this Irish team. I

think he's just improvising. This is not a good way to manage an international side six months from a World Cup and is reflected in our consistency problem.

In that World Cup, we will play Australia for the top spot in the pool (I don't think Italy will challenge us) with the loser probably facing a daunting quarter-final showdown against the mighty Springboks. So, one way or another, we'll have to beat a southern hemisphere side to make an impact at that competition.

This Six Nations has proved that European rugby has gone even further backwards in company our southern hemisphere rivals. England winning is



proof of that. Two defeats and lack of consistency in such a poor tournament leave me deeply sceptical of our chances of turning over either southern giant. It will take more than kicking down a rotting English door to convince me of Kidney's merits to lead us to success in New Zealand.

## CHAMPIONS LEAGUE RECLAIMS TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

Written by **Eoin King**

CHAMPIONS League football is back. The tie of the round will commence tomorrow as Man United travel to Chelsea. Tonight, Inter Milan take on Schalke 04 in the San Siro while Tottenham are away to Real Madrid.

Last year's winners, Inter, have improved lately after a disappointing start to their season under Rafa Benitez. However, under new boss, Leonardo, they came away with a 3-2 victory over Bayern Munich in the most exciting

game of the last round. They will line out favourites. Schalke, who have since sacked Felix Magath as their manager, have Raul in their ranks and one of the most promising goalkeepers in Europe, German international Manuel Neuer. Should he produce the same performance that he did against Valencia and Schalke get an away goal, they have every chance of progressing next week. At the Bernabeu, Spurs look for another inspirational performance

in Europe. Reaching this stage alone is a great achievement under Harry Redknapp. Like Schalke, if they could claim a draw or bag one or two away goals, anything is possible in White Hart Lane next Wednesday night. However, before last Saturday's game against Wigan, Tottenham had not won a game since their away victory against AC Milan in early February. It might be their time to bow out. Mourinho is where he wants his team, and there is

no better man to navigate a path from the quarters to a final in May. Tonight, Ronaldo should be fit. The likes of Corluka and Assou-Ekotto should finally be exposed by the quality of the Portuguese man, Ozil and the clinical passing of Alonso.

Yet most debate will linger around the all English affair at Stamford Bridge. This tie is nicely poised. Chelsea looks like a team missing a clinical striker but should Torres ignite, that may prove the difference. United will feel they only need a result tonight, so that they may settle the deal in Old Trafford. They were ultimately undone by the four-man midfield employed during the final twenty minutes here in March. Expect more caution from them tonight. They should also have the experience of Vidic and Ferdinand to anchor the defense

this time around. All arguments can be exhausted but expect next week's game to be the crucial match. Barcelona should progress against Shaktar, with all neutrals hoping for a potential El Clasico semi-final, as memories drift back to last November when Barca gave one of the most complete performances of exquisite football. The Donetsk based squad's passage to this point wasn't too demanding. They were thumped 5-1 away to Arsenal in the group stages and they will continue to concede goals away from home. It could well arise that the semi-finals are contested by the last three winners of the competition. Predictions: Barcelona, Real Madrid, Inter and Man United to progress

## LEINSTER AND ULSTER SET TO ADVANCE TO SEMI-FINALS AS HEINEKEN RESUMES

Written by **Conor McGrath**

Conor McGrath previews this weekend's Quarter Finals.

THE red hand of Ulster faces a seemingly daunting task away to English high flyers Northampton coupled with the possible loss of the inspirational Stephen Ferris. Northampton's attacking options in the form of Chris Ashton and Ben Fodenis lethal but with respect to my previous delusions, I think Ulster will win. With crucial input from players like Ruan Pienaar, Andrew Trimble and BJ Botha, they have learned to win away from home in Europe, as their impressive defeats of Bath illustrated, and nobody expects them to advance.

Irish teams have a habit of overachieving with the underdog card and with Ulster, I see no different. Northampton's weaknesses lie in their scrum and at out-half. Cut those channels, as I suspect Ulster will, and the red hands will surely leave red faces. Leinster versus Leicester has always been an intriguing confrontation. The technically brilliant aristocrats against the industrious lumberjacks

have spawned some extremely hard nosed affairs and this weekend will see no different. Leinster's scrum, back row and a midfield comprising of D'Arcy and O'Driscoll now hold no fear against the once mighty Leicester Tigers. Ireland showed England up for what they truly were at Lansdowne and considering it's the same stadium, the same foes and Sexton's unflinching desire to use his backline, Leinster's brand of rugby will be too much for those fragile mindsets.

