DIT Student Union


DIT:Students Union

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DITSU survey raises questions

By Samantha Rowntree

A STUDENT satisfaction survey carried out for DITSU prior to the Christmas holidays highlighted the lack of knowledge (or lack of interest?) that DIT students have in the student's body.

The survey revealed that only 44% of students know the identity of DITSU Overall President, namely Vinny Dooley.

The DIT site Presidents fare slightly better in the survey with 67% being familiar to students, while their deputies only manage an average 54% recognition.

But when students were asked how satisfied they were with their Overall President, the result showed a strange discrepancy. Nearly three-quarters of those surveyed were happy with Vinny Dooley’s performance despite the fact that, as identified earlier, only 44% of students knew who he was, which is an odd finding to say the least.

Most of the students surveyed by DITSU want to see an improvement in the entertainment provided by the Students Union. This is reflected in the 82% of students who are in favour of an inter-campus DIT Rag Ball.

Students are equally in favour of bands and big name DJs for such events. Another interesting finding in this survey reveals that most students are relying on part-time work for their main source of income rather than a grant, loan or family source. With 63% of students relying on wages from part-time work it is no source of surprise that financial constraints are forcing so many students, on a national wide basis, to leave college.

A total of four hundred students from the approximate 28,000 students in DIT were covered by a survey, which excluded students attending DIT Rathmines and the Institute's smaller buildings. What was clear from the survey figures conducted by Foresight Communications, was that there seemed a general decline in the figures which were favourable to the Union in relation to the 1999 survey.

Several attempts were made to contact DITSU President Vinny Dooley in relation to the survey's findings, but none were forthcoming.

Childcare course suffers gender imbalance

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Childcare course suffers gender imbalance

Only one male student in class

DIT Rathmines plays host to the BA Degree in Early Childhood Care and Education course. This three-year degree was introduced in 1999 to replace the long running certificate and diploma courses. The most remarkable fact about the course is that it has only one male student in a class of 53, demonstrating that there is a long way to go to achieve an equitable gender balance.

The course trains people to work with children from 0-7 years. It gives a general training for people to work with children in a wide variety of settings including creches, preschools, special needs centres and hospitals.

There are very few men in the course but there are hopes that through career guidance more males and females will consider childcare as a profession.

Course co-ordinator Anne Fitzpatrick said that Irish third level institutes were not alone in terms of the lack of male involvement in childcare courses.

"Gender imbalance in the staffing of early years services is a huge issue not just in Ireland but internationally," she said.

For example in Norway, which has very well developed childcare services, the Government there has been trying to correct this but have only 6% male staff despite a pro-active policy to recruit men.

The EU is also addressing the issue with an aim (by 2006) that 20% of staff working in the sector should be men. While the School of Social Sciences aims to have 25% mature students on their courses this has not always been achieved.

The points for the course last year were 350, five points less than the year before.

The course content is a combination of theory and practice. There are placements throughout the course starting from first year where students work one day a week and also undertake two block weeks of practical work.

Continued on page 5
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Budget offers little respite for cash strapped students

UNDER the new rent a room scheme announced in the December Budget, home owners will be able to earn up to £10,000 each year from renting part of their homes. This makes it an attractive scheme to first time buyers who need help with inflated mortgages.

This in fact means that people have been given an excuse to make money out of students who have no or few options for affordable rented accommodation.

Homeowners, now more than ever, homeowners will advertise rooms with the aim of attracting students in order to top up their income. How many students will see finding sharing box room so narrowly to become glorified house pets? Will the student become the resident name? But the biggest question is how will students afford to pay their rent to these landlords?

The accommodation crisis has affected every student at some point and the government has yet to walk the walk on the issue as an election lesson. The home student Sinéad Molony, winner of the Today FM Live Real of a Young Person for 2001, question unfortunately cannot spend her winnings on rent because it is impossible for her to find somewhere suitable to rent.

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I live in Drogheda and since my win my mother has had a friend have been looking for a place but it's impossible to find anywhere this time of year," she said.

