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## DIT Independent , 1st.-31st. of December, 2009

DIT:Students Union

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December 2009

# DIT News

Your independent student newspaper

## News

### The Budget explained!

Plus: We speak to Wikipedia co-founder Jimmy Wales, Minister John Gormley about global warming and Joe Higgins talks socialism



## Dent

We talk to chartoppers **JBS** and cheeky jock **Chris Evans**



## Sport

We look back on a great year in Irish sport and give you the latest from DIT sports clubs



# Student grant cut by five pc

Cliona Ward, Editor

Last week Minister for Finance, Brian Lenihan, introduced a controversial budget which outlines measures to cut costs in all sectors of Irish society, and notably in Education. The Budget outlined by Minister Lenihan is aimed at reducing exchequer spending by over €4 billion next year.

The largest contributor to this €4 billion saving is in the Department of Social and Family affairs, followed by Health, with the third largest contributor being within the Education sector. The government has outlined its plan to spend €134 million less on education and science next year, which includes plans for a €50million cut on staffing and changes to the teacher support services hoping to yield a further €7 million.

The greatest change which will affect students is the new criteria surrounding the student maintenance grant. Students in receipt of a grant will see a five percent cut in the amount they will be given, while those on the 'Back to Education Allowance' will no longer qualify to receive the maintenance grant. Similarly, students in PCL courses who receive a Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme allowance will also not be entitled to a maintenance grant. The changes will apply from next month to all new grant holders.

Minister for Education, Batt O'Keeffe, released a statement which explained that the reduction in the grant amount is in line with the drop in the cost of living, however, figures released recently by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) showed that the cost of education has risen by 11.6% in the year to October 2009.

Students who are in receipt of a maintenance grant are means tested to assert that they are in a position where they will struggle to continue their education without financial support. The 5% cut in the grant amount will affect some of the

most financially vulnerable students.

Speaking out against the cuts was President of the Union of Students of Ireland (USI) Peter Mannion who released a statement saying:

"These new student grant restrictions will seriously decrease the potential for thousands of students around Ireland to make the leap into Further and Higher Education... It will be impossible to tempt the unemployed back to education if financially it becomes unbearable to continue with further or higher education"

Other areas where students have been affected are in the controversial social welfare cuts. Students who leave college next year and are under the age of 25 will no longer be entitled to the full social welfare payment. As unemployment levels continue to soar many graduates will be forced to sign onto the live register to survive but will not receive the same amount as those over the age of 25.

For new social welfare applicants, the rate of jobseekers benefit and supplementary welfare allowance for those aged 20 and 21 with no dependent children is being reduced to €100 per week while those aged between 22 and 24 years will see allowances fall to €150 per week.

CSO figures show that youth unemployment has jumped by 51,126 in the last two years. In November 2007 some 32,236 people under the age of 25 were on the live register and by November 2009 this had increased to 83,362, an increase of 158.6%.

Opposition parties have criticised the Budget for its position on young people and students. Fine Gael Innovation



Bam Soc member Craig Reynolds shows off the SVP giving tree, Shireen Shortt

Spokeswoman Deirdre Clune TD described it as an invitation to emigrate for young people.

"Budget 2010 will encourage the export of our young people. The Government is ignoring youth unemployment, making little or no effort to stimulate job creation, while slashing jobseeker's payments to those aged under 25. Its message to young people is clear: leave Ire-

land. If you want a future, go abroad."

Meanwhile Labour Party Spokesperson on Agriculture and Food, Seán Sherlock has said that "in the absence of any clear coherent policy on job creation, this current Government has effectively told the young people of Ireland that they are a burden on this State and are better off getting a flight to anywhere but here."

## DIT staff may strike again

Cliona Ward, Editor

Unions are warning of an 'indefinite strike' in protest at the cuts to the public sector pay in last week's Budget. Such action could see the staff of DIT picketing once again, along with many other public sector workers, drastically reducing student's lecture hours.

Talks held between unions and Government broke down a fortnight ago, before a public sector pay bill could be agreed, leaving unions furious with the decision to apply pay cuts of up to 15% to public sector workers in the Budget.

SIPTU President Jack O'Connor announced last Thursday that members of his union were willing to strike again to reverse the 'cruel' cuts.

"I think the depth of anger is such that there are people who would certainly

expect that we would name a day, probably some day in February... and people would stop on that day and we would stay stopped until there was a resolution" he told Today FM's Matt Cooper.

If the strikes go ahead as planned, the effect on students could be severe as the proposed industrial action comes at a time when most students return to college for their second term.

DIT students have already suffered a drastic cut in their hours and lab times this academic year as a result of the HEA imposed staffing embargo which left many disciplines without lab technicians and students unable to attend classes.

For many students in DIT, another strike could cost them the chance of gaining enough academic credits to pass their degrees.



## A word from the Editor...



From the bottom of my heart I wish you all a very happy Christmas and (fingers crossed) a prosperous new year. This year has been a tough one, we've had to deal with gym closures, losing out on college hours to budget cuts and industrial action, and the weather's not been too nice to boot!

But I think there's a maniacal sense of hope in the air. Everything is so uncertain, it's chaotic, and chaos is secretly thrilling and I think we can hope that maybe something great is around the corner because we're getting enough of the bad stuff.

This issue of DIT News is a good 'un. We're chocked full of information on the Budget and the strikes, but we've also some nice updates on what's been happening on campus!

What's more we've a few nice interviews for you from the co-founder of Wikipedia to the Minister for the Environment there isn't a dull page.

We've also updated our look so be sure to let us know what you think! As this is the last issue of the year, we won't be back until February.

If you need to get a DIT News or DEnt fix keep an eye out on [www.ditnewsoc.ie](http://www.ditnewsoc.ie) as we get our website up and running.

In the meantime, have a great holiday and we'll see you in the new year!

*Cliona Ward*

## Meet the team...

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**Clarifications:**

In the November issue of DIT News a travel article entitled 'Blackrock to Bangkok' was incorrectly attributed to Andrew Purfield. The article was in fact written by Genevieve Brennan. We wish to clarify this error and regret any inconvenience caused.

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Madam,

I am writing to you regarding an opinion piece titled "Students a no-show at mass protest" last issue. We in the Students' Union welcome all opinions - as a matter of fact I think more students should be writing about us.

We did not support the day of action in the manor suggested because we represent students. I as President represent all students in DIT regardless of how big or small the issue. Students of DIT pay our wages. Yes there are issues with regards to the current economic climate but getting students on the streets to stand by those in the public sector I felt, would not have done us any favours. The day of action still went ahead without us and regardless of whether we were there or not would have achieved the same amount as it already has.

I ask you to remember that in these challenging times it is those in the public sector that we are trying to convince to open our pool and sports hall. Classes have been cancelled and major disruption has occurred since the start of September. I will also state that the Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI), who is a member of Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), refuses to acknowledge the rights of students to give feedback on their education. It can be easily forgotten that these trade unions are contributing to making student life in DIT a lot harder than it has to be. Please remember that these protests and strikes, (which are due to continue) closed the doors of our Institute when we as students wanted to learn and come to class. Don't get me wrong - they have every right to do so but it is students that are losing out all the time. It seems counterproductive that we would go out and support such action.

Would students getting out on the street and participating with this protest bring down the cost of the current capitation fee? Would it have opened our pools and given us more facilities? The simple answer is no, it would not have achieved anything for the better of the student body in DIT.

We are students working on behalf of students, working in your best interest! We held protests in the first semester as follows; Silent Protest with Sean Haughey in

Bolton Street, a very successful Flash Mob at the Department of Finance, Campaigning on RTE News at six and RTE News at nine on the 27th of October and on Drive Time Radio with Marian Finucane stating issues with regards to the cut backs. Myself, Jen and Sean are due to meet with Tom Boland the CEO of the Higher Education Authority on Friday the 11th of December to work through a resolution on these cut backs effecting DIT students.

Tracey Flinter,  
DITSU President

Dear Madam,

Recently, we have been struck with a killer bug that is plaguing our society, it is as simple as that. Now I will be brief and to the point in this article. Why is our college not doing enough to combat Swine Flu? Now I can only speak for Kevin and Aungier street when I say this, but why on earth are there no anti-flu soap dispensers in the toilets and in the kitchens? Why have we not got a big awareness campaign going on?

So far, all I have seen is a few dispensers in the libraries and at some entrances. This is beyond belief. We're talking about a public health hazard and all we have seen is a few leaflets saying 'hey you, that guy, use a tissue and stop picking your nose!', the minimal dispenser amount, and of course the baby wipes!

Gordon Bennett, I am not trying to state the obvious but we need to shell out more effort for the anti-swine flu campaign! What is happening? Are all colleges the same?! Is there no money being spent on this, or is there any at all? Is the college even bothered? What about other colleges? I can't help but think that maybe we are not the only ones so unprepared. One thing is for sure, if things keep on the way they are with very little being done, more students will be struck down. I hate to be the pessimist, but these are valid points which the college should solve immediately or as soon as possible.

Andrew Purfield  
1st year, Business & French

## That time of the month!

Brought to you by Fionnuala Holohan

**It was a good month for:**

Rugby: Ireland wins against South Africa

Commuters: DART northern line back on track AND new Luas line to The Point opens

Bright city nights: christmas lights switch on, and this time we're just looking

Women: Maire makes EU Commissioner for Research and Innovation

Mick Lit: Colum McCann wins US National Book Award with Let the Great World Spin

NI economy: strike days and christmas shopping

Climate: Copenhagen global conference starts

**And a bad month for:**

Ginger Steven: Fired by Bill right at the end... how embarrassing!

Liam Clancy: the whistling gypsy passes over

Goodwill to all: 'unfriend' enters dictionary

Gillette: are Tiger and Thierry really 'the best a man can get'?

Flood coverage: journalists, journalists everywhere

Loafers: The Oprah Winfrey show ends 2010

X-Factor: John and...er....gone and soon forgotten

Catholic Church: they all came tumbling down

It is the policy of DIT News to correct any inaccuracies as soon as they occur. Any corrections or clarifications will be printed in the next edition of the newspaper. It is also the policy of DIT News to offer the right of reply to any person who feels aggrieved by any comment or opinion contained within. Please forward any such comments to the Editor.

# Students lose hours over strike

Cliona Ward, Editor

Last month thousands of students found themselves locked out of college as the hundreds of DIT staff took part in a nation wide public sector strike.

Lectures and labs were called off on November 24th as the staff joined almost a quarter of a million public sector workers protesting against proposals to reduce salaries in the public sector.

Students were denied access to library facilities, catering services, computer labs and administrative services as almost all campuses shut down as part of the industrial action. The Bolton St and Aungier St buildings were opened for a limited number of hours, though no academic facilities were available.

Director of Academic Affairs, Dr Frank McMahon, explained "all unions have served strike notice on organisations in the public sector, including in higher education... the

strike will affect the ability of organisations to provide their services during the 24 hour period. In DIT, the services affected will include all forms of teaching; access to the library and computer rooms; and many administrative and support services."

Lecturers and staff of DIT spent the day picketing outside each of the campuses of DIT, most of them taking shifts, while others spent the entire day in the miserable weather conditions protesting.

Senator for Dublin University Ivana Bacik expressed her support for academic strike by refusing to cross the picket line to Leinster House "on principle, and out of solidarity".

Lecturers who spoke to DIT News at the Rathmines campus explained that the industrial action was not just about their pay. "We're not just doing this for ourselves" said the staff member who did not want to be named, "if



DIT staff picket outside the locked gates of the Rathmines Campus, Cliona Ward

we don't make a stand today then it's just going to get worse, we've already had massive cuts in college and until we tell them we've had enough it'll just get worse".

Peter Mannion, President of the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) shared a similar opinion and "urged students to join the strikes organised around the country". He says the cuts are "a further stifle to the recovery of the economy".

"The USI represents 250,000 students nationwide. Our students will be tomorrow's graduates and any changes in pay or working conditions in the

public sector will directly affect them in years to come", says Mannion. According to the USI, a slash of the public sector wage bill by €1.3 billion "will only lead to further unrest among the teachers of Ireland".

Though the USI actively endorsed the public sector strike the DIT Student's Union (SU) did not publically support the day of action. In a letter to DIT News SU President Tracey Flinter defended DITSU's position on the public sector strike stating, "the day of action still went ahead without us and regardless of whether we were there or not would have achieved the same amount as it already has".

## USI defend contested support for ICTU strikes

Graham Ó Maonaigh, Layout Editor

Last Governing Council of DITSU held on 8th December in Aungier st was attended by USI President Peter Mannion and USI Deputy President Dan O'Neill.

Both were requested to attend by DITSU to answer questions from the Governing Councillors as to why USI issued a press release in support of the ICTU One-day Strike of Public Sector Workers on the 24th of November.

Peter Mannion took to the podium with the simple address of "You invited me here for Questions, What are they?"

The Chair of Governing Council then opened the floor to questions from those in attendance. Graham Hayes, Tracy Flinter and Paul Keegan all questioned whether or not USI had a concrete

mandate to support the ICTU One Day of Action.

In defence, Peter pointed to two motions passed at previous USI National Congresses and how "working with them [the unions] has yielded benefits and constructive changes.... And the TUI support for USI against Fees"

Ciaran Nevin of Bolton Street had the harshest words for the USI Deputy President, Dan O'Neill. Mr Nevin alluded to similarities between Labour Youth National Conference motions and the Press Release which Dan had issued as USI Deputy President which questioned the motives behind USI's support for the ICTU One Day Action. Ciaran also highlighted how almost 200,000 Student Hours were lost due to the ICTU One Day strike in DIT.

Dan O'Neill, USI Deputy President replied near the end of the time allotted for the debate and stated "he was elected to make decisions for the betterment of students".

Soon after the USI representatives left promising to return another day to report to Governing Councillors and DITSU in the future prior to USI National Conference.

## DIT student wins global photo comp

Cliona Ward, Editor

DIT Visual Communication student, Hazel Coonagh, has named the winner of the Metro Global Photograph Competition.

Hazel's photo was chosen out of over 130,000 submissions in three categories in what is the world's biggest online photo competition.

Hazel's winning photo depicted an elderly man sheltering from the harsh winter snow in Dublin.

In addition, she will be mentored by Irish photographer Paul Kelly, and will be invited to the Fotografia festival in Rome, which is curated by Marco Delogue. Mr Kelly said of Hazel's photo "[she] has done very well in presenting a strong thoughtful portrait within a captivating, dark setting."

Speaking to Metro, Hazel described

how she took the photo from the bus. "I was coming home from Clondalkin on a January morning, and it had started to snow..."