Biarriz versus Toulouse is an encounter very similar to that of Leinster versus Leicester. Toulouse like to negotiate victory through instinctive genius and flair while Biarriz prefer to build a commanding lead for twenty minutes and then just rest on their laurels until the final whistle.

The cauldron of San Sebastian has seen great teams melt away in the Basque sun but Toulouse have too much proven quality for that. Biarriz build their points on drop goals and penalties from the ever brilliant Dimitri Yachvili. I suspect this

will not be enough to quench the white line hungry exploits of Vincent Clerc and co Toulouse destroyed Biarriz's scrum in the final last year and expect the scoreline to reflect that this weekend.

If Perpignan versus Toulon was a pay per view fight, only the player's mothers would buy it. This fixture has dour drop goal affair written all over it. Perpignan offer nothing in their back line and the obvious gameplan is built around their impressive scrum. The mercenaries of Toulon operate in much the same fashion but when you have the iconic Jonny Wilkinson kicking drop goals, with the same ease as supping pints, Perpignan will have to offer so much more. Toulon have nothing to fear, too much cohesive talent and a world class out-half whose ability to control pressure situations remains unequalled at the present time.

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# AN FOCAL

The Trampoline Was Out And So Was The Sun.  
Election Week 2011 Was Colourful.  
See It In Pictures. Pages 20 & 21.

5th April 2011



Issue 13 FREE  
Volume XIX

# PROTOBABY DELIVER IN DOLANS

Written by **Robert McNamara**

PROTOBABY are a four piece modern rock outfit based in Limerick. They've just released a new EP entitled 'State of Affairs' and the lead track is garnering much critical acclaim in the Irish music press and on the airwaves. They have been compared to everyone from Johnny Cash to Joy Division, reflecting their eclectic and expansive sound. I got the chance to sit down with lead singer Colm McGuinness and guitarist Tony Monahan before the launch of the EP at Dolan's Warehouse in Limerick. I start by suggesting State of Affairs is political commentary in song but McGuinness is having none of it. "No way, it sounds like a political song but it's actually about the state of affairs in my life", he baulks.

Stupid journalists, always trying to pigeonhole. "A lot of the songs I write are based on things that are going on

in my life. That particular song was written after I had a really bad night and I went on a bender and pissed off a lot of people." Well if the music thing doesn't work out he'll make a great politician at least.

The band's sound is difficult to describe, McGuinness possesses an unusual baritone voice that falls somewhere between Jack L and Ian Curtis. "We both have similar ideas of what the band should sound like. We listen to a lot of up to date bands like Radiohead, The National, Muse. We think of our sound almost like rock but with Colm's voice it kind of makes it a different thing", Monahan adds.

It contrasts with but compliments a cohesive rhythm section and some virtuoso lead guitar from Monahan. It works, and Protobaby's originality is currently captivating gig goes on

a nationwide tour in support of the record. "We now have to do an album but we want to do it right so we are not going to rush into it", Monahan adds. "We'll start demoing new tracks in the next few months, we'll be doing gigs, tours through the summer."

McGuinness has bigger ideas about the bands progress though. "It's the Late Late Show that will really help." This is news to me and in my naivety I ask him if they are appearing on Ireland's most recognized prime time slot. "No, but they really should help us out!" If you can catch them, make sure you do. It won't be long before their gigs are selling out. State of Affairs is available now on iTunes. [www.myspace.com/protobaby](http://www.myspace.com/protobaby). Protobaby played the Stables last Thursday.



Protobaby, who played The Stables recently.

## A DIFFERENT ANGLE

Written by **Caitríona Ní Chadhain**, **Entertainments Editor**

THE Strokes' latest album has been highly anticipated after a five year hiatus following the 2006 release of "First Impressions of Earth". The title 'Angles' was attributed to the way in which the album was written. Rather than front man Julian Casablancas steering the ship, this album is a combination of songs written by the various band members.

'Angles' draws from a lot of different styles and genres, too many some say, resulting in an overcrowded and disjointed finished product. The fact that Julian Casablancas took to sending his vocals into studio via email instead of showing up for recording says a lot about the making of this album and might explain its incohesive sound. Rather than a collaboration of musical talent the album comes across at times as a clash of five solo projects with varying interests and influences.

The album's second track 'Under Cover of Darkness' harks back to the days of "Is This It" and the more classic Strokes' sound, this could be attributed to the fact that it's one of the few songs on the album written by the band as

a whole. 'Gratification' is another favourite, Lizzy-esque guitar sounds make it one of the catchiest tunes on the album and one for blaring out the car window on a warm sunny day.