The Union of Students in Ireland (USI) has condemned the Minister for Finance, Charlie McCrevey, for failing to address the issue of inadequate student grants in this years Budget. The USI says that over 30,000 students have been forced to drop out of college since the 1999 Budget. The Union believes that this figure will continue to rise because Finance Minister Charlie McCrevey has so far failed to address the issue of inadequate student grants.

After the Budget, USI President Julian de Spaine did not mince his words with Minister McCrevey, "Today's Budget is being hailed as a Budget to fight inflation. But there has been no attempt to tackle difficulties that are faced by faced by students because of spiralling rent costs. The gap between what the grant provides and what a student needs to survive is growing and the Minister doesn't seem to care. Minister McCrevey's cop-out will inevitably lead to an even higher rate of student drop-out", he Institute of Education and Values annual property survey revealed that rent costs in Dublin increased by 18 per cent, while the student grants had only increased by 5 per cent in the same period.

"If you happened to be one of the 17,000 students who took to the streets in the weeks before the budget it was obviously to no avail. The campaign had little impact on Minister McCrevey who blatantly ignored the students' demands calling for grants to be increased to social welfare levels."

The campaign had little impact on Minister McCrevey who bluntly ignored the students' demands calling for grants to be increased to social welfare levels. Cian Ó Callaghan, USI has vowed to continue the campaign "Students will not forgive a Minister for Finance who squandered an historic opportunity to make access to higher education a reality for everyone. Our campaign will continue until the Government acts on this issue," De Spaine has accused the Minister of having a "tight-fisted" attitude towards students, "There are no excuses for the Minister's tight-fisted attitude towards students."

The Estimates of Receipts and Expenditure for 2001 show a surplus of revenue over expenditure of almost £3.5 billion. To increase student grants to reasonable levels would cost £255 million. This figure shows a surplus of revenue over expenditure of almost £3.5 billion.

Don't forget to tell us what you think about what we have for you, what you're interested in, what things cost in euro to develop a scale of value for themselves in euro. To make things easier when the euro is introduced, take this opportunity to recharge the batteries for badly needed break and the same week there should be a competition to show a surplus of revenue over expenditure of almost £3.5 billion.

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"Your opinions and input are very important to us and could be the basis for future Government policies in this field.

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[Letter to the Editor]

Dear Sir,

I am writing in response to the headline article in the most recent edition (Issue 10) entitled "Students’ Union loses £36,000 on ball". Firstly, as an employee of DITSU, I agree with everything the President has said and done in the aftermath of the "Spellbound" cancellation. While the main reasons for the failure of the event were bad timing and bad publicity, arguably due to poor management decisions, I feel the time for finger pointing is past. As caretakers of students money, the Union has to act on what it feels are the wishes of the students. In this case, it was felt that a Halloween Ball would help to foster a greater sense of identity amongst DIT students, who are decentralised geographically. We are all under the umbrella of DIT, yet often see ourselves as students of Aungier Street, or Mountjoy Square, as a pose to DIT Students. The results of a recent independent survey suggest that, yes, students are interested in becoming more unified socially, with 64% of students surveyed endorsing the idea of more inter-DIT events.

Secondly, a "Students’ Union source" got it wrong. While the President did say that share of the work involved, the exec were consulted on both venue and line-up, and were each given a specific job to do in the run-up to the event.

Thirdly, I have to question the reasoning behind Karling Club President, Ray Nangle’s comments dominating half of this article. While Mr. Nangle is President of one of DIT’s biggest clubs, I feel he lacks the specific knowledge of the Students’ Union required to make such sweeping statements as “it’s a joke”. I don’t know where he got his figures regarding advertising. I don’t know that they are inaccurate. With no disrespect to Mr. Nangle, he is speculating on what may, or may not have been done. Also, as President of a prominent club, he should realise that DITSU do not fund club activities or societies, we merely facilitate them. The money comes from DIT, and is disseminated through the clubs and societies as the Social and Cultural Committees or the Sports Council sees fit.