I sat down the back and was looking through my camera at some of the shots I had taken, and just started taking pictures out the window..... We came along the quays and stopped i

n a bit of traffic and I just saw this gentleman waiting for his bus as it was snowing, with the "No future" poster beside him.... How could I not take it?"

Hazel, who is in the final year of her degree programme, wins a prize that includes top of the range photographic equipment, as well as a trip for two to any one of 100 cities.



Image from Pix.ie/hazel - all-rights-reserved

# Jugglers wow at Kerry fête

Cecily Weeks, Bolton St

Last month the Tralee Circus Festival welcomed a bus full of enthusiastic DIT circus and juggling society members.

The main event opened early on Friday night which saw all the jugglers from Cork, Galway, Belfast, Dublin and even a few local people from Tralee gather together. After a fantastic night of African drumming and dancing, the tired but excited crowd made their way to bed to prepare for a full day of fun.

Saturday's event began with some excellent workshops, which included Contact Juggling, 2 club scissor patterns, devil stick and intermediate diabolo. A public show was held on Saturday night in the Siamsa Tire theatre which was outstanding and had all the crowd thoroughly entertained and laughing for

its entire duration, with acts such as Tumble Circus, Fidget Feet, and Craiceann.

The night was packed with further shows and activities and even a fire show in the hotel car park!

There was a special new show from tumble circus called 'Nouvelle Carny Part 3' which thrilled DIT's jugglers. The show was excellent and saw some amazing acro-balance, hula hoop and comic performances. The night was capped off with the 'Renegade show'; an unrehearsed show where the audience is requested to come up on stage and show off their juggling skills or even tell a few jokes! This show saw performance from our own Brian



The DIT Circus and Juggling club at the Circus festival in Tralee, Cecily Quentin Weeks

O'Connell on the Unicycle and Cecily Quentin Weeks with some diabolo.

The final morning saw our DIT jugglers head to the juggling hall for some workshops. There were some excellent things on offer which included a hand stand workshop taught by professional acrobat Hillas Smith. The day finished off with Juggling games, such as unicycle gladiators, 5 ball endurance, club balancing, and 3ball Simon says.

DIT did well winning the 3 person juggling wheel barrow race and Brian winning the 5 club endurance.

With the bus waiting outside there was just time for the final toss, where all the jugglers throw their equipment in the air, before everyone piled less enthusiastically back onto the bus for a much calmer and seemingly longer trip back to Dublin.

## Media talk hosted at DIT

Fionnuala Holohan, News Editor

The Women In Media talk last month was a lively affair and there were no shortage of pointed and practical questions.

Final year students Elaine Loughlin and Ian Carney introduced the topic and the speakers and then we had question time, which proved refreshingly lively.

The speakers were Katie Hannon, who works as a journalist on RTE's Prime Time; Alison O'Connor, a journalist, author, commentator, currently writing in the Sunday Business Post and Sharon Tobin, a broadcast journalist who recently moved from TV3 to RTE.

Katie spoke first and recalled being advised by her career guidance teacher that she would make a beautiful primary school teacher. She kept her head, however, and completed the then two-year certificate course in DIT Rathmines and has worked as a journalist ever since. She noted

that there were many women in the reporting and feature-writing roles, but at the commission editor levels, especially in news, the positions were occupied by men. For the women who are successful, and progress, they find they are disproportionately in demand on discussion panels, when compared to the male colleagues, to reduce the male look of a panel.

Alison was next and in her measured, assured tones, she re-iterated much of Katy's points and also spoke of the lack of women on national radio, and the perceived audience preference for male voices. She also made the point that Irish broadcasting was not as ageist as the UK one and that competence tended to win over superficial considerations.

Sharon was last, and provided a peppy injection of energy, speaking of how she has had to adapt some behaviours – for example, having to resort to aggressive tactics in the scrum of journalists to get her question heard. Her final additional point was that women should build on their strengths and do it their way, rather than mimic the male way of doing things. Question time followed.

Child care was an emotive topic – the speakers having indicated that it was nearly impossible to be a

news journalist and a mother of a young family, and to do either well. This implied constraint on career choice was hotly contested and a young single mother in the audience took the panel to task for their acceptance of the situation.

Alison replied that working for RTE provided her with a level of support that is rare in the media and Katie re-iterated that some reporting jobs were simply out of the question for working mothers.

The young student challenged the panel to help drive through the changes that would make job choice a level playing field for all.

A lecturer who was present at the talk, weighed in on behalf of mothers by asking why the mother's career rather than the father's should be the one sacrificed on the altar of child-rearing, and provided some light relief when he avuncularly advised the women present to choose their life partners carefully.

When asked if women had changed the media by their increased participation, albeit at the lower echelons, the panel reflected and thought that they had unfortunately been changed more by it than vice versa.

Katie commented that journalism had become much more competitive, and consequently

aggressive and go-getting, and thus is favouring more typically masculine traits. Alison thought that the situation has actually worsened in the representation of women as heads of department and that it was still the exception rather than the rule. She pointed to politics as an example of how the dominant male culture defines how decisions are approached and made.

On the subject of media's role in uncovering issues and halting abuses, particularly in the case of the recent clerical child abuse report, Alison said that this was one case where the media 'could take a bow' that without their investigation and perseverance, the victims would never have had a voice and the resulting investigations and reports would never have been commissioned.

Lastly, when asked if academic qualifications were critical to working in journalism, the panel collectively shrugged and declared practical expertise, natural 'nosiness' and an interest in people to be main pre-requisites: the qualification wouldn't hurt but other attributes were as important.

So, a lot of food for thought for the young journalists and media students in the audience.

# Grangegorman development gets budget boost

Cliona Ward, Editor

Last week's Budget did not spell gloom for all areas of DIT. The Campus Planning Office and the Grangegorman Development Agency were the recipients of good news in Budget 2010.

Minister Lenihan's Budget announced an allocation of €2 million to the Grangegorman Development Agency for the coming year, an increase of 25% on 2009.

In addition, in his budget speech Minister Lenihan outlined that the proceeds from the sale of HSE properties, which the Grangegorman site is classified as, can be retained to fund HSE capital projects.

This announcement was welcomed by the Campus Planning Office and the Grangegorman Development Agency who see it as critical for the funding of health facilities as part of the Grangegorman development.

The Department of Education has given confirmation to DIT that the Strategic Plan for Grangegorman will be discussed by Cabinet in the coming weeks.

The new Board of the Grangegorman Development Agency, chaired by John Fitzgerald, held its first meeting at Grangegorman on Monday last where the new budgetary announcements were discussed.

The announcement comes as a welcome change of pace from Government as the Grangegorman build has progressed slowly since its inception.



An aerial photograph of the Grangegorman site, photo courtesy of dit.ie

**Thanksgiving seems like the alternative Christmas. You've got the turkey, the TV, the family gathering, but lack the gifts. What's the draw? Susan Ryan looks at the true meaning of Thanksgiving.**

Celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November since 1863, the American tradition of Thanksgiving continues to confuse many Irish people.

First off, it has nothing to do with the Liberty Bell, Mount Rushmore or any other well-known US icons. The first Thanksgiving was celebrated by fresh-faced English settlers often referred to as the 'Pilgrims'.

The Mayflower ship carrying religious dissenters from England, planned to land at the fertile soils of Virginia after crossing the Atlantic, but instead accidentally landed at Massachusetts.

The settlers faced a harsh winter in Massachusetts on unfamiliar terrain difficult to farm. Native Americans helped the settlers through this first year by providing food and teaching harvesting skills to their new neighbours.

The first Thanksgiving meal was held in 1621 by the settlers to thank the Native Americans and God for surviving that first eye-opening year, and was celebrated by both settlers and Native Americans sitting down together to eat.

While turkey was on the menu for that first Thanksgiving, historians are quite certain that pecan pie didn't make an appearance just yet.

Today, celebrating Thanksgiving by sitting down with your family to dinner remains a must.

DIT postgraduate student Jane Rambocus grew up in Washington D.C. and still considers Thanksgiving one of her favourite holidays because it lacks the commercialism of Christmas.

"It's one of the only holidays where you don't give cards or presents, instead you gather around a table with people you care about and eat a lot of delicious food," she says.

"Although this sounds very cheesy, one of the best parts of the holiday is when you sit around the table and say what you are thankful for. I always feel a bit cringy before I do it, but it's so important as it makes you think about the good things that are in your life," adds Rambocus.

DIT's Caitlin McBride moved to Ireland with her family from the east coast of the US several years ago, but asserts that Thanksgiving remains very firmly fixed on the calendar.

"Even though I've been living in Ireland for ten years, I still always remember to celebrate Thanksgiving. As cheesy as it may sound, it's a way of celebrating your patriotism, especially when you're not living in the US," says McBride.

She agrees with Rambocus that the holiday is focused on family and, crucially, on the family eating together.

"Thanksgiving usually just means spending time with your family and stuffing your face, giving your stomach a warm-up for Christmas dinner!"

## Tattoo event is titillating

Karen McCabe, Aungier St

It's not often you get to spend a Sunday afternoon surrounded by people baring their flesh to proudly show off new patches of inked skin.

But at Dublin's 7th International Tattoo Convention which took place on the 6th-8th November, no one got a second glance if they walked around in just their boxers. It was hosted in the Ballsbridge Inn where it has been for the last 2 years.

Over 135 tattoo artists were at the event, from studios as far away as Malaysia, Belgium and New York.

As soon as you enter the building, the buzzing of tattoo guns could be heard all around. Stands were also in place selling all kinds of alternative clothing, from babygros to leather trousers.

Rob Witczuk, a tattooist for Snakebite

on Abbey Street was pleased to see the turnout. "It's nice to see them getting more mainstream" he told me, as he checked out new tattoo guns on a stand.

The event was organised by Paddy O'Donohue, a piercing artist who puts his best efforts into making this great event possible every year.

Music thumped all around as designs including names, cartoon characters, tribal designs and fantasy animals were tattooed onto willing recipients.

Piercings were also available at the 'Razor's Edge' stand, a Newbridge and Naas based company.

Sunday was also competition day, with prizes being awarded in many categories including 'Best Sleeve', 'Best Leg' and 'Best Colour'.

While sorely tempted to enter myself, the decision was made for me as I was told an unfinished leg sleeve was not going to win against some of the other works of skin art on display.

Dublin Seal Sanctuary was also holding a raffle on the day, with very well suited prizes including tattoo and piercing vouchers.



## Strike one!

Fionnuala Holohan, News Editor

I thought I had a reasonable idea of what capitalism, socialism, communism were - anyway, I thought, some of these were the also rans in the political ideology race - capitalism had won. Yet here we are in 2009 - a purported free market economy, where the state is currently providing 'life support' to the capitalists. Because we need the capitalists to provide growth and jobs. So that we can continue to bail out the capitalists. It's circular thinking like that that gives pyramid schemes a bad name.

The public sector strike on Tuesday 24th didn't help. We first year journalism students were out and about getting quotes, getting the cold shoulder and later on, getting slightly drunk. We have never felt so much like journalists, we laughed. But interviewing the strikers, I

never felt less like one.

In my head I kept thinking: «If my employer was going bankrupt, and had to make deep cuts to survive, I would have to accept it - I agreed to that when I chose to be an employee. Why do the public sector think they are any different? How can they ask for guaranteed pensions, no compulsory redundancies, set pay levels etc - things that I would never have expected from any employer I have had?»

The pickets themselves were lacklustre, quiet and thinly populated affairs. We tried in vain to find some union and governmental 'fat cats' to interview outside Leinster House, but there were none to be found. There were no marches, no speeches, no emotional polemic, no visible leadership. Only the humble workers, stoically pacing. If the strike was about making sure the Government re-engaged with the unions on the public service rationalization plans, and having agreed with the Government before the strike to return to talks the next day, why did the union leaders continue with it?



Without them, it was not even enough of a show of strength to even mildly rattle the Government.

After lunch, we thought we espied some fat cats and ran over to interview; however they were Sinn Féin TD's boycotting the Dáil that day in support of the workers, and grandstanding to great effect - bored journalists swarmed around them. However, when Sinn Féin are your only visible supporters, it must make you question what you are doing. It does seem fair to ask for the cuts to

be applied to those who can best afford them, not the lowest paid workers - regardless of whether we are talking about the public or private sectors. It also seems more than fair to make the government much more accountable in terms of salary and benefits if they do not meet their published targets. Being voted out after their term is over is not enough. On December 9th, the Budget is presented to the Dáil and we will finally have something tangible to debate. I guess it's time to start paying more attention in politics class.

## Divided and conquered

Jonathan Adams, Aungier St

The moment that seemingly most of the working class in Ireland bought the line from the snivelling fat cats in the Government and big business that there is this great divide between private and public sector workers was one of the greatest propaganda victories for the rich and powerful in recent times. "Psst" said the fat cat pointing at a crowd of teachers and nurses "they caused the crisis, sure aren't they paid from your taxes and they won't even accept a pay cut like you!"

The crisis we're in is a result of the inevitable rise and fall of the global economy and this current crisis has been triggered by a property bubble fueled by extreme financial deregulation, a monopoly created by developers and banks in the housing market, brown envelopes and the dependance of the media on real estate advertising - not by teachers and nurses, or workers in any sector.

The split between workers in different employment categories is a fiction created through the media as part of a strategy of divide and conquer being taken by the Government and big business - and it has so far worked. There exists a huge lack of support for the action taken by public sector workers and their unions, and a common conception among the working class is that public sector workers have been selfish, traitorous even.

While all this is going on, what is seemingly off the agenda for debate

is the NAMA legislation. This corporate welfare hand-out (from us, the taxpayers) is expected to reach and exceed €50bn to bail-out the banks from their dodgy loans, which helped to ignite the current crisis. In effect, the Government and the rich are robbing us, while we squabble amongst ourselves. Public sector workers have been battling to avoid being hit with cuts of €1.3bn that would attack the livelihood of hundreds of thousands of people and the level of public services for the country as a whole. Finally, some perspective! €1.3bn will maintain public service workers' pay and conditions and public services as they are (which are by no means great to begin with), but they are asking for €50bn in corporate welfare for the banks, property developers and other fat cats who are already rich.

The reality is that all working people should be on the same side. There is little or no difference between workers in either the public or private sector. Workers in both sectors have the same interests and are facing the same problems in the current crisis. The issues affecting all workers include paycuts, attacks on pension funds, a reduction in social welfare benefits, a decrease in funding for community development programmes and cuts to public services in education, health, housing and transport to name just a few.