The influence of front man Julian Casablancas' solo endeavours can be heard throughout the album with a more synth-orientated 80's sound than previous Strokes' albums. Something feels amiss from "Angles" compared to what the Strokes have given us before, a something they briefly rediscover on 'Under Cover of Darkness' and in some of the other tunes but ultimately the album doesn't come together as effortlessly as their previous albums. A hint of over-production on a few of the tracks, 'You're So Right' for example, leaves it sounding too much like hard work.

The five members' alternate angles never meet in the same place for too long, resulting in an album less refined than most of The Strokes' work, but 'Angles' does deliver some quality tunes. It's a good album but not the great album it could have been given these musicians' track record.

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## Entertainment

## NOCTÚ BARES ALL

Written by **Barbara Ross**

THE University Concert hall will host the new about Irish dance play NOCTÚ on 28 April.

NOCTÚ meaning to bare or reveal all is a new departure for the genre that is Irish dancing. Choreographed and directed by Riverdance Principal Dancer Breandán de Gallaí, the show gives a new look into the world of Irish dancing.

NOCTÚ tells the story of Irish dance from the viewpoint of the dancer using movement, narrative, parody, comedy and sadness. The show pushes the boundaries of traditional Irish dance as we know it. 'Dance Off' is a new RTE television series to be broadcast this summer that follows the making of NOCTÚ. The RTE show will follow the production from auditions and boot camp to the artistic growth and rehearsals of the show. It will show the blood, sweat and tears that go into an Irish dance production.

The premier of the dance performance takes place in Lagan Valley Island

Centre, Lisburn, where emotions run high on opening night. This international search for the world's best Irish dancers comes to a climax here when thirteen competitors from Ireland, Scotland, England, Australia, Canada and Hungary take to the stage.

Through a series of acts the audience will see behind the scenes and get under the skin of those who negotiate the politics, the battles, the highs and the lows, the bliss and the agony of being an Irish dancer. They will get a once and a lifetime insight into the dedicated lives of Irish dancers and why they choose this hard path. Breandán has led performances to over 600 million people worldwide achieving stardom among live audiences. He led the Riverdance Troupe, as soloist, to open the 2003 Special Olympic World Games with a live audience of over 80,000. Breandán has been choreographing traditional dance from his youth and after studying in the Giordano school in Chicago started to add other dance influences to his creations. Audiences will have an opportunity to see his newest creation NOCTÚ live at various venues around the country from 18 April until 1 May. The show comes to the University Concert Hall on 28 April.



## I'M AN ILLEGAL ALIEN

Written by **Brige Newman**

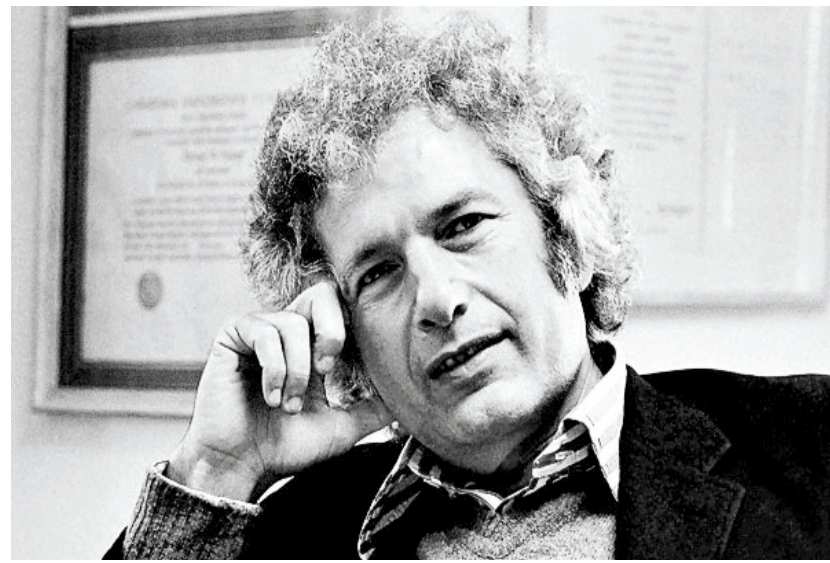
CURSING, pot smoking, nudity – does this sound like your typical alien movie? No? I didn't think so, and that's the charm behind Greg Mottola's Paul. Funny, caring and often violent, Paul does not try to fit into the stereotypical alien mould we've all come to expect.