But, somehow, through the media, a division between working people has been created despite its non-existence in any important way. According to RTÉ, during the public sector strike on 24 November, to give one example of how they have done this: "Strikers [...] abandoned the picket line in search of cheap Christmas shopping in the north [...] taking advantage of a day off courtesy of the strike." However, the national broadcaster provided no evidence for claiming that striking public sector workers were responsible for large volumes of traffic on the road to Newry. Their 'extensive' research

included an interview with a young man who said, "that fella there, he's on strike", as he points off camera supposedly to a public sector worker.

With the existence of such biased reporting it is no wonder that the context of public debate has shifted to a bitter argument over public sector 'selfishness'. A real debate would focus on why we as users of public services would accept cuts to those services when 50 times the amount of the proposed cuts to public spending is

going on bailing out the rich. Working people need to force the Government to withdraw from the NAMA swindle and instead expand the public sector, increasing employment (e.g. hiring in DIT) where the private sector cannot. Working people also need to be fighting for the same union protection in the private sector, that is found in the public sector. Unfortunately, there is no real debate happening in the media, it has shown itself to be completely at the beck and call of the rich and powerful.

## Gov rubs salt in DIT wounds

Glenn Fitzpatrick, Aungier St

Just when you thought the cutbacks saga couldn't possibly get any more aggravating, it did. There is almost certainly going to be uproar over the next few weeks around the college from the people who were depending on the DIT Leisure and Gym facilities this year.

While we spend long lunch breaks bored off our unfit arses, your local TD is entitled to usage of free gym facilities in Dail Eireann.

The Government/State website, ETenders, is advertising for a personal fitness consultant for the Oireachtas gym, who will be paid for at the taxpayer's expense.

I am often one to express faux outrage but this one really takes the proverbial biscuit before the gym starved student can.

The message to the students of DIT is

one of 'do as I say, not as I do', our beloved Finance Minister Brian Lenihan is telling everyone to make sacrifices and we more than most have done that this year. It appears that their sacrifices know no bounds really, the only problem is that they are sacrificing things that don't affect them. I can picture the response from the cabinet now...

"The government cannot afford excessive porkyness among its ranks, things are tight enough without a heart attack or stroke finishing off its soldiers before they achieve their destiny. Therefore it is unpatriotic of you to even quibble about this worthy investment at this, our nation's darkest hour"

It is a crying shame that, literally speaking, the fatcats in Dail Eireann are getting a gym service at our expense. A closer look at some of the figures in the Dail will reveal that some of them are in dire need of a strict fitness regime but this hierarchy stinks of hypocrisy.

While the DIT faithful are told to tighten their belts, it will be very much the opposite that happens but at least our leaders will crack on with a New Year's Resolution.

I cannot wait for them to announce that overweight 3rd level students are costing the country money.

# Joe Higgins gives us his two cents

Fionnuala Holohan, News Editor

Joe Higgins, MEP for Dublin and seasoned socialist agitator, was back in town for Budget week, ahead of the announcement of the public service cuts he is so vehemently opposed to.

I met him at his offices on Pearse Street (red front door, naturally), he was slightly late as he was looking for parking, but duly arrived in, shook my hand and sat down, keeping his coat on so he would be ready for his next appointment. He is in great demand in the media these days, a conscientious and vocal objector to the prevailing political policy and thought.

Some background information – Joe is a member of the Irish Socialist Party and was elected as a member of the European Parliament (MEP) for Dublin in 2009. He is from the Kerry Gaeltacht, trained initially as a priest, attended college in UCD, worked briefly as a teacher and, when elected to the Dáil in 1997, insisted on only accepting the average worker's wage i.e. less than half of a TD's salary, donating the rest to the party and campaigns.

**DN:** You described your political stance as democratic socialism, how would you describe that?

**JH:** It simply means that the major sources of wealth and wealth creation (banks and major industry) should be in public ownership and under democratic control, so that they are providing for the needs of society, primarily, rather than the needs or profits of the major shareholders.

We saw the destruction that the current ownership by these very powerful minority cabals has caused, particularly in the current economic crisis. The big banks, insurance companies, hedge funds etc were simply allowed to profiteer endlessly and outrageously, resulting in an inevitable crash, and the destruction of many people's livelihoods. In our view [the Socialist Party], that is immoral, and utterly unacceptable. Under democratic control, their investment policies would be dictated by what is in the common interest of society generally and so that production then is based on the needs of the society and of people primarily, not private profit.

The big meetings in Copenhagen this week, the same principles apply - they have destroyed the environment in the lust for profit, and had known it was going on for a long time - in our world production would be tailored for the needs of environment as well.

**DN:** There is an argument that the jobs and public wealth were ultimately created by capitalists...

**JH:** Work is done by millions of workers every day and they create the

wealth. Capitalists merely provide funding/borrow funds etc. The main capital in society is working people.

**DN:** How would entrepreneurialism be encouraged without the incentive of more personal wealth?

**JH:** We think everyone should have the right to a life of reasonable comfort and dignity, but I see a society where people want to contribute to society and to bring their gifts and talents to benefit the whole of society. We certainly do not agree that individuals should be able to enrich themselves at the expense of other people.

**DN:** If the socialist society came to pass, how would our lives change or be different?

**JH:** Young people are facing an uncertain future. Is another generation going to be faced with prospect of emigration? And where would they emigrate to? So for young people, capitalism means a very bleak future. We would say the interest of young people lies in the putting their energies into the creation of a new society which is based on different principles completely. It would be a much more positive and happy society where the wealth that is created is used for social ends, not for multinational companies to send to their shareholders etc but for better services, health, education, environment and so on. A better environment all around for every body.

**DN:** You often seem to be a lone voice in wilderness, or do you think its just that other voices are not allowed through?

**JH:** The whole capitalist system has a huge superstructure ringed around it to protect it. The media, for example, is owned by billionaires who are major capitalists themselves, who protect their interests. Look at the year-long vilification of public sector workers by Independent Newspapers, telling outright lies, simply to protect their system. They now have a crisis caused by greed and profiteering at expense of another generation, some of whom are saddled with 40 year mortgages.

**DN:** Do you have a strategy for bringing a socialist order about?

**JH:** Socialism and socialist ideas have always had certain support among working people, but the point is that the majority of people learn from their own experience and this present crisis and crash is going to be a sharp learning



curve for many people. It will raise the question of why is it like this and there have to be alternatives, and that's the dialogue that is going to be engaged in over the next while.

**DN:** What do you think is going to happen in the Budget?

**JH:** Well, it's clear that the policy will be that working people will pay for this crisis, which they had no hand or active part in, it being created by speculators, developers, big bankers, Fianna Fáil and the Progressive Democrats, all together, and we say – no way. We do not agree with this idea that we all have to put shoulder to the wheel, we say - you didn't do the crime; you shouldn't do the time. Not a cent should be taken from working people. Where has the wealth gone? What did they do with the billions that they raked in? The idea that you would tax profits on business, either national or multinational, is not even discussed.

**DN:** What would you do?

**JH:** In a socialist society, these institutions would be democratically owned and run, but what we would advocate in the immediate period is to say: let's have an audit of where did the created wealth go, how much was it, let's have it all out in the open – the amounts made, all that is hidden - and then we want it back here. It's not good enough to say it's in bad debt now, it's not the case. If some developer paid for a site, that they now can't pay back, but the site cost went somewhere – where did it go? To a site somewhere else? We want to know.

There is amazing wealth being created, the multinational companies in 2007 recorded €34.5bn profits, paid the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest tax rates of the 27 EU states, paying maybe €4bn a year in tax. A double taxation on them, which wouldn't be anywhere near what the workers are taxed, would be a solution. If Sweden or Germany's tax rate was applied, it would be €8bn and €12bn respectively. Wealth is there, it's the political decisions being made that are having this effect.

They build a low tax economy, and then throw up their hands and say well. We say - let's build another kind of economy.

**DN:** On another topic, in light of all the clerical abuses etc, do you think church and state should be fully separated?

**JH:** Absolutely. The church should have no more right to run schools than they have to run the refuse collection or water services. The whole structure should be in state ownership, but again, under democratic control. Democratic structures would be set up with parents and teachers and students and the community. Religious instruction would be a separate issue, organized by the churches concerned, which they are free to do, absolutely.

**DN:** As an MEP, how do you bring social agenda to the European arena?

**JH:** I use the platform to argue for alternative ideas - socialist alternatives to the present system – and support workers and communities who are struggling on various issues, whether it's justice or jobs or whatever. I do this via the committees I am part of - the international trade committee and employment and social affairs committee - using them to fight the campaign for workers rights.

**DN:** Is the socialist agenda better advanced in Europe than Ireland?

**JH:** No. Europe parliament is dominated by a big right-wing neo-liberal majority - the Christian Democrats etc. The Social Democrats are not on the left at all, despite being called socialist. The Labour Party here has moved to the right, they are in the capitalist camp. All of them in the Dáil have accepted that these cuts will happen. The dominant philosophy and policy in Europe is neo-liberal capitalism.

**DN:** Do you believe in the Presidency as an institution?

**JH:** No. It should be abolished.

**DN:** If it all came to pass, the socialist order, what would you do?

**JH:** I could probably retire, couldn't I [smiling]. I would hope that I'd still be making a contribution to making it work and improve society generally.



# The chilling facts of global warming...

Aisling Kenny, Aungier St

Did you know that a TV on standby can use up to as much as half as much electricity as when it's switched on? So turn it off when not in use! The same goes for stereos and DVD players.

Are you aware of how important it is to un-plug chargers from mobile phones and i-pods when not in use? No, neither was I, but only 5% of the power drawn by a mobile phone charger is actually used to charge the phone. The other 95% of the energy is wasted when the charger is left plugged into the wall.

Finally, leaving our computers turned on at night, the last thing on our minds before we "switch off" at night is saving energy. However, it's worth a thought, as turning off our computers at night will save on average 25% of its yearly energy bill.

I know it might be hard to believe, but our lackadaisical attitude to these simple tasks is causing the death of polar bears in the North Pole right now. The effects of global warming caused by our lack of thought could mean that the polar bear will not survive. These bears depend on the natural habitat of the Arctic to exist. Recently, Polar bears have been photographed clutching to tiny ice blocks as their natural environment melts away.

And it's not just polar bears that are affected. In Antarctica, penguins are also

suffering. Global warming could wipe out penguins completely.

The massive rainfall caused by global warming is causing the death of thousands of penguin chicks each year. Daytime temperatures in Antarctica are now above freezing and heavy rain is soaking young Adelie penguin chicks, at night when temperatures fall below freezing, these vulnerable wet chicks freeze to death.

So, what can we do to prevent these animals from becoming extinct? - According to David Corcoran from the Environmental society at DIT "past and present generations have depleted natural resources in an unsustainable way" he says "it's up to future graduates to find sustainable energy sources".

Global warming is becoming more serious than ever. Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, John Gormley, told DIT news that "As well as tackling the causes of climate change, by cutting our CO2 emissions, we must prepare for its effects. This includes avoiding building in at-risk areas and building up our coastal defences."

According to recent data by the Catlin Arctic Survey Team, a group of explorers who trekked through the Arctic for three months - The North Pole will turn into an open sea in summer within ten years. Already, Global Warming caused

by the burning of fossil fuels for energy has caused glaciers to begin melting resulting in global sea levels rising rapidly.

So, how will this affect us? I hear you ask. Minister John Gormley explained to DIT news that "A recent report on how climate change will affect tourism in Ireland showed that sea levels could increase by between 20 and 60cm or as much as a metre in some coastal areas. Flooding would have a devastating effect on our capital city. We could see homes, buildings and infrastructure under water. Some of our outlying coastal areas would disappear, with the loss of important natural wildlife habitats. Floodwater can also be dangerous, with sewage systems polluting drinking water and carrying disease."

So, are we going to continue to live with our heads in the clouds and pretend that the experts conducting these studies are exaggerating and we have nothing to worry about?

Or... are we going to recognise that we now have a responsibility towards saving our planet and try to make a difference by living greener lives. If we do,

it will help to reduce our Carbon footprint and contribute to the well-being of future generations.

Let's be honest, is being aware of our carbon footprint and the the topic of Green Living really a priority for us students? No, probably not, if we are being truthful. However, in a world where there is rapidly growing Climate Change, and Global Warming problems continue to escalate, perhaps it's about time we started to think about it.

It's not a matter of throwing away our modern student lifestyles to go and live in the woods. All it takes are simple changes to our everyday lifestyles like switching off that light as you leave the room or turning down your thermostat by ten degrees. These seemingly small gestures can not only help solve the global warming problem, but could even save you a few euros.

To find out more on what you can do to help tackle climate change check out the latest Department of the Environment website [www.1010.ie](http://www.1010.ie).



## Wikipedia: dawn of the add/edit culture

Graham Ó Maonaigh, Layout Editor

Wikipedia is known to all in students in DIT as the solution to writers block. To their lecturers it is either at best a workaround of critical thinking, at worst an invitation to plagiarise.

To one of Wikipedia's co-founders, Jimmy Wales, the Wikipedia Project is driven to create "a world in which every single person on the planet is given free access to the sum of all human knowledge". Jimmy defined Free as in Speech, not Beer and Sum as in Summary, not a data dump.

Meeting Jimmy Wales was interesting for two reasons. Firstly Jimmy Wales possessed a sort of cool value and charisma you would expect to get from

a rock star.

What is funny about this is that essentially Jimmy Wales founded an encyclopaedia, 'What's cool about that you might ask?' The coolness all flows from the interactivity and the ownership that we as users of Wikipedia get.

We interact with the information on Wikipedia by adding and editing articles on topics as diverse as TV shows to philosophical ideas. The information is ours as a community on the Internet. We own it and all that Jimmy Wales did was create the space for this to evolve.

Secondly Jimmy Wales is an inspiring advocate for 'Free'. While he is an

Internet entrepreneur he understands that Wikipedia is successful purely due to its non-commercial nature.

The site relies on small donations to operate much like those \$5 donations that Barack Obama used to successfully launch a campaign for the White House. There are no adverts on Wikipedia.

When I asked if he would ever consider putting advertisements on Wikipedia, Jimmy is not enthusiastic but highlights that they could be used for example to raise considerable funds for universities and schools in developing countries.

Thinking outside the box and believing in the nature of altruism in people to give back is one of what Jimmy gets excited about.

Finally I was left thinking what we as a culture owe to Wikipedia? With Wikipedia we have seen the Internet become more condensed.

You no longer need to spend hours surfing the web to find multiple sources of information to get a broad perspective on a topic. If there is something missing, you can add to it yourself.

The information on Wikipedia is open to reviewing therefore most of what is on Wikipedia is related to a consensus on a neutral point of view on the topic.

With this we get to see what culture says about an issue because neutrality is central to writing on Wikipedia.

Exceptions to this are widely reported in traditional media but they miss the point. If the article is wrong, review and edit it yourself.

If you're going to quote it, then quote the referenced source not the article. Simple.

Wikipedia.org - The facts

5th most popular website in the world

3.1 million English articles

Pop Culture:

-40% of English Articles

-80% of Japanese Articles

# DEAD

Your Dublin ENTertainment magazine



# chris evans

The bad boy of the BBC becomes our pal

**JLS tell us  
how they make  
young hearts  
beat again**

**And we look back at the year  
that was 2009**

# DEnt Ed

Hello and welcome to the very lovely Christmas issue of **DEnt** magazine...

This month we are bringing some festive cheer by showcasing some of the finest faces in our interviews section...

We caught up with UK Chart-toppers and X-Factor alums JLS when they visited Dublin last month for a chat, see pg 4...

While we also gatecrashed Chris Evans book signing for an inpromptu interview with the funnyman on pg 5....

Not only that but we're reviewing like it's 1999 so be sure to check out our CD reviews section be sure to check it out on pages 6 and 7...

On behalf of **DEnt** I'd like to extend an apology to our lovely and talented writer Laura Butler.

Her fabulous article on vampires was published under the wrong name so let it be known it was her article.

This is the last **DEnt** of 2009, what a year it has been. While you're waiting around for the next issue keep an eye on [www.ditnewssoc.ie](http://www.ditnewssoc.ie) for our new website!

**Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!**  
*Cliona Ward*

# Picture Perfect

Showcasing DIT's finest photography talent

This month's featured photographer is: **Ciuin Treacy**



## FILM REVIEW

### A Serious Man

#### General Release

The latest Coen Brothers movie, *A Serious Man*, has the same black comedy you would expect from these quirky directors.

The film centres around one man, Larry Gopnik, during the late 1960s and as times are a-changing so is everything in Larry's life and not for the better.

His children care more about washing hair and watching television than what is happening to their parents' marriage.

Larry's socially dysfunctional brother is living in the family house with them and is driving everyone crazy with his disgusting habits.

And a South Korean math student of

his is trying to bribe him to pass his exams.

In the middle of all this, his wife decides it is time to arrange a divorce from him in order to start a relationship with a recently bereaved family friend.

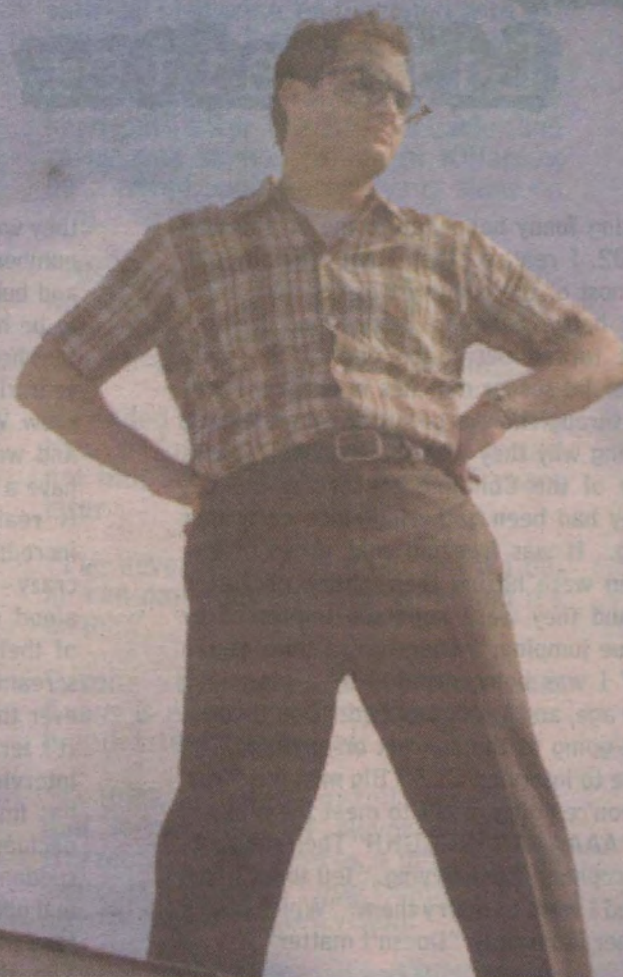
While going through the separation from his wife, he looks to three Rabbais for advice on how to get through it in one piece.

This film is peppered with dark jokes and visually stimulating.

It can be slightly disjointed at times but this is not unusual considering other Coen brother movies.

*A Serious Man* is a good watch for anyone who wants to watch a comedy that is slightly more challenging than the status-quo.

It is well worth the price of a cinema ticket.



## Elder Roche

### The Sugar Club

#### December 1st

As Elder Roche hit the stage, bravely following the truly awful rapping in Dublinese that preceded his set, he went about pouring out the many guises of his heart. A mixed crowd of drinkers, sparkly dressed girls and cosy couples had assembled in the faux cabaret setting of this Leeson St. club. The scene at this venue so mad-deningly ordinary it was often in danger of spilling over into David Lynch absurdism. Midgets talking backwards would have been the perfect icing on the weird cake!

Pounding the ground with his heavy work boots to keep time, this perhaps was also a sign of nerves as it was sure he knew this was a difficult crowd. All the people arranged at their own little tables behaving much like errant kids in the back seat of the car – doing anything but paying attention to what they should be. But Elder Roche was determined.

He started with 'Time Will Tell' and instantly revealed himself as part Tom Waits, part vaudeville, part Terenure gothic and part something of his own conjuring. Having a full band behind him broadened his sound; solid double bass playing and some tasty guitar solos augmented this short half hour set.

'Black Crow' is a stomping number where he became a demented ringmaster with shades of the horror poetic of Edgar Allen Poe. 'Dark Place' was bolstered by his strong vocal and contained the wryly dark lyric 'I settle down to something sweet and sickly'. The piano intro both creepy and spellbinding – echoes of dark, twisted fairytales.

The sound was a little glitchy in places through no fault of the band as they maintained a dialogue with the sound engineer throughout. This was no success of a night, but one that kept Elder Roche well versed in the pugilism that is playing live to non-fans. Shriill girls and boys pumped on pre-xmas drinkies would keep anyone on their toes!

Simply this was a gig where this performer was out of his natural habitat. Picture him banging out gruff n' sweet sea shanties in the Jolly Roger pub on Sherkin Island as the sea floats by the window, and you'll get the right idea. Until you can get to West Cork, check him out somewhere in the vicinity to get a little taster. He'll be in fine voice.

[www.myspace.com/elderroche](http://www.myspace.com/elderroche)



JLS

## Life after the X-Factor

By Niamh Hassell

Something funny happened to me on the way to the O2. I realised that I am officially old. While most of the country was gearing up for an epic battle between France and Ireland, in what turned out to be one of the most controversial soccer matches in history- I was wading through hordes of hysterical teenagers, wondering why they weren't at school. It was the day of the Childline concert at the O2, and they had been gathering since early that morning. It was freezing cold, drops of ice-cold rain were hitting their glitter encrusted faces, and they were none too impressed by my queue jumping. "Where do ya think you're going?" I was being accused by a pipsqueak half my age, and I was terrified. "Don't worry, I'm not going to the concert or anything..I'm just here to interview JLS." Big mistake. "You, mean, you're going to get to meet them like?" "Yep" "AAAAAAAAGGGGHH" Then she spots the microphone I'm carrying. "Tell them I love them and I want to marry them" "Which one" I ask rather ignorantly. "Doesn't matter".

JLS shot to fame on the X Factor just over a year ago. They may not have been in the spotlight for too long, but they have managed to accumulate thousands of devoted fans along the way. Their self titled album shot straight to the top of the Irish charts and they have already had two number one singles under their belts. I was about to meet pop royalty. Hungry and tired pop royalty by all accounts. Their plane was delayed and they haven't eaten since this morning I've just been told. Just as I am calculating how cranky they might be, Oritsé bounces over to me, grabs me and pulls me in for a hug.

"Alright darlin... how you doing...I'm Oritsé and this is Marvin - Do you want to hear my new instrument?"

"Ummmmm...sure?"

Oritsé pulls a blue kazoo out of his designer pants and sings their newest single 'Everybody in Love' through it. He's obviously thriving on an empty stomach. Marvin on the other hand is slightly more subdued. He sits beside his band mate shaking his head. "The Boulevard [another boy band performing for the concert] gave him that thing. He'll be at it all night".

I begin, slightly flabbergasted, yet hugely impressed, that someone could manage to make the kazoo sound that good- by asking them if

they were happy to be back in Ireland with the number one album in the charts. Marvin perks up and begins excitedly chattering. «It's amazing to be back here. We adore Ireland and all the fans here. We were at the Childline concert last year right after X Factor and we started the show. We'll be kicking things off again tonight, and we couldn't be happier. the fact that we have a number one album first here in Ireland is really special for us", "Yeah Ireland is incredible" Oritsé chimes in. "The fans here go crazy - the fans here are incredible". I wonder aloud how it must be a terrible by-product of their job having to deal with thousands of screaming girls chanting your name where ever they go. The lads laugh in unison. "Yeah. It's terrible - awful even". At this point of the interview, Aston, another member of the band has finished talking to another journalist and decides to gatecrash with his red kazoo. The sudden break allows Oritsé to jump on the couch and open the window overlooking the queues of fans waiting for a moment exactly like this one. The shrieking envelops the backstage area. "Wow, there are so many girls out there. This is why we love Ireland", Oritsé is clearly excited with all the attention.

The mania outside the glass shutters is almost surreal; like timetravelling to an early Beatles concert and watching girls faint all around me. When everything calms down a bit, I ask Marvin if this type of extreme behaviour is common. He replies "Yeah, it's weird man - it's like that old school hysteria. I mean, it's great for us obviously - with all the attention that we get." I ask him about the crush that happened in Birmingham where some fans had to be taken to hospital after the hysteria took over - and people got trampled on by others trying to get to the front. "We were there for a gig that was organised by a radio station. There were loads of acts performing there and we happened to be the first act on..then that happened and they shut the gig down. We hope that everyone is well and recovering, but it is a bit crazy when we go somewhere...but yeah, we love it. it's just amazing to be able to have that sort of hysteria"

Is this the X Factor factor then? The biggest show on television is the equivalent of rocket

fuel; propelling these young stars to fame at lightening speed. Do JLS think that they needed X Factor and Louis Walsh to give them a boost in the industry, or do they think that they would have made it on their own? Oritsé sits back and looks almost serious for a moment. "No no no. Louis is incredible- he's the best in the business, but we definitely needed the boost of the X Factor. You can't beat the X factor- it's the biggest show in the country and it gives you such a platform. We owe everything to Simon Cowell and his team." And what about our little Jedward then? "When we were on the X Factor performing as guests this year, we went to the house, and all we could see outside were John and Edward t - shirts." I ask Marvin what he thinks. "Jedward are a very entertaining duo. When I met them, they were just so polite, they're just really driven to succeed. I think that it's unfair that people boo them and are negative about them. You know what, they are 18 years old and living their dream. I say leave them to it. I wish them all the best".

So whats on the cards for Christmas for JLS then? The roller coaster ride began with the X Factor auditions, and I am guessing that between touring, making an album and recording videos, the lads are looking forward to a well deserved break. Marvin tells me that he'll be "booking a holiday somewhere and spending time with family». I ask Oritsé what's on his wish list. " Can I be really really honest? Last night, I met Rhianna for the first time. We were in a restaurant and she walked in wearing a red dress, and the first thing she did was to look over to me." He holds his head in his hands for a brief moment and drifts off to a daydream, only to be cut short by his manager who snaps his fingers and tells them it's time to eat.

"See ya later darlin, come get a picture in a minute yeah". I realise that I forgot to pass on the pipsqueak's marriage proposal. But something tells me that they're not going to be short of offers.



# Good Evans!

By Paul McNulty

Behind a rickety, makeshift desk, Chris Evans, the millionaire radio host, signs copies of his new book at a signing in a Dublin bookshop.

Ignoring the PR handlers and bookshop functionaries, he records voice messages and poses for photos for his legion of fans.

"I got a new suit and a new haircut for the Tubridy Show tonight-do you like them? I've got old man hair now."

He handles the attention with the calm assurance of a broadcaster who knows how to connect with his audience.

"You're so not star-struck. You're the coolest cat on the block-and you know that," he teases a trembling woman as she clams up on meeting him. Bill Clinton is meant to have this effect on people.

He looks into the other person's eyes and they don't feel like fans, they feel like friends. I introduce myself to his assistant-and she tells him that "the student reporter" is here to see him.

Evans (43) has recently been announced as the successor to Terry Wogan on BBC Radio 2's fabled Breakfast show.

He seems undaunted by the prospect of taking over the reigns of Europe's most listened to show. "Terry has given me some fatherly advice, but I'll just get on and do my own thing and hopes it works.

I'm going to start at 7am and he

didn't start until 7.30am-that wasn't a breakfast show-it was practically brunch!"

Evans has less reason than most to be worried-the Sunday Times Rich List estimates his fortune at £35million.

"Working for the BBC is like playing for Manchester Utd or Chelsea," he says. "It was never about money for me, it's about passion."

There is also a certain amount of respect-because it's the BBC-you have stars coming in the door every single day."

Evans has hosted the Drivetime show on BBC for the past 3 years averaging 5million listeners.

It was seen as rehabilitation for the flame-haired presenter, who had been seen as a busted flush in broadcasting.

He hosted the Breakfast Show on BBC Radio 1 in the late 90's to great acclaim.

**"I've never met Gerry Ryan, but if I do, he can name his bottle of wine and it's on me"**

From fairly innocent features like "In Bed with Your Girlfriend", Evans became more and more extreme.

Evans' booze-fuelled departure from the innocuous to

the outrageous lost him many fans and attracted unwanted attention from the tabloids.

He brought his production team on binges, showed up late for shows and was a constant feature in the media.

He resigned on air after the BBC refused his demand for a four day week so that he could concentrate on TGI Friday-his irreverent TV show at the time.

"When I started to get risqué-that's when it all started to go wrong. Risqué is not a substitute for being creative, in fact it's often the polar opposite."

His incessant headline making was famously lampooned in Private Eye,

when he features on the cover of the satirical magazine, emblazoned with the headline Chris Evans-A Nation Yawns.

Evans came to Ireland to "sort my head out" after the BBC debacle, and as he was salmon fishing in Killarney, he chanced upon Gerry Ryan's show on 2fm.

"His show was a masterpiece, it was my mum and dad's corner shop- it had everything. After listening to his show, I knew that I had to get back on air."

He ended up buying Virgin Radio with a team of investors in a move that would net him over £30million profit 5 years later.