Paul, voiced by Seth Rogen, is an alien on the run from the US Government. After living on earth for over 60 years he has outlived his usefulness to the agents of Area 51 and he is in a mad race for his life. On the way he runs into two British nerds played by Nick Frost and Simon Pegg. The three race through Americas alien hotspots and

encounter many mishaps along the way, including three government officials, a partially blind girl, a crazed creationist and two hillbilly's out for blood.

As good a movie as it is, Paul doesn't live up to Pegg or Simon's last movies, Hot Fuzz or Shaun of the Dead. The British humour that set these movies apart from other films isn't alive in Paul, which is more concerned with fitting into an American box office. Mottola has tipped his cap to some quirky comedies in the past; Superbad, Adventureland, and several comedic television series. Pegg and Simon are very convincing nerds, a giant shift

from their characters in Hot Fuzz. The dynamics and chemistry between the two has been proven time and time again on the screen, and is heightened here as they wrote the film. Seth Rogen seemed to draw on his Pineapple Express co-star, James Franco, for the foul mouthed alien Paul. He managed to inject sincerity into a character that could have come off as false and contrived. At the end of the day Paul was a good movie, but it lacked a certain je ne sais quoi; that extra 'oomph' that would have left the audience rolling in the aisles.



## A GOLDEN OLDIE

Written by **Róisín Burke**

*"I'm afraid"*  
*"That's nothing to be ashamed of,"*  
 Major Major counselled him kindly,  
*"We are all afraid"*  
*"I'm not ashamed"* Yossarian said.  
*"I'm just afraid"*.

Described by The New York times as "Wildly Original", "Brutally gruesome" and "Vulgarily, bitterly, savagely funny", Catch 22 has secured its name as one of the great literary works of the 20th Century.

Joseph Heller's fictional classic is based on hilarious no-win situations, otherwise known as a 'catch 22'. The main character Yossarian is unforgettable for his defiant attempt to 'avoid death or die trying.'

Set on the island of Pianosa, off the west of Italy, Yossarian is a US army air forces B-25 Bombarber in the fictional 256th Squadron. He is a self-proclaimed coward and wants nothing more than to

leave WW2. Yet he is constantly shot down by a catch 22.

Yossarian tries to leave the army on the grounds of insanity, but army policy states only an insane person would stay at war, thus stating the desire to leave war qualifies him as sane. In this way an insane person can never leave the war and neither can someone who is sane.

The story is wonderfully glossed with weird and eccentric characters such as Milo the entrepreneur, Major Major and the one and only dead man living in Yossarian's tent.

The plot flits between various chronology and character narratives, but never strays from its golden element of contradictory circular knowledge.

It is a tale does not need to be read as much as experienced.

Yossarian lives!



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#### PhD Scholarships

Based on applications received by **30th June**, up to three graduate tutor scholarships of €15,000 p.a. will be offered to support full-time PhD studies. See: [www.ucc.ie/law/postgrad/schol\\_fund/](http://www.ucc.ie/law/postgrad/schol_fund/)

A scholarship of €7,500 sponsored by **Ronan Daly Jermyn Solicitors** is available to support a research LLM in the business law field. See: [www.ucc.ie/law/postgrad/schol\\_fund/RDJScholarship/](http://www.ucc.ie/law/postgrad/schol_fund/RDJScholarship/)

For further information see [www.ucc.ie/law/postgrad/](http://www.ucc.ie/law/postgrad/) or contact Veronica at [v.calnan@ucc.ie](mailto:v.calnan@ucc.ie)



In Focus



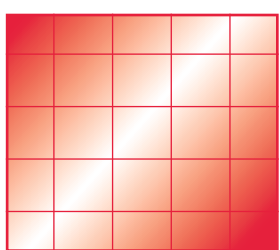
In Focus



# Elections 2011, In Focus

A sunny, March week saw more than 3,800 of you vote in your Students' Union Elections. There were sweets and leaflets, colours and smiles. Here are some of those moments. Images by Des Foley and Finn McDuffie.





# The Grid

Exclusive communication for Clubs and Societies.

Attention C&S PROs! Send content for The Grid to [cseitor@live.ie](mailto:cseitor@live.ie) only before Friday, 8 April 2011 to benefit from your space in the final issue of An Focal this academic year.