"I've never met Gerry Ryan, but if I do, he can name his bottle of wine and it's on me."

Despite his own lauded position, Evans is effusive in his praise of other broadcasters he admires.

"I think Simon Amstell (comedian and former host of Never Mind the Buzzcocks) is as good as it gets. He's as sharp as a tack and I don't think there is anyone funnier on television."

As I pack up my notepad and Dictaphone to leave, Chris calls me back by name.

"Here Paul, take a copy of my book.", and he hands me a copy before disappearing back into a flurry of fans and photographers.

**"When I started to get risqué-that's when it all started to go wrong. Risqué is not a substitute for being creative, in fact it's often the polar opposite"**

It reads "To Paul- Thanks for the interview-Good Luck Pal".

I don't know if that's his standard salutation, but I come out of there thinking I'm on first name terms with multi-millionaire BBC star Chris Evans- and that he has wished me well in my career!

I walk out, like his millions of listeners, thinking I've made a friend.



# A year in review...

## The top five albums of 2009

By David Phelan

### Jamie T- Kings and Queens

Jamie T's second album was the most natural progression that one can expect from an artist but one that most artists never realise. Rather than stick to his oars and belt out the same bass-heavy riffs which its predecessor relied upon, Treays switched to a more guitar based sound, riddled with lo-fi ditties and monstrous anthems. 'Man's Machine' is the song anyone who bought debut 'Panic Prevention' was waiting to hear from the Wimbledon man, it's one of those punch the air, "this song is about my life" tunes that Blur once popped out at ease.



### Lady Gaga- The Fame Monster

This isn't as good as it is just because 2008's 'The Fame' is attached but because Gaga has taken the time to craft proper songs for a reissue, something unheard of in the add a few remixes to sell cds at Christmas game. 'Bad Romance' only asserts Gaga's position as the premiere purveyor of pop perfection and not since another New Yorker decreed she was in fact the mother of Jesus Christ has a singer been so enthralling. Along with the modern classics in 'Paparazzi' and 'Just Dance' the album effortlessly leaps into the all time classics fray.



### The Horrors-Primary Colours

Shock! Er...horror! They're back and they've made a bloody great LP. Due to their appallingly bad debut many wrote off The Horrors as bunch of students (fact: members of the band deferred their respective courses in order to go on the road), angry with the world, especially their mothers who refused to buy them GHDs for their birthdays. 'Primary Colours', it is fair to say proved even emos can make a decent album. 'Who Can Say' is what Sinatra would've made his millions from if he wore guy-liner and read endless amounts of Byron. Meanwhile, 'Sea Within a Sea' is an 8 minute wander through the head of psychedelic master-mind Faris Rotter. Astonishing...and they had to go back to college.



### Florence and The Machine- Lungs

I reluctantly include this. When I and a cohort watched Florence flail around in front of twelve people in Crawdaddy last November I immediately heralded her as the natural successor to the throne of Karen O. However, the raw ability displayed in early demos and eps was over-shadowed by the ridiculous amount of production on the finished album. Still, some beautiful songs here but not half as beautiful as her duet with fellow Nambucca trendy Kid Harpoon on Bruce Springsteen's 'I'm Going Down', look it up on youtube for aural euphoria.



### Arctic Monkeys- Humbug

Rejoice ye faithful, no longer must we go to a ` Monkeys gig and fear for our lives. This deserves a spot not only because of the sublime 'Crying Lightning' nor because of the masterful and awkward 'Cornerstone' but because the skangers HATE it. So much has the amassed crowd of vagrants mistook Turner's use of irony and sarcasm as anthems for an ASBO'd youth that the band have incurred a severe rollicking throughout their latest tour. "Play 'Mardy Bum' you c\*\*\*t" ....I don't care if never hear it again.

# Still got it?

## Music legends reviewed!

By Todd Ryan

Queen: Absolute Greatest

Yet another Queen compilation is out! Now I love the legendary rockers music as much as the next music fan but seriously haven't we been through this a few times before? We love you Queen but let it go! I know a new album would go down a flop without Freddie Mercury but this does seem like new money for old rope. However, I gave it a listen and damn those guys had some classics!

**The Good:** Bohemian Rhapsody, Who Wants to Live Forever, Don't Stop Me Now, Radio Ga Ga, We are the Champions – the list goes on.

**The Bad:** Nothing new here. Chances are a quick nosy through your dad's music collection and you'll find these songs.



Whitney Houston: I Look to You

She's back! After her less than impressive performance on the X-Factor, Whitney's comeback looked set to be a severe disappointment however, one listen to this album you can hear why this lady is a legend. With writing contributions by Alicia Keys and Diane Warren (I Don't Want to Miss a Thing) the album is packed with terrific songs worthy of the modern listener. The album is classic Whitney with a wonderful mixture of urban tunes and ballads.

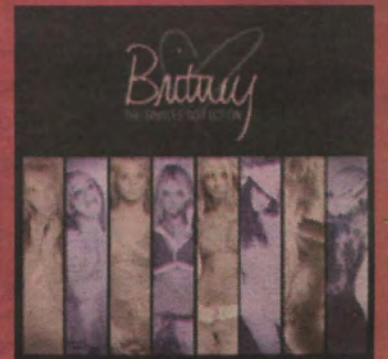
**The Good:** Million Dollar Bill, I Didn't Know My Own Strength and I Look to You – obvious hits.  
**The Bad:** Salute and Nothing but Love – minor letdowns.

Britney Spears: The Singles Collection

A first compilation from the singer to mark her tenth year in the music industry (it's been ten years since ...Baby One More Time??). The album is stuffed with Britney classics and with the addition of the 2009 smash '3' the album could be a Christmas present for many. I admit I'm a fan of the singer and nobody can deny her comeback as something other than legendary but again old stuff being pushed on us again? Die hard Britney fans this is for you! Everybody else save your money.

**The Good:** 3, Stronger, If You Seek Amy and Toxic

**The Bad:** ...Baby One More Time and Oops I Did It Again – we suffered through those once before let them die!



Mariah Carey: Memoirs of an Imperfect Angel

Well I listened to the album and I survived – barely. The only credit I can give is it's not another greatest hits collection. Besides that the album is a major failure. Every now and then the singer can hit the nail on the head with a cracking tune but alas it's not to be this year. The album is classic Mariah – love songs with a hint of urban but sang in an impossibly high key but nothing exceptional. If you like Mariah it's only okay if you don't let this be the last word on the album.

**The Good:** Obsessed and Up Out of My face are quite okay I guess

**The Bad:** I Want To Know What Love Is – leave it to Foreigner Mariah!



By David Phelan

"What's trad Daddy?", is a question one may find themselves answering in the not too distant future.

The death of Liam Clancy has put the role of traditional music in Ireland into a stark perspective, traditional Irish music and balladry is lost on Irish popular culture.

The fact is the Féile represents those performing because it's the social norm in the family and many eventually move away from it as they enter adulthood.

It's not as much the abandon of the rich indigenous music which we should be most ashamed of but rather a reliance on other influences to 'show' us the new way.

The UK has their way of doing things; punk, rave, Merseybeat and shoe-gaze were all irremovably associated with the UK.

The US have hip-hop, rock n roll and the blues.

We had trad but that is being slowly removed from the Irish conscience.

The fact is we cannot afford to rub music synonymous with the country off the board, we simply do not have all these other genres which we can claim as our own and therefore our musical identity is at stake.

Shane MacGowan and Spider Stacey have proved that Irish music and the ethos which it entails can be taken in other directions and the artist can retain the upmost integrity.

Try telling Snow Patrol, Director, U2 and The Frames this.

On the traditional front now we have The High Kings a group so generic and so far removed from the dangerous pre-historic nature like that of The Dubliners that their skinny lattes just aren't skinny enough.

Luke Kelly, Liam Clancy and Christy Moore were arguably the most 'rock n roll' men to tread the boards here but for one reason or another they are derided and even defiled by youth more interested in two warbling jonahs from Lucan.

By all means we should embrace the music and entertainment this world has to offer but we should also seek to reinvigorate the world with our own sound that no other culture can offer. "What's trad Daddy?", is a question one may find themselves answering in the not too distant future.

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Calling all DIT Students & staff

# Don't just go for a walk... go on a Herbie power walk!

come and join Herbie  
on a 40 minute  
power walk.



**Southside Walk - Every Tuesday, 1.10 - 1.50pm**  
Meet outside DIT Kevin Street, Main Gates at 1.05pm

**Northside Walk - Every Thursday, 1.10 - 1.50pm**  
Meet outside DIT Bolton Street, Main Entrance at 1.05pm

For more information, call **Herbie** on **087 224 5507**

So to find out more about this or any other sports and clubs information check our website:

[www.ditsports.ie](http://www.ditsports.ie) or contact one of the Sports Team.



## Kling on clothing

Deirdre McGing, Aungier St

The wise fashionista that is Vivienne Westwood once said: "You have a better life if you wear impressive clothes". But what constitutes impressiveness in today's vast realm of fashion?

One brand name that instantly comes to mind for its notable take on style is none other than Kling.

What was born in Spain in 2004 has now reached the pure shores of Ireland in the form of their new store in the chic Italian quarter of the city and already seems to be striking impact upon those who unearth its eccentric sense of design.

Kling pride themselves on embracing a simple but stylish approach, and have adopted a look

they have portrayed as 'elegance with a twist'.

Their winter '09 collection is no exception to this pretty picture and seems to illustrate what can only be described as a glittering festive tale.

The new collection reminisces on the label's original fashion ideologies and some might say the designers have gone back to their roots, or 'trademark style'.

For prices that certainly won't break the bank (nothing ever seems to hit the €70 mark), it is possible to kit yourself out this season with looks that go from day to night, quirky to chic, fresh to urban femininity.

In a lucrative attempt to blur the ego of a gossip girl with Little Red Riding Hood, the creators fashioned something only to be described as matchless and devilishly unique.

Among the snowy styled pieces include an extensive array of knitted items which include striped maxi bat winged jerseys, two-toned boyfriend cardies, and a number of preppy dresses and skirts— many featuring downright bizarre prints and patterns. Be sure to look out for the cuddly sheep skirt whilst you browse through the bargains on offer.

These wacky, off the wall designs also extend to the winter coats on offer at Kling. For once it seems a fashion label have smashed the mould of the predictable and conventional winter jacket.

The winter collection includes quite a few mac and trench style jackets that come in a range of patterns from classic tartan to 50s polka dots. It also features the famed orchestra jacket for which has taken the world of fashion by storm this season.

If you want to be the brightest star this Christmas, Kling is the place for you. The party season might as well be an invitation to flaunt the wittiest designs we can lay our eyes on.

Several of the pieces can go from day to night if accessories are taken into consideration carefully. If you're a little weary of this approach fear not because there are also distinctive party dresses in the collection.

Watch out for the black chiffon 'kiss dress' retailing at €59.90. The collection also features a 'to die for' cocktail dress for €35.90 which comes in navy, grey and green to flatter every skin tone.

Before we all know it Dublin's Kling store will become a precious gem in our city. Not only will it be adored for its uniqueness and charm, but it's about damn time someone brought fun back into fashion.

*Kling is located at 2, Blooms Lane Lower Ormond Quay Italian Quarter Dublin 1.*

Wool Jacket € 44.90 and Sheep Skirt € 29.90



Skirt € 29.90 and Knitted Jersey € 29.90



Green Jumper €39.90



Jumper Dress €39.90



## Market Value!

Laura Butler, Aungier St

Every weekend, dozens of stalls of ethnic backgrounds descend upon the various towns in suburbia. Bright and early, traders set up camp in designated fields, playgrounds and parks for a day of welcoming the children, enticing the customers and of course selling to the masses the joyous concept of 'Free fun'.

This year, a little present for Christmas is available, for those who

simply cannot get enough of market value goodness.

Participating in the festive spirit for the fifth year, the popular '12 Days of Christmas' market returns to the Docklands from Saturday 12th December until Wednesday 23rd, to satisfy all our Christmas cravings.

Running from 12 noon to 8pm daily, this charming yuletide event offers visitors a magical experience in a unique waterside village setting, with over 100 market traders selling a range of Christmas gifts, seasonal food and stocking fillers. Over 100,000 people enjoyed its festive atmosphere last year.

Taking place on George's Dock in

the IFSC, the 12 day market offers a culmination of gift ideas, ranging from craft jewellery, stained glass giftware, wooden toys, and beauty products and leather ware to a unique selection of home accessories.

The festival is traditional Christmas at its best and offers a lot more than shopping.

Traditional Crimbo at its ture best, the market village boasts a beautifully restored showpiece 'Galloping Horses' Carousel along with other fairground attractions to keep us young souls busy in the giggly season.

And if childish fun doesn't do it for you – hard to believe at this time of

year - there will be carol singers and bands on hand to perform a selection of old tunes, while we munch on arrays of continental pastries, minced pies, cheeses, cakes and other goodies of culinary perfection.

Never fear, you can always wash it down with international beers, mulled wine, or a particular favourite - a deliciously indulgent hot chocolate.

One thing's for sure, there will be no scrooges left standing after a wander into this festive paradise.

For further information on the Docklands 12 days of Christmas Festival visit:

[www.dublindocklands.ie](http://www.dublindocklands.ie)

# Top Gear in top form at live show

Andrew Purfield, Aungier St

What can I say about last Friday evening.....Top Gear simply blew me away. It was absolutely epic!

Prior to the show, for about an hour, I wandered around literally awestruck by the magnitude of some of the ferocious mechanical powerhouses and the quality of the classic collectors' cars.

Such collectors' items are serious eye candy for petrol heads worldwide and all those present were treated to a feast of all things motoring.

The first classic cars that caught my eye included the breathtaking Jaguar E type series of 1976, a bright red racy Maserati 1969 car, a beige-but-modestly-humble Alfa Romeo, and an impressive collection of 1970's British Leyland road cars.

The evening was only just beginning, and already I was becoming overawed by the quality of these timeless classics - because that was what they were, in every sense of the phrase.

As usual a VW Camper Hippie van made an appearance, as well as a Ford RS 1800, which was the first rally car that I ever saw.

The Ford was white, and a little worn and torn, but still praiseworthy. Some of the less impressive cars included a Ford Escort Mexican model, which as a 'rally' car did a very modest top speed of

110mph. The old Ford Capri looked like it was there against its will..it was just so much of an eyesore.

The Top Gear team also made a mistake in ever thinking that VW made a classic car: the 1970 red 'sports' model was just awful to behold - its worn out tyres, and poor interior left a lot to be desired.

The Dunlop F1, Ferrari red F1, and Caparo dominated the F1 cars for me! They were exquisite and astonishing. The Dunlop was my own personal favourite though.