Clubs	<b>Basketball</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registercs.ul.ie">registercs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Karate Shotokan</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registercs.ul.ie">registercs.ul.ie</a> .	Societies	<b>History</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registercs.ul.ie">registercs.ul.ie</a> .
<b>American Football</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registercs.ul.ie">registercs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Chess</b> Meetings 6 to 8pm, Mondays at EG-010, Thursdays at SU Room 3. Pop in if you're interested. All skill levels welcome. We provide coaching for beginners or intermediate players.	<b>Krav Maga</b> Training on Mondays from 6:30-8.15pm in the PESS Hall, and on Wednesdays from 7-9pm in PESS Building gym.	<b>Anime and Manga</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registercs.ul.ie">registercs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Law</b> See C&S features page 23 for news.
<b>Archery</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registercs.ul.ie">registercs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Dance UL</b> Dance classes running in Dromroe Village Hall on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays as usual this week. For more details, check out our Facebook page or <a href="http://www.danceul.com">www.danceul.com</a>	<b>Ladies Hockey</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registercs.ul.ie">registercs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Drama Stage Fighting Workshop</b> with Ciarda Tobin 6 April 7:30 to 9:30pm in Dromroe Village Hall. Don't forget our Spring Show, Don't Tell Mama, 12 to 13 April, Jonathan Swift (B1023). Tickets €4.	<b>Music</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registercs.ul.ie">registercs.ul.ie</a> .
<b>Athletics</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registercs.ul.ie">registercs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Fencing</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registercs.ul.ie">registercs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Outdoor Pursuits (OPC)</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registercs.ul.ie">registercs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Enterprise &amp; Finance</b> No submissions received. Visit <a href="http://registercs.ul.ie">registercs.ul.ie</a> .	<b>Poker</b> Tournaments Mondays in the sports bar. Check the UL Poker Soc Facebook page for more details.
<b>Badminton</b> Thanks to all members and friends who attended the quiz night on 24 March. Special thanks to the Sports Bar and all local businesses that sponsored prizes (see website for details)	<b>Handball</b> UL One Wall Handball Tournament takes place on the 2 April in the PESS building and Ballynanty. Entry €15. Open to all players. Entry forms at <a href="http://gaahandball.ie">gaahandball.ie</a> .	<b>Pool &amp; Darts</b> Pool sessions every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9:45pm to 10:45pm.	<b>Games Board Game Night:</b> Every Monday, from 6pm to 11pm. GSoc members only. Console Day, Wednesdays from 11am to 6pm. Open to all students. €4 to join.	<b>ULTV</b> Thanks from ULSU for your excellent, speedy and professional coverage of the Elections Hustings 2011. You really helped bring the event to a wider audience.



## Taste of Freedom

Growing Alternatives to the Food Crisis

Latin America Week 2011

**FRIDAY, April 1<sup>st</sup> 9pm, Stables Club**  
 SALSA party with the International Society. Proceeds towards building a community centre for sugar cane cutters in Pradera, Colombia

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6<sup>th</sup> 1pm-2pm MC2005. Guest speakers**  
**RICHARD INTRIAGO (Ecuador):** Making Food Sovereignty a Constitutional right  
**CARLOS GOUVEIA (Brazil):** Brazilian landless movements efforts to implement Food Sovereignty

**4th-8<sup>th</sup> April, LRA, Languages Building**  
**11th-15<sup>th</sup> April, Limerick City Library**  
 EXHIBITION: *Understanding Latin America* by 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> year students of Spanish



**LATIN WEST**  
 (Latin America Solidarity Group in the West of Ireland)

Find us in

**uSpeak**  
we Listen

Your opinion  
Your student experience

**UL Student Exit Survey**

All final year students

Complete it now  
Check your UL email

Questions?  
Email: [exitsurvey@ul.ie](mailto:exitsurvey@ul.ie)

## LAW SOCIETY RAISES €1100 FOR MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY IRELAND

Written by **Diarmaid Harnett,**  
**Law Society PRO**

ON 14 and 15 February Diarmaid Harnett (PRO) and more than 20 members of the Law Society volunteered their time in order to raise money for a fantastic organization, MDI.

Muscular Dystrophy is the collective name for a range of neuromuscular conditions, which are characterized by the progressive weakening and wasting of the muscles. Muscular Dystrophy Ireland (MDI) is a voluntary organization, which was established in

1972 by a small group of people in the west of Ireland to support families of those with muscular dystrophy. Since then it has grown considerably and it now has a membership of over 560 members and a network of branches throughout Ireland. MDI's primary objective is to provide support to persons affected by Muscular Dystrophy and their families through the provision of a range of support service such as counselling, family support, respite

care, youth activities, independent living and training opportunities and many more.

The response of the students was incredible: more than 600 individual Lily O'Brien's chocolates were sold to help fund MDI services and the research that they carry out. Many people gave far above what was asked as they were aware of the tremendous work that the MDI organisation does.