It has a Kawasaki engine, it is road-legal and raced on tracks, it has just 170 BHP, and weighs 450 Kg but has a top speed of 180 km/h, high considering the low brake horse power the engine contained.

In comparison, the Caparo did over 200 km/h and the Ferrari just surpassed these two, exceeding 252 km/h, leaving the Caparo and Dunlop looking tame in comparison.

Other treats included the Peterbilt Big Rig which had a very well-designed, almost luxurious, interior. It has 600 BHP, an alloy fuel tank and sixteen gears, and state-of-the-art shock absorbers.

However, happily we do not see it on the roads over here as it does the better part of 200km/h top speed. The Alves FV430 allowed me a chance to get inside an army tank. This monster does 40mp/h

top speed, and is designed to transport as many as fifteen troops with a commander. It is purely a protection-purpose tank, but can have a turret pointing out of the commander's post. Being at the commander's post in the tank was definitely a surreal experience.

As show-time neared, there was a real sense of both euphoria and anticipation. The annoying prerecorded P.A. woman only added to the suspense by telling supposedly lost VIP'S and 'professional members of the national press' to stay seated after the show so that they could have their hand held on the way to the backstage party.

Then suddenly! Flaming cars burst on stage accompanied by a model/acrobat. It was absolutely breathtaking. The charismatic trio of Clarkson, May and Hammond then entered to huge applause, each in their own super car.

Cue the usual banter, including a picture of James May (which is not for publishing) and another to reflect on the 'achievements' of Fifth Gear. Then the

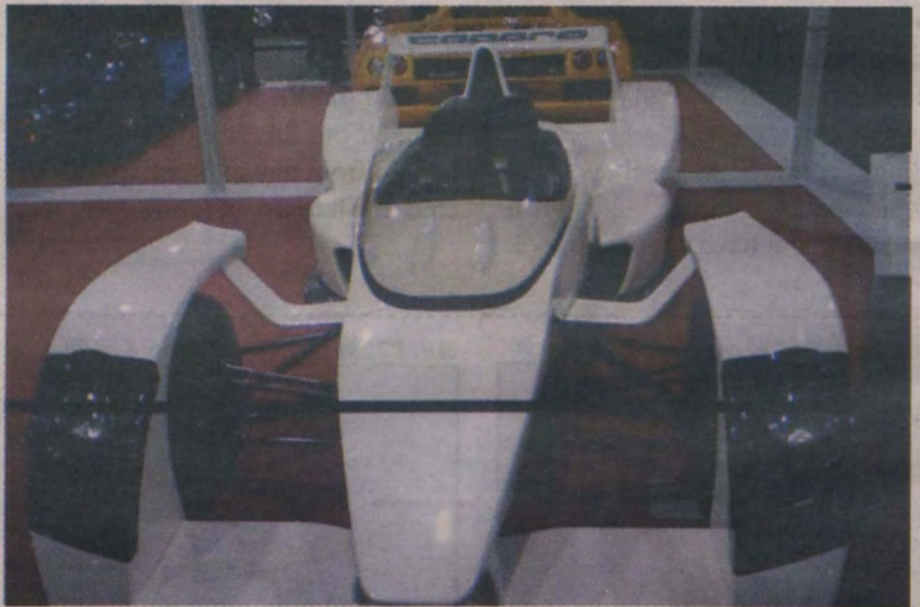
crowd was treated to a Ford tribute with the Top Gear Stunt team, as well as a super-car parade, a car football game of Ireland versus France, a race of home-built custom cars and three-wheeled racing, more flaming cars, the cool wall, endless entertainment, and of course, the Stig!

Top Gear's enigmatic fourth host and tamed racing driver hosted and won his own game show, which was presented by Jimmy Carr on screen in a game where the loser is literally 'killed to death!' Stig ended the show with the World's first indoor motor loop-the-loop.

Throughout the show, the humour-filled quotes of Clarkson and team kept coming ('we are led by a one eyed Scottish idiot', 'the only rule I know about football is that you don't use your hands', and 'it's not the first time James May has been strapped in by a big strong man') that typified the comedy, entertainment, personality, character and common touch provided by Top Gear.

Oh, and let's not forget the...er....cars too!

A white Caparo, just one of the many amazing cars on show, Andrew Purfield



# Vampires, werewolves and huge franchises Oh My!

Laura Butler, Aungier St

The cult craze has deemed vampires to be sexy, sleek creatures of the night. And the Twilight crew are leading the pack.

Fans across the country have boarded the train to Twilight Mania as the second installment of the movie series hit our screens on November 20th.

Fans impatiently queued for over an hour outside cinema screens across

the country, eager to immerse themselves in the salivating city of vampires and werewolves.

This vampire obsession is a recurring fad for adults and teenagers alike. Dating back to Bram Stoker's Dracula - the quintessential vampire novel - the public has endured a long-standing love affair with the dark figures of the underworld.

Fast forward a few years and the blood-sucking beasts are again on the prowl in mainstream culture. This time around however, it seems apparent they are here to stay.

Be it bursting into flames, or sparkling like diamonds in the sun, the perks of the vampire nature fascinate us.

Stephenie Meyer's internationally successful novels have been consumed by millions of avid fantasy readers across the globe. There are dozens of websites and

blogs dedicated to her hardcore fans.

With the thrill of the release of the second film in the franchise, The Twilight Saga: New Moon, we have been hit with posters, billboards and adverts donning the image of three handsome, fit looking youths staring us square in the face.

Cinemas around the country booked up dates in a matter of minutes over New Moon, to the extent that extra showings were added to accommodate.

The Twilight Saga: New Moon broke the record for opening night sales, by grossing \$27 million on in the US and Canada alone, excluding the offshore fan-base which was almost as high.

On its opening weekend, the Summit blockbuster ranked third in the all-time chart, closely behind The Dark Knight and Spiderman. Hands down to the promotional

staff, they have certainly delivered.

For some reason we cannot get enough of the magical, mysterious, whimsical world of the supernatural and what it represents: our darker, devious side. Meyer's accomplishment proves this.

Although the gothic books may not be well written, nor intellectually stimulating, the characters Meyer has created and the double lives they lead in the small town of Forks adhere to the imaginative suggestion that we all secretly crave that kind of dangerous, obsessive excitement.

Team this with Chris Weitz's colourful skills and you are provided with the winning formula.

The vampire phenomenon is truly thriving, this time with half naked canine hunks thrown into to further satiate out thirst.

Now all left to decide is: Are you Team Edward or Team Jacob?

## Ipods just got tougher

Oisín Gregorian, Aungier St

It wasn't long ago when many iPod owners were driven over the edge by mediocre Apple products breaking easily: crashing, freezing screens and, in some extreme cases, exploding batteries!

These inconveniences forced the hapless owner into the arms of the repairman or to trudge back into the shop of purchase and hope to God they were still in warranty for a replacement.

Beforehand, some were so wary of these issues (yet still wanted one for the sake of owning an iPod) that they went and took out replacement cover starting from at least fifty euro.

Apple Corp and its CEO Steve Jobs seemed to be squeezing cash out of the average customer.

Thankfully, the design team at Apple have answered the calls for improved reliability in their more modern models.

In the year since purchasing the iPhone I have experienced no such breakdown. The phone has taken an

attrition test most older iPods wouldn't have survived.

Quite a few times has the iPhone vibrated off the table to a violent crash on the floor, fallen clumsily out of the hand and has even been into a puddle and lived. Remarkably the iPhone has been battered and bruised for the better part of the year and still today functions fully.

Surprisingly, the same can now be said of the iPhone's colleagues the iPod Touch, Classic, Nano and Shuffle – whose reliability has significantly improved.

Every new iPod now has the ever helpful feature of a factory setting restore option via iTunes, which in a few minutes restores the iPod in the case of the screen freezing or should it stop responding.

This feature has since become very helpful to many iPod owners and has also limited the need to bring the product back to the shop.

Indeed, one has to wonder why they didn't, and why they waited for so long after so many breakdowns, complaints and general anger published on Apple feedback forums.

Not only are the new iPods more reliable and durable than those of previous years, they also look better.

Without question, there will certainly be less whinging, less frustration and less money forked out in repairs in the case of these latest Apple releases. Good work Steve.

## Ski goggles just got tactical

Sam Kirwan, Tech Editor

Canada-based company Recon Instruments has announced plans to produce sports goggles with a built-in head-up display (HUD).

Expected to be on the shelves by as early as next year's ski season, the goggles will boast an 'Iron Man' style function of projecting vivid instrument readings such as speed and GPS maps right onto the inside of the lenses.

The most impressive function of the goggles has to be their planned 'Performance Tracking' utility.

Speed, air-time, and jump-height will all be displayed to the wearer instantly, allowing them

to monitor their skill progression, or even to compare with friends. Snowboarders will be stoked.

The most practical use will be the GPS function. The wearer will be able to access detailed maps of the surrounding area, including slope maps for winter sports; and trail maps for cross-country sports such as mountain biking.

A 'friend locator' tool will show the locations of others wearing Recon Instruments goggles on the map.

It is also expected that most modern mobile phones will be able to connect to them wirelessly, to make and receive calls.

Recon Instruments plans to expand the idea into other areas, such as sunglasses for joggers, scuba-divers' masks, and even for military application by foot-soldiers.

No preliminary price has been announced, as the goggles are currently in concept design phase.

Visit [www.reconinstruments.com](http://www.reconinstruments.com) for more information.

## Google is watching you!

Sam Kirwan, Tech Editor

Ever noticed the way Google seems to know what you're about to type as you key it into the search bar? Well, that's because it does.

Those of us with Google accounts – Google mail, for example – will most likely be aware that this has been happening for a good while now.

Account holders will be familiar with the Web History tool, which automatically records searches and 'remembers' them for next time. To those without an account, this will come as a disconcerting addition to surfing the web.

As Google engineer Robby Bryant puts it: "While signed out, [it] can customise your search results" by using up to 180 days worth of previous search information, all of which is collected over that period of time "by an anonymous cookie on your internet browser."

The result: freakishly accurate search predictions. Google says that this is its



way of helping users to quickly find information relevant to them.

As you search, a note is made of what you typed, which result you clicked on, and what you viewed on that website. The next time you search with the same or similar keywords, the result you clicked on last time will most likely be higher up on the list.

Although a perfectly logical, helpful device, some users might see it as Google's way of keeping tabs on their search history, even as far back as that lonely (but exciting) Saturday night in 6 months ago.

That's right, folks: your parents, siblings, girlfriend or boyfriend might not know; but Google does.

Of course, privacy is privacy. Both registered and non-registered users can opt out of this service.

Google account holders can disable it via their Web History settings. 'Signed out' users can do the same via the Web History link at the top of the homepage. Can't figure out how? Google it.

## Assassin's Creed II review

Oisín Gregorian, Aungier St

It's been two years since Ubisoft released the hit game Assassins Creed and in its sequel, the brand new Assassins Creed II, the 3rd person action/adventure fails to disappoint once again.

The plot mimics that of the original Assassins Creed. It centres around the protagonist Desmond Miles who – with the aid of a fantasy styled Animus machine – is able to leap into the lives of his assassin ancestors through genetic memories. Your goal: to collect information in the various towns and countrysides in order to better assassinate your target.

The gameplay takes on an open world format around Renaissance Italy including cities such as Venice, Florence and the Tuscan countryside. Each setting is beautifully detailed and nothing is left to be desired.

From locations like St. Mark's Basilica, The Grand Canal and The Rialto in Venice, The Tuscan Countryside in all its beauty and the many architectural wonders of Renaissance Florence, the graphics of the game really complement the beauty of Italy.

There are many small changes to the

gameplay from the original Assassins Creed. Most noticeable are the character's ability to dive into water and swim, and the addition of a day and night cycle.

The player can now blend with any form of the living peoples, unlike in the previous version where you could only blend with specific people. In order to hide from the authorities when in a wanted situation, your character Ezio can bribe people for protection, remove the many wanted posters scattered around his location or, of course: assassinate corrupt officials.

The combat system has also improved with a wider array of weapons like smaller swords, daggers, maces etc., and the ability to disarm opponents. This eliminates the boring, repetitive system of the original Assassin's Creed, which many players found to be a major flaw.

In total, there are probably over 100 different missions in the game, with plenty of side-missions. A marked improvement on the original.

It is recommended to play the first Assassins Creed to fully understand the world of the series. For hard-core gamers and fans of the first game, for the adventurous type, the action lover and even the fan of good old game violence, this game is for you. For a sequel, it's a very good effort from those at Ubisoft and an enjoyable gaming experience. Assassins Creed II is out now and available from all game stores.

Rating: 8.5/10

## A look back at the year in Sport



An elated Irish rugby squad celebrate winning the grand slam earlier this year

**Sports Editor Paul Mc Nulty sat down with sportswriters Diarmuid Geraghty, Dean Goodison and Conor Ward to look back on the sporting year that was 2009.**

**Paul Mc Nulty**-Well lads, we'll look at the Irish sports first of all. Another year of Kilkenny winning the hurling, is the race for Liam Mc Carthy becoming too predictable?

**Diarmuid Geraghty**-We had the best All-Ireland hurling final in years, with young pretenders Tipp taking on the game's seasoned masters Kilkenny.

The best thing was that the intensity and physicality was massive, but that didn't take from the skill level on show either. It looked like the Cats were beaten at one stage, but like the great champions they are, they pounced for the vital scores when it really counted.

So while it might be a small bit predictable, you could never say that watching Kilkenny is boring-it could almost be described as a privilege.

**Dean Goodison**-Particularly if Kilkenny win the 5-in-a-row. It would mean that they would be the greatest side of all time. It would take a rich fool to back against a fifth Liam McCarthy Cup for the Black and Amber and with Brian Cody in charge there certainly won't be anyone resting on laurels.

**Paul Mc Nulty**-What about the football? Kerry won their fifth All-Ireland of the decade but the standard of football never reached the heights this year, did it?

**Dean Goodison**-Kerry bounced back for a tough Munster Championship outing against Cork to exact revenge in the Croke Park showpiece, adding to their league

triumph in April against Derry.

The Munster champions will have to wait a little longer for their first title since 1990, but maybe not as long as Dublin, who can win Leinster but not much else.

**Diarmuid Geraghty**-We saw a pretty poor standard of football in this year's All-Ireland in general. Apart from a couple of good displays from Kerry, and the Leinster final between Dublin and Kildare, you are clutching at straws after that to remember a decent match all year.

It was dull stuff, with two poor All-Ireland semi-finals too. Maybe the GAA need to look at the back door system.