From Left to Right: Diarmuid Harnett, Anna Maria Murphy, Briana Kelly, Emer Cremin, Jason Slattery, Liam Walsh, Steph Apsel (MDI Representative), Lorna McLellan, Adam Moursy. Image Finn McDuffie.

## DO TELL MAMA AND YOUR FRIENDS...PLEASE?

Written by **Conor Gibbons,**  
**Drama Society PRO**

HARK, hello! Drama Soc is asking YOU (dramatically, of course) to come and see our spring show, Don't Tell Mama on the 12 and 13 April (Tuesday and Wednesday of Week 12). It will be a night you won't forget, a night of taboo theatre, scintillating performances and laugh out loud moments. Don't Tell Mama is a variety showcase of both musicals and drama, all featuring the theme of taboo. And best of all in these recessionary times, tickets are only €4. It will have some well-known greats from musicals like Chicago and Rent, while showcasing some of the darker sides of theatre and

literature like American Psycho and Crimes of the Heart. Not to mention the twisted humour of Sweeney Todd and much, much more... The show will take place in the Jonathan Swift Theatre (B1023) and will begin at 7pm. Please come along, it will be a great show! After all, who doesn't like a bit of taboo before bed? To find out more on this event and keep up to date, like us on Facebook at UL Drama Society or e-mail info@uldrama.ie.

## DAY OF RECKONING AWAITS UL ATHLETES

Written by **Liam Feely, Acting PRO**

IT'S only two weeks away from the most important competition in Irish intersarsity athletics, the annual IUAA championships to be hosted by Queens University Belfast on 29 and 30 April. This event marks a pivotal point in the future development of athletics in the University of Limerick as they attempt to dethrone the aptly named DCU Dragons and return to their rightful place as the premier academy in Irish varsity athletics. Between 1993-2005 the UL Athletics Club won an incredible ten intersarsity championships. For those of you with dodgy maths skills that's ten wins in thirteen years. On the other three occasions UCD rather fortuitously defeated an injury-ravaged UL by the narrowest of margins. It is a feat that until recent years has looked beyond any other team in Irish athletics. However, since 2005 a new era has dawned with

the DCU coming out from behind the shadows of their more illustrious rivals. This somewhat overnight success is in part due to the magnificent work they have undertaken in reconstructing their academy. No doubt they have been inspired by their enigmatic director Enda Fitzpatrick, a notable miler back in his heyday. The vast resources available coupled with a highly successful scholarship programme has provided an outlet for Ireland's finest young athletes to stay in Ireland rather than move to the NCAA system in America. It may indeed prove a step too far this year for UL to overcome this bloodcurdling dragon that feeds off its frailer opponents yet UL have one major advantage, pedigree. To this day all commentators among Irish athletics argue that there is only one team that can slay the DCU Dragons. We shall match fire with fire in Belfast.

## UL NEEDS BOXING

Written by **Peter Tully**  
**and James McDowell**

IN UL we have a number of established clubs and societies ranging from fencing to football, but it's surprising we don't have a club for Ireland's most successful Olympic sport, boxing.

We are currently establishing a boxing club for students, novices and experienced boxers alike. If you would like to learn how to box, keep fit or if you want to compete for UL in Ireland's most successful amateur sport then this club is for you. We have a coach who has trained both pros and amateurs for over 15 years. At the moment we have permission for training in the PESS gym and to get funding for equipment for the club but we need members. So if anyone is interested in joining please contact James at 10118764@studentmail.ul.ie or contact Peter at 10130799@studentmail.ul.ie.

## KAYAKERS HIT SLIGO AND STORM FREESTYLE COMPETITION

Written by **ULKC PRO**

ON 11 March, the UL Kayak Club packed up their gear and hit the road to Sligo. The annual surf trip proved to be just as exciting this time around.

Not only did the Freshers get their second taste of kayak surfing but some of our more experienced paddlers sat their level four assessment. Preparations for the annual Alps trip are well underway

and having these qualifications will certainly come in handy when paddling down the extreme white water of Italy.

Congratulations to Michael Shaw, Conor Bredin and Dave O' Sullivan who all competed in a freestyle event last week.

Well done to Dave and Conor who came second and third in senior men's

and also to Mike who placed first in senior men's sport. The event took place in Gowar on the wave feature beside King John's Castle. It was great training for the club members who competed and a big achievement for doing as well as they did.



Dave O'Sullivan

## DEVSOC RAISES OVER €500 FOR PAKISTAN

Written by **Lina Mickel,**  
**Development Society PRO**

THREE weeks ago, the Development Society successfully hosted its fundraising concert 'Playing for Pakistan' for the flood victims from July 2010. Although forgotten by the media and out of public eye, Pakistan's people are still struggling to live a normal life as they returned to destroyed homes and have to rebuild their houses.

DevSoc collaborated with Concern to support its Pakistan Flood Appeal. Around 120 altruistic people found their way to The Stables for a great line-up: Starting off with mellow guitar sounds and strong voices, Fat Baby Panda from the Music Society set an relaxed atmosphere for the night. Later on, the dynamic and alternative electrosounds of Fighting Spiders from Waterford brought everyone on the dancefloor.

Apart from the performances, a raffle with exclusive spot prizes such as concert tickets, a book voucher and Fairtrade products brought even more smiles. All guests were assured to have an enjoyable night. The Development Society was proud to achieve such a good turnout and reached a total

outcome of €582 including €50 generously given by the Cumann Gaelach. Further acknowledgements go to the Music Society and especially Marty for his helpful support, to Fat Baby Panda for a great performance, to the DJ Society, to Fighting Spiders for terrific entertainment and also to the Stables' team which assisted our event.

In other news, DevSoc recently visited the Human Rights Centre at Queens University, Belfast. Thanks must go to Chair Louise Power and committee for their dedication. DevSoc will be a UL experience we'll never forget.

"Pakistan's people are still struggling to live a normal life."

# THREE VARSITIES IN A ROW FOR SAILING CLUB

Written by **Lauren Joslin, ULSC PRO**

"The fact that this was UL's third win made victory all the sweeter especially for final year students on the UL team."

UL SAILING club has been crowned Intersvarsity Champions for the third year running.

The Varsities, hosted by UCD, mark the end of the Irish university sailing season and UL certainly went out with a bang. Endless hours of preparation and training finally paid off for the two teams who travelled to Mullaghmore, Co. Sligo on 9 March for the biggest college sailing event of the year. UL, Conor Martin, Maddie O'Connell, Pa Hegarty, Elspeth Keating, Billy Clarke and Rachel Cronin, secured their third consecutive Varsity title. UL1 faced opposition from colleges such as Trinity, UCC and UCD on defeating UCD2 in the semi-finals they progressed to face UCD1 in the finals of the Gold Fleet.

The racing was close but UL synched it giving rise to much celebration. The best of five final was tense from the beginning.

UL won the first two races comfortably, but UCD fought hard winning the next two races. It all came down to the final race, and what a spectacle it was with UL clinching it on the finish line.

The fact that this was UL's third win made victory all the sweeter especially for final year students on the UL team. UL2, comprising of Peadar O'Sullivan, Ross Murray, Catherine Finn, Cian Gallagher, Shane Newman and Lauren Joslin had a successful weekend finishing third in Silver Fleet. They progressed having beaten NUIG and losing only to UCC at the final mark.

UL won their first ever varsities in 2009, and has become the only club with the exception of Trinity to have secured a triple win in the history of the competition. For now, UL students are the Irish champions.