**Conor Ward**-From a Cork perspective, it's never nice to lose an All-Ireland final to Kerry, especially after hammering them in Munster and getting our hopes up so high.

We are going through a tough patch in the hurling too, and it looks like it will take us a couple of years to get back near the top and really competing for an All-Ireland.

**Paul Mc Nulty**-Well, what can we say about Irish rugby this year? It's just gone from strength to strength really, hasn't it?

**Conor Ward**-Well, it was a magnificent year for Irish rugby as a whole. To win our first Grand Slam in sixty-one years was amazing, especially given the drama of the final day in Cardiff. It certainly wasn't an easy ride from an armchair perspective.

Capping the year off with a fine win against the world champions South Africa was another big high. The emergence of so many young players and the increased competition for places is very

encouraging for the future too.

**Dean Goodison**-Of course it was good to see the Heineken Cup staying in Ireland too, with Leinster finally reaching their promised land, after years of missing out.

Irish teams won every significant competition they were involved in, which says something about where the game is at in the country.

**Paul Mc Nulty**-So lads-what were your personal highlights and lowlights of the year.

**Diarmuid Geraghty**-As a Man United fan it pains me to say it, but you couldn't help but admire Barcelona's display in the Champions League final.

Messi, Iniesta and Xavi played some amazing football throughout the year, and it was great to see an old stalwart in Pep Guardiola coming back as manager and winning trophies with style, grace and humility.

Kerry demolishing the Dubs in the football wasn't a bad day either!

As for a low point-that night in Paris was a killer obviously. After putting up such a great fight and coming so close, the manner of the defeat was hard to stomach. The continued exile and negative attitude of Stephen Ireland is very frustrating too.

Every time Ireland are playing he seems to be in the papers going over the same old rubbish. He claims that he's happy not to be involved, yet he keeps coming out and talking about it, showing a total disrespect to the players who are involved in the squad.

**Conor Ward**-As a boxing fan, it was great to see Floyd Mayweather Jr. back involved in the sport, because

the Pretty Boy is an exceptionally good fighter.

There was no stopping Manny Pacquiao though as he notched up another couple of great wins, and we can now look forward to an absolutely mouth-watering clash between those two lads early next year.

On the negative side of things, Munster losing to Leinster in the Heineken Cup semi-final was a tough day, even though you had to admit they deserved their win.

The Lions losing to South Africa in such cruel circumstances was pretty hard to take too. Besides that, the game is largely lacking for entertainment value unfortunately, with teams struggling with rule changes and an over-emphasis on the physical side of things.

**Dean Goodison**-In tennis, we got a great Wimbledon final for the second year running, with the masterful Roger Federer proving he is still the main man.

In fairness to him though, Andy Roddick was very unfortunate to be denied. We also got to witness the possibly one of the the greatest horse of all time in Sea the Stars who won the Arc, the Guineas and the Derby.

On the down side-I think like all Irish soccer fans, Henry's handball was a killer blow. It seemed like nothing could be worse.

At least that's what we thought until John Delaney asked for us to be the 33rd country in the World Cup, and making us a laughing stock in football-even to that notorious sleazeball Sepp Blatter.

**Paul Mc Nulty**-Thanks for joining me lads-and here's hoping that 2010 will be just as eventful!

# Pool and snooker are on the ball

Joe Bloggs, Aungier St

The Snooker & Pool has had a very successful year so far with 110 members joining the club and two teams competing in the all Ireland 8 ball inter-varsities league.

The league got off to a slow start with the idea of giving as many players as possible competitive games in the run up to the inter varsities championship weekend in Dundalk in February. There has been a big panel for both teams with about thirty players having lined out for DIT between the two teams so far this year.

The A team is nicely poised in their league with a big game coming up to go top of the table on Wednesday. The B team has had a different team in all their games which means that they have found it hard to compete with the first teams from other colleges.

There is a long term plan in place and it is hoped that the club will advantage greatly from all the players getting experience.

Dundalk IT held a friendly tournament and a great day was had up there and our players did DIT proud. The team included; Dave McDonnell, Wayne Doyle, James Nolan, Ronan Byrne and Daniel Sweeney.

The last game of the group had to be played after the Ireland France world cup play off second leg was over. The team performed brilliantly to beat UCD. There were a lot of tired heads at this stage and NUI Galway got the better of us in the semi final. In the individuals Dave McDonnell got the furthest losing in the quarter-final in a tight match.

The day was a great success and a lot



The DIT Snooker & Pool club show they have balls

of players got to experience the nerve jangling experiences of playing for a team in a tournament.

DIT entered two teams in the Snooker inter-varsities in Galway and earned a lot of respect. The A team got through their group unbeaten against three teams who all have snooker tables in their colleges. After getting out of the group the team lost for the third year in a row to a Queens university Belfast team.

The score was 3-0 to DIT at one stage and an upset looked on the cards. Queens however pulled it out of the bag much to their relief and eventually ran out 6-3 winners. The B team did not make it out of their group and lost in the semi final

of the plate competition to University of Ulster Coleraines A team.

The fact that we had one of the favourites for the competition very worried is a testament to the players. There was a huge team spirit and camaraderie amongst the DIT players from both teams over the weekend and it is hoped that this continues and that we can build on this in to the future.

The A team consisted of Dave McDonnell, Darren Duggan, Kevin Fitzsimons, Daniel Sweeney and Wayne Doyle. The B team consisted of James Nolan, Ronan Byrne, Declan McNally, Peter O'Dwyer and Gary McLean.

## Karters down at the wire in Santry

Graham Higginbotham

Tuesday the 10th of November saw the Karting Club make a return to the superb karting venue which is Kart City in Santry. A full grid of 25 drivers arrived to a somewhat slippery track on a crisp Tuesday night.

When the team arrived there was a group out on track already so it gave everyone a good opportunity to have a look at the layout of the track while also giving everyone the chance to see how the karts were reacting to the tricky conditions.

As the club has been to Kart City many times before over the years they can appreciate the difficulty that a bit of rain on the track can give the drivers but as a result of this knew it would be a good nights racing and in truth, were not disappointed.

Once everyone had got their race suits and helmet, a drivers briefing followed. A practice session was given to every driver which helped everyone get to grips with the track conditions without

the added pressure of that comes with racing.

It was clear from the practice that everyone was finding it tough to adjust to the slippery, under steering, ice like conditions in parts of the track.

The first corner after the main straight was one which caused a lot of problems for drivers as they struggled to cope with the under steering they got as they tried to turn around the hairpin.

The added speed of some karts reaching speeds of 40mph also added to the difficulty. As everyone came in, there was a hum of people asking each other how they were taking corners, what lines to take, breaking markers and techniques of how to slid the karts around some corners.

It was interesting listening to everyone's opinions as everyone had different ways of taking the same corner so it's fair to say that there was a lot of techniques on offer.

With the practices out of the way, it was time for racing! Every driver had two heats in which to score maximum points. Maximum points were awarded to first position and then they decreased all the way down to last place.

With this in mind and the knowledge that only the top 16 drivers would progress to the semi finals everyone was out there to win and make their drives count.

With a lot of skill on show each race was

really exciting to watch. With more close calls, near misses and spins that would make the spini's at 103.8 dizzy, the top 16 drivers were announced.

The top 16 drivers were split into two semi finals made up of eight drivers with only the top 4 drivers in each progressing into the 8 kart final. With the skills shown by each of these drivers during the day the crowd were poised for an epic final. With all the drivers on the grid, Graham Higginbotham seemed to have some kart concerns as he exited the pits. Once the marshals had checked the kart it was driven back into position on the grid for the start of the race.

Eoin O'Siochru was on pole after setting the fastest time of the day in his semi final, the remaining places were filled by the rest of the finalist. The flag was then dropped and the race was on.

In what was one of the most closely fought finals of the year, the trio of Eoin, Graham and James went clear of the rest of the group at the beginning of the race. With passes coming thick and fast the trio swapped places constantly for a duration of 4 laps.

Graham braked too early coming into the hairpin at the end of the main straight leaving the door wide open for James and Eoin to take over on the inside promoting James from 3rd to 1st in one move.

In the very next corner however Eoin dived under James followed by Graham demoting him back to 3rd almost immediately. In the same corner Graham

and James came close to contact which caused James to lose his momentum and gave Eoin and Graham some breathing room to fight for the win amongst themselves.

In what was the race of the session from these two young drivers, both sporting distinctive racing helmets, it was easy to know the difference between them.

The Duo must have passed each other at least 12 times in the 10 lap final. With defensive lines clear for all to see and passing maneuvers coming thick and fast it the win was decided on the last lap when Graham came under Eoin coming into the hairpin at the end of the main straight and held off the efforts of Eoin 'till the chequered flag.

Punching the air with delight it was clear that Graham was happy with the win. Both drivers shook hands after coming into the paddock so good sportsmanship was displayed which was a nice thing to see after such a close final.

James took a well deserved third spot. Upon talking to people trackside it was clear that this final was by far the race of the session and one which was as thrilling to watch as it was to drive.

Next up was the prize giving and after the top three drivers had been awarded their medals and trophies, it was time for the champagne! With everyone running for cover Graham sprayed bubbly over his fellow contestants and into the air in delight.

# Senior GAA team hit by string of injuries

Darragh Biddlecombe

The senior GAA team with an unusually high number of injuries and players still involved in Club championships, found the going tough in the early stages of the Division 1 league.

Missing up to sixteen of the senior panel, they played and were beaten by UCD, DCU, and Carlow IT in their opening league matches.

Forced into a play off to hold their position in Division 1 they defeated Dundalk IT comprehensively 5-10 to 0-2 with a near full strength panel a fortnight ago. They are currently into week two of their four week winter training programme.

They are looking forward to the Sigerson draw next week and their opening O'Byrne Cup match versus Laois on Saturday 9th January.

Meanwhile the Senior B team have had victories over Carlow IT, UCD the team finished second in the group to DCU. They went into an away quarter final versus UUJ where they were defeated. They are now looking forward to the Championship programme after Christmas.



DIT's Darragh Breathnach in action, Darragh Biddlecombe

## Soccer team draw with UCD

Conor McMahon

DIT 1  
UCD 1

The DIT Men's Premier Soccer team resumed their annual duel with UCD in a blustery Grangegorman match where both teams managed to produce some free-flowing football despite the less than ideal conditions.

As two of the major powerhouses in college football, these sides have crossed paths on an ever-increasing basis in recent years with never much to choose between the two outfits.

With UCD assured of progression through to the knockout stages, the game held more significance for DIT who needed to avoid defeat to ensure qualification.

The game began with DIT facing a strong breeze in addition to the famous Grangegorman hill yet their passing football belied these adverse circumstances.

DIT made all the early running and UCD struggled to get to grips with a narrow three-man midfield ably supported by two orthodox wingers and the excellent hold-up play of lone front man Stephen Roche.

DIT continually carved open the UCD rearguard but a combination of good goal-keeping and poor finishing saw them fail to capitalise on their impressive approach play.

Then, as is so often the case, the team who had been under the cosh since kick-off nicked the opening goal. A rare foray into the DIT defensive third from UCD saw DIT concede a corner. From the resulting set-piece, poor marking allowed a free header which found the back of the net despite the best efforts of goalkeeper Craig Hyland and full-back Dean Zambra.

Having dominated the game to this point, DIT could have crumbled following the goal but they continued to play an attractive style of football and duly got their reward just before the half-time whistle.

Another sweeping move found Sean Fitzgerald in acres of space 25 yards from goal where he manoeuvred the ball onto his supposedly weaker left foot before unleashing a rasping drive into the top-right corner.

After their fifteen minutes respite, the teams returned to the field with DIT looking to build on their excellent first half and exploit the conditions which now favoured them. However, this never materialised as DIT failed to re-produce their sparkling football from the first period.

As the game wore on with both teams seemingly content to share the spoils, the pace of the game dropped and both teams began to play as teams who were happy to be in the next round.

So, DIT move onto the knock-out stages where they will face DCU. If they can re-produce a fraction of the form which they displayed in the first-half, then they can look forward to definitely still being involved come the business end of the season.

## Camogie team on form

Mary McElroy

The first match of the season was against UCD and the DIT camogie team began their preparation of their goals of winning the league and the Purcell cup.

The game got off to a great start when Joellenne Hoary in full forward position opened the scoring by hitting over a point, with many to follow. Emer Brunelle was in flying form and added two more to the score board.

The UCD team kept plugging away at their defense and their centre forward was causing a few problems but after re-grouping at half time the team became more cohesive and defended like a unit.

Noelle and Grainne played the well in defending UCD from scoring. Katie Murphy did was good in midfield attacking and defending, covering good ground.

Support play was important in the attacking line as Carolane and Catherine both scored points.

On Tuesday 22th of November the team played Maynooth at Saint Brigid's park, Blanchardstown in terrible weather conditions.

In the first half the team fought against the wind and driving rain only trailing by two points at half time as the team headed for shelter.

The team were determined to win this match to compete for a place in the league final, and Jane Dolan, at midfield played a great game and split open the Maynooth defense.

Joellenne Hoary capitalised on these, and Paula Culhiddy hit top corner of the net with a goal from a beautiful flick of her hurley as she broke free from her defender on the edge of the square.

Aileen O' Loughlin, wing forward scored a point, with Cathy scoring several points.

Emer Brunelle played as an extra back sthe teameping back and forth collecting any lose balls that could have caused a



## Soccer stars get national recognition

Conor McMahon

DIT Soccer club once again provided a strong contingent at the trials for the Colleges Football Association of Ireland (CFAI) squad for the upcoming year.

In recent years, DIT has maintained a strong presence on this prestigious side with DIT players often providing the core of the squad.

Last year, in particular, DIT representatives were crucial members

of the team which went unbeaten throughout a series of competitive games winning every game without the concession of a single goal.

Having had 5 representatives on last year's side, with Dean Zambra, Conor McMahon, David O'Sullivan, Stephen Roche and Paul Whelan proudly representing the college, the Soccer club hope for similar recognition this year.

With Paul Whelan the only player who has finished his studies, the returning players' hope to retain their squad places and with some impressive performances in the opening games this year. Player's such as Eoin Kavanagh, Niall Flynn and Craig Hyland will hope to impress at the trials, which take place on December 2nd, to force their way into the national squad.

The squad is due to be selected in the coming weeks and hopefully it will include a significant number of DIT's current stars.

## DIT win at sailing

Richard Burton

The second event of the IUSA calendar saw 28 teams head to Schull for the IUSA Southern on the 14th and 15th of November. The event was hosted by the Fastnet Marine Outdoor Education Centre and DITSC.