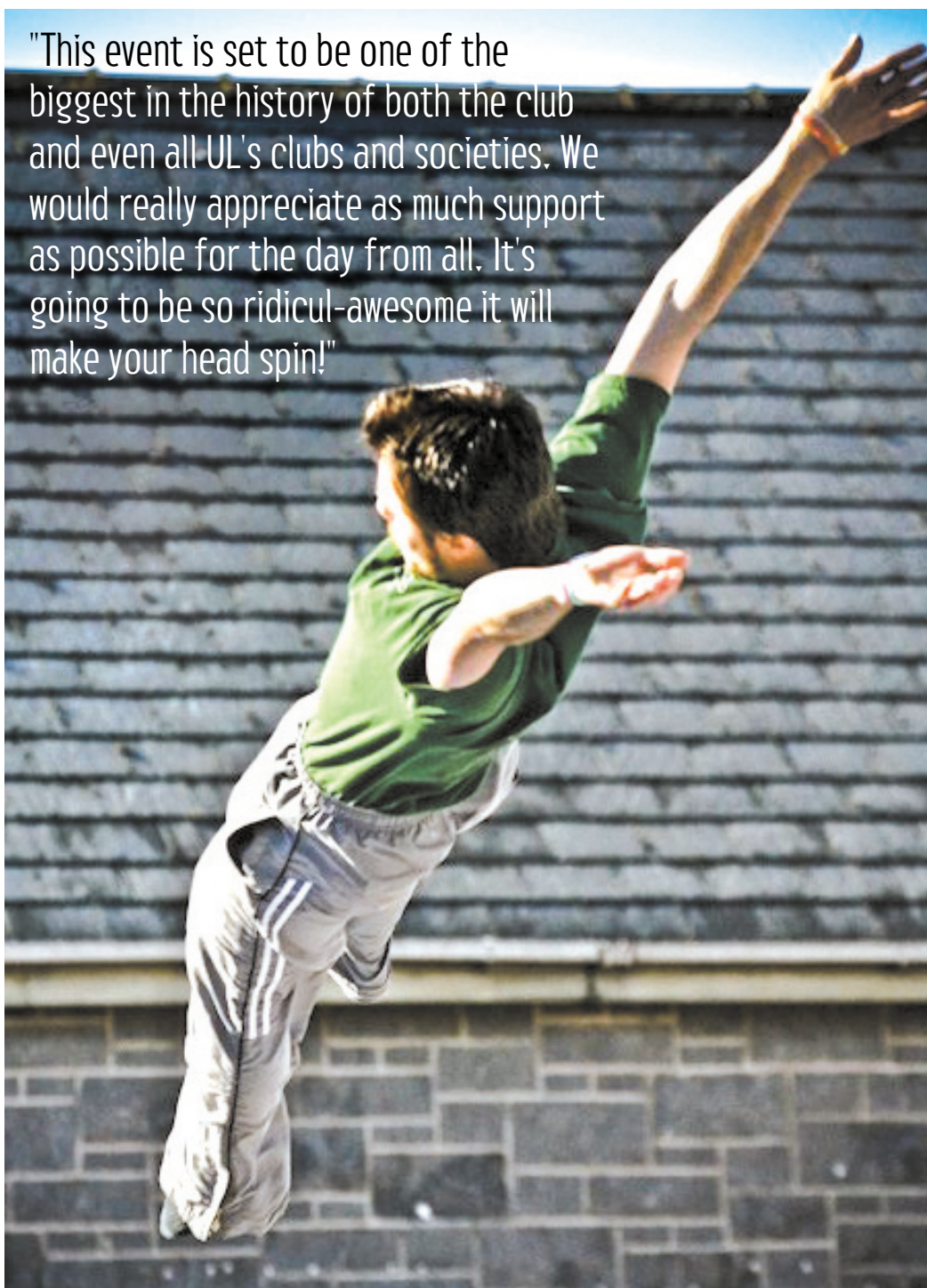
UL has also become the first ever Irish team to be invited to the British Intersvarsities which takes place in Week 11. Congratulations to everyone involved, and thank you to everyone who made this win possible from Paul and Liz in the SU to Billy Clarke who has handed over his role as captain after a very successful year.

"The racing was close but UL synched it giving rise to much celebration."



Above: Pa Hegarty, Billy Clarkem Conor Martin, Elspeth Keating, Rachel Cronin and Maddie O'Connell.

"This event is set to be one of the biggest in the history of both the club and even all UL's clubs and societies. We would really appreciate as much support as possible for the day from all. It's going to be so ridicul-awesome it will make your head spin!"



Fiachra in the SU Courtyard

# BIG BOUNCE 2011: BEDS, TRAMPS AND 24 HOURS

Written by **Natalie McSharry, Co-Captain UL Trampoline and Gymnastics Club**

UL Trampoline and Gymnastics Club in conjunction with Delta Soccer Dome, will host a Record Attempt to complete the highest number of somersaults on a trampoline in 24 hours.

The weekend 8 to 9 April is set for the arrival of gymnasts from all over Ireland and the UK to the city of Limerick, European City of Sport 2011, for a massive display of athleticism and fun.

In that 24 hours we intend to set a world record for the most 360 rotations, forward or back, with some of the national and international Elite attendees adding some pretty exceptional flare. The event is run in conjunction with the Delta

Soccer Dome whom is providing the venue in Ballysimon for the day. As well as this we have many local businesses providing sponsorship and food.

From 5pm on Friday, the DJ society will provide entertainment. We will also have support from ULTV who will record the entire event in order to legitimise our attempt! From 3pm Saturday with there will be a fun-packed two hours with air tracks, raffles, clowns, demos,

music and a great atmosphere. A promotional outdoor bounce will be held in Limerick city centre the weekend before to raise awareness and funds for the massive event. This event is set to be one of the biggest in the history of both the club and even all UL's clubs and societies. We would really appreciate as much support as possible for the day from all. It's going to be so ridicul-awesome it will make your head spin!

The Big Bounce is a Charity event with proceeds going to Milford hospice. Follow us on Twitter, find us on Facebook or just Google us for more details.



Ciaran McNerney in SU Courtyard