After a quick briefing on Saturday morning, 4 flights of boats were launched, although there was a swell slowing things down, the watchful eyes of Dave Harte and Richard Bruton ensured the safe launch of the boats and a swift start to racing.

Seventy-four races were started and finished on Saturday, as light and wind began to fade at 4pm. The remaining 10 races were completed on Sunday morning before the knock out stages. These last few races turned out to be very important, as they decided the top seed in the Gold fleet. UCD1 beat UL1 in the last race of the round robin to clinch the top seeded spot for the Gold fleet quarter finals.

After a quick break from racing the flight sheet for the finals of all 3 fleets was produced, with a further 52 races scheduled for the day. The Gold fleet saw UCD1 take on UL2 in the first best of 3 quarter final. This was followed by the all Dublin match up of DIT1 and DCU1.

Current Varsity champions UL1 took on Schull Community College, who after receiving an invite to the event, ended up topping the Gold "B" group after the first day. UCC1 and TCD1 made of the final pairing of the quarter finals.

In the Silver fleet DIT 2 qualified for the quarter finals before losing out to UCD2 who had reached the semi finals of the gold fleet at the first event of the season.

DIT1 were up against TCD1 in the first semi final of the day and won in two races to make it to the final. UL1 and UCD1 battled it out in the other semi final, going down to an umpire decision on the line of the third and final race. UL1 were victorious in the end and were to compete against DIT1 in the best-of-five final.

The first race was comfortably won DIT1 in a steady 1, 2, combination. Race 2 was much more closely contested and as race 3 came to a close DIT1 were looking to be overall winner but Simon Rattigan was flagged as he crossed the finish line giving UL1 a race win and a chance to stay alive in the competition.

Race 4 saw a 1,3,6 combination in favour of DIT at the leeward mark. The race wasn't decided until DIT converted their 1,3 to a 1, 2 allowing them to cross the line securing the IUSA Southern 2009/2010 with a score line of 3-1.

DIT1 were Marty O'Leary, Tomás Duke, Simon Rattigan, Aoife English, Conor Byrne and Rachel Guy

DIT2 were Darren Burke, Dave Egan, Neasa Coady, Tony Fitzgearld, Ben Malone and Peter O'Reilly

12 of the top college and ex college sailors got invited to battle it out for the title Random pairs champion 2009,

The basis of the event is that each helm enters individually and is assigned a different team for each race. Then each race win with a different team counts as a point. then the top 2 ranked helms. Go through to a final.

Each Sailor had 10 races in the round robin league format. and after this DIT's Marty O'Leary was top of the pile. DIT team of Rachel Guy and Simon Rhatigan were ranked 3rd out of the twelve.

Due to the Bad weather that was forecast to arrive. It was decided to go straight to finals. This would be between DIT's Marty O'Leary and UL's Darragh O'Connor, who had DIT sailor Emer Mc Nally sailing with him.

For the final each of the two finalists are match with a random team. In a twist of faith UL's Darragh O'Connor and DIT's Emer Mc Nally were teamed with DIT's Simon Rhatigan and Rachel Guy for the best of five races final. Essentially an all DIT team except for Darragh O'Connor would race against O'Leary for the title

O'Leary was teamed with Ex UCD sailor John Chambers.

The final was tightly contested with jury and officials having to be on their toes in the end it was UL's Darragh O'Connor who narrowly outdid O'Leary from DIT.

# Christmas racing

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James Sheridan

It's that time of year again. The time for eating, drinking and jump racing. Stephens Day kicks off four days of top quality National Hunt action both here and in England that can only be matched by Cheltenham in March.

The big race of the festive season in England is the King George VI Chase at Kempton. Kauto Star and Ruby Walsh will be aiming to rewrite the record books yet again when they attempt to win it for a fourth time.

Champion hurdle hopefuls will put their reputations on the line at Leopardstown and at Kempton while the marathon runners will battle it out over nearly four miles in the Welsh Grand National at Chepstow.

There is also the Lexus Chase on December 28th where Joncol, Notre Pere and Cooldine look like they will fight it out for the right to be called Ireland's top chaser

Without a doubt the most competitive race of the Christmas period is the Paddy Power Chase on December 27th at Leopardstown.

Run over three miles with a prize fund of €190,000, the Paddy Power is a gruelling contest where jumping, stamina and courage are needed in abundance.

Likely to be run on heavy ground with a maximum field of 30 going to post, this handicap has thrown up some big priced winners in the past with last year's victor Wheresben going in at 33-1.

The English challenge is headed by the Paul Nicholls trained Nycteos. A horse with plenty of ability but has dumped Ruby Walsh on the floor in his last two races. There will be no room for errors in this contest.

Experienced chaser Operation

Houdini will go into the race in great form from having won two hurdle races in the last month.

He went off favourite for this race last year but was a disappointing eighth and even off a six pound higher mark this time he should still be in the shake up.

Two sneaking in at the bottom of the handicap are Askthemaster, whose trainer Robert Tyner knows what it takes to win this race, and Plaisir Destruval.

They finished first and second in a recent race at Naas and should go well.

My two for the race are the Gordon Elliot trained Hoopy and the likely winner Lochan Lacha.

Hoopy was a fast finishing third in the race last year and looked to be returning to something of his best recently. He should be staying on at the business end when many have cried enough.

The Tony Martin trained Lochan Lacha has the look of a horse trained specifically for the race. He was unplaced behind Tranquil Sea at Naas in October and then won a competitive hurdle race at Fairyhouse under Ruby Walsh which should have him primed for the big one.

Off a rating of 122 he will probably not have to carry any more than ten stone ten which would be a perfect racing weight.

His ability to handle the ground, the three mile trip and jump well makes him the selection.

3 Point Win Lochan Lacha Paddy Power Chase - 8/1 with Paddy Power

1 Point Each Way Hoopy Paddy Power Chase - 20/1 with Paddy Power



# Sports books of the Year

Paul McNulty, Sports Editor

At this time of year-we are all looking for good sports books as gifts. They are better than socks or aftershave-but only if you choose a good one that has something a bit different. There is a lot of dross out there-list books and "official GAA books" are generally to be avoided like the plague.

This year marked the 125th anniversary of the GAA, and predictable a slew of books came out that looked like they could have been written by the lads in Hayes' Hotel in 1884.

For GAA books this year-and indeed all books, the pick of the crop is undoubtedly Damian Lawlor's *Working on a Dream*.

Lawlor spent the year with the Waterford football team-watching them train, play and everything in between.

That Waterford's footballers are perennially rooted in Division 4 of the League and not exactly the glamour boys of the GAA make the book all the more interesting.

There are no prima-donnas here, and reading the thoughts of manager John Kiely makes you wish that the Sunday Game would employ him rather than the bland nothingness that is Anthony Tohill.

This fly-on-the-wall type book has long been a feature of American sports writing, with Buzz Bissinger's *Friday Night Lights* and Michael Lewis setting the standard. It is testament to Lawlor that his book bears comparison to these.

It captures the essence of being an amateur footballer in what is a sport with professional standards. It is a heart-warming book that would grace the shelves of any right-thinking GAA follower.

In what was rich year for Irish sports books-one of the most impressive tomes of recent years is Kieran Shannon's *Hanging from the Rafters*.

This book, weighing in at over 500 pages, looks at the phenomenon that was basketball in Ireland in the late 80's and early 90's.

He looks at the characters who played in the decrepit halls of Ireland's parochial halls-from Tralee to North Mon in Cork and Killala in Ballina, where the supporters feet often marked the boundaries of the court, such were

the crowds these men attracted.

For a few years, coming to play in Ireland for a while was a valid option for those US college stars who didn't quite make it to the NBA.

Indeed one player, Mario Elie, who played for Killester, went on to win 2 NBA Championships after his spell in North Dublin.

Shannon's book captures the zany spirit that these athletes found when they came to Ireland. Deora Marsh, an American who came to Ballina said "When I got here in 1988-people used to stare at me on the street because I was the first black man they ever seen. Hell-even dogs looked at me funny!"

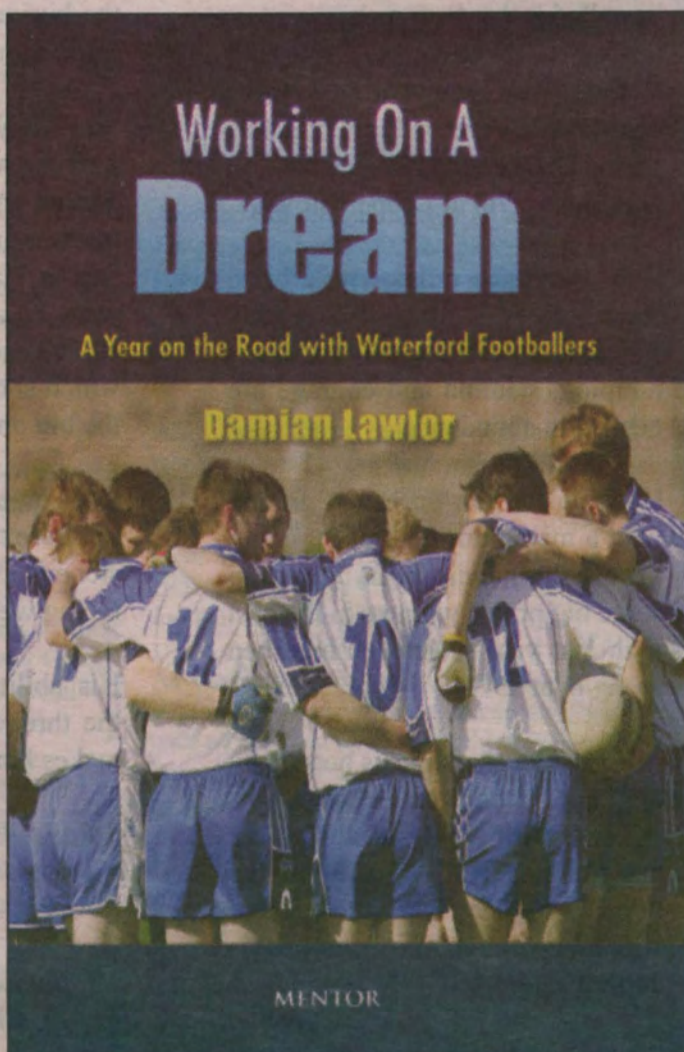
*Confessions of a Rugby Mercenary*, by John Daniell, is an unusually frank autobiography. Daniell is a tough, wizened old Kiwi seeking employment in France. He knows he's no superstar, but that's the charm of the book.

It tells of the many hits he takes in the course of making his living while playing the game he loves. Daniell comes across as the anti-Tiger Woods-he is the least polished, least arrogant sportsman you could come across-and is all the more likeable for it.

The tennis book of the year, has to be *Open*, by Andre Agassi. The big surprise here is not so much his admission of drug abuse (he details his time using crystal meth) but the depth of his dislike for the sport that made his fortune.

He also revealed that the famous Agassi mane of flowing locks was in fact hair extensions, and he had to keep them in place with hairpins during the French Open Final in 1990.

"The night before the tournament I used the wrong conditioner and the thing started to fall out. I never prayed for a result in my life, but I prayed that that thing would stay in."



# Up the Jumper

With Conor Ward

"It was a very good year." OK, I wasn't seventeen anymore unfortunately, and Frank Sinatra was sadly long gone, but great and all as he was, I didn't need his melodic soporific tones or his piercing blue eyes to tell me that 2009 was a good one. I had Messrs McGurk, Hook, Pope and O'Shea to do that job - and even their grandiose eulogies, insightful little anecdotes and pleasing brand of witty banter was superfluous. I knew before they even started that it was a very good year.

"It was really backs to the wall stuff at the end - it was great to keep them out and finish '09 unbeaten which is pretty sweet. We're far from the finished article but we're going in the direction we want to go"... The words of Ireland captain (and best ever player - have I mentioned that before) after our most recent victory over world champions South Africa. Pretty sweet indeed.

I say 'most recent' because that's the third time in a row we have beaten the Springboks - something we shouldn't be slow to shout from the rooftops. (Incidentally, if you are going up on a rooftop for whatever reason this time of year... Get warm clothes on... And be careful for the love of God, because it's cold and icy, and if you take a fall anything could happen. And don't come crying back to me saying you weren't warned)

Anyhoo, amidst all this concern for the safety of my contemporaries, where was I? Oh yeah, the year that was, a little recap. We started by beating France at Croke Park, finished by downing the Lions-conquering Tri Nations-winning Boks, and sure didn't we squeeze in an old Grand Slam somewhere in between for good measure - our first since 1948.

And although adding, subtracting and long division have never been the foremost specialties in Wardalinho's particular box of tricks, my trusty Casio calculator told me that we had just bridged a 61 year gap. Nor could the Casio calculator - or anything since put on the market by the good people of Microsoft, Apple Macintosh or Google - find any record of a loss on Ireland's ledger for 2009. Ten games played. Nine wins, one draw.

We have taken on and got a result against every major power in world rugby - bar New Zealand - over the last twelve months. And the All Blacks are nothing that would have

our lads quaking in their boots at this particular moment in time.

With that in mind, I have to say I find the IRB world rankings a little derisory to this team's recent level of achievement. We are lying in fourth place, with the uninspiring All Blacks sitting pretty at the top, followed by the Boks.

To my mind, you can't take away from the year South Africa had, however. They followed their Lions taming by an impressive run to the Tri Nations title. A touch jaded from those exploits, they went out with a whimper on their autumn tour. In the bigger scheme of things, they are probably still just about the top team. But Ireland are now right in the shake-up, and only looking to get stronger and stronger over the next two years leading into the World Cup.

We have a truly excellent coach at the helm of an experienced and capable group of deputies. A quiet but astute individual, it was no surprise to see Declan Kidney swoop the IRB coach of the year accolade.

But more than that, we have young blood flourishing in this squad at last. A fresh crop of exciting talent has exploded onto the international stage. Stephen Ferris took the Six Nations by storm, Luke Fitzgerald (unfortunately injured for a while now) has gone from strength to strength.

Rob Kearney has become arguably the best full-back in the world game. Tommy Bowe has been just incredible on the wing. Cian Healy has made his mark in the front row. Tomas O'Leary has emerged as an international scrum-half of substance. Keith Earls has kicked on again and gained invaluable experience.

And then there's that lad Jonny Sexton, God bless him, a pure gem of a player. Two top-notch out-halves are now vying for a place in Kidney's line-up come the Six Nations, which is just two months away.

We also have that guy O'Driscoll, who I think I mentioned earlier, and some more handy customers like O'Connell, Wallace (x2), Heaslip and D'Arcy.

We're not a perfect side by any means, and there are areas that need improvement going forward.

But these are good times dear friends. May it continue to be so in 2010.