To take up another point, DITSU are a non-profit organisation, and it was never our intention to make money off the students. While the price of tickets was higher than previous events, I still feel that it was a reasonable price. While a loss of £36,000 is substantial, the Union is thankfully, and I might add, through good management, in a position to absorb this loss without there being any affect on the services we provide to students. Mr Nangle goes on to say, “if any other managing director lost £36,000 they would be gone”. While the Union is there for the protection of the students, it must never be our intention to make money off the students. While the price of tickets was higher than previous events, I still feel that it was a reasonable price.

While risks always come with running a business, the Union has to act on what it feels are the wishes of the students. Therefore, it was felt that a Halloween Ball would help to foster a greater sense of identity amongst DIT students, who are decentralised geographically. We are all under the umbrella of DIT, yet often see ourselves as students of Aungier Street, or Mountjoy Square, as a pose to DIT Students. The results of a recent independent survey suggest that, yes, students are interested in becoming more unified socially, with 64% of students surveyed endorsing the idea of more inter-DIT events.

However, despite her win, Sinead who hails from Drogheda still hasn’t been able to find anywhere to rent in Dublin. She and a friend have been looking for somewhere to live but as it’s so late in the year they’ve given up little hope of finding anywhere. Since the win, Sinead has quit her part time job and is enjoying her money. Little did she know that Tom Dunne of the 'Pet Sounds' show was going to tell her she’d won £3,000. Sinead says, “I was really shocked, it was brilliant”. However, despite her win, Sinead who hails from Drogheda still hasn’t been able to find anywhere to rent in Dublin. She and a friend have been looking for somewhere to live but as it’s so late in the year they’ve given up little hope of finding anywhere. Since the win, Sinead has quit her part time job and is enjoying her money. Little did she know that Tom Dunne of the 'Pet Sounds' show was going to tell her she’d won £3,000. Sinead says, “I was really shocked, it was brilliant”.

First year journalism student in DIT Aungier Street, Sinead Molony couldn’t believe her luck when she was one of four winners of the "Live Rent Free for a Year" competition

Sinead was at home getting ready for a night out when she received a phone call from Today FM. Little did she know that Tom Dunne of the 'Pet Sounds' show was going to tell her she’d won £3,000. Sinead says, “I was really shocked, it was brilliant”. However, despite her win, Sinead who hails from Drogheda still hasn’t been able to find anywhere to rent in Dublin. She and a friend have been looking for somewhere to live but as it’s so late in the year they’ve given up little hope of finding anywhere. Since the win, Sinead has quit her part time job and is enjoying her money. Little did she know that Tom Dunne of the 'Pet Sounds' show was going to tell her she’d won £3,000. Sinead says, “I was really shocked, it was brilliant”.

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Yours Sincerely,
Will Nelson
Deputy President
DITSU, Kevin Street

[News in brief]

By Samantha Rowntree

Chemistry Competition

This may be your last chance to enter the 'Chemistry on the Web' competition, as the closing date of March 15 approaches.

This competition is designed to encourage students with an interest in IT to utilize their skills, to facilitate the understanding of chemistry. The total prize fund of £1,100 could come in very handy!

All entries will be judged on information content, presentation, creativity, innovation and initiative.

To check out some of last year’s entries check out the chemistry website for DIT. For rules and further information visit http://www.dit.ie/chemistryrcscomp.html

Send all entries to Dr. Patricia Emis, Dublin Institute of Technology, Kevin Street, Dublin 8. (01) 4024780

First year journalism student in DIT Aungier Street, Sinead Molony couldn’t believe her luck when she was one of four winners of the ‘Live Rent Free for a Year’ competition.
Childcare course suffers gender imbalance

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However, DIT is not unique, as there's a similar situation with the early childhood studies course in UCC where only two of the 50 students on the course were male.

Dr. Francis Douglas, director in UCC believes the growth in the childcare area is due in part to the implementation of the (99) Childcare Act, whereby the health boards have to take responsibility for pre-schools in their area and the administration surrounding it.

"There is a further expansion coming," said Dr. Francis, "that's to do with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, which at the moment is looking into training in the EU childcare sector. They are going to create a new profession." DIT acting through its Centre for Social and Educational Research is providing technical assistance to the Department on this initiative.

Through research more information has been found on why men don't consider childcare as a career option. To tackle the problem work needs to be done at every level from within the family, through the education system our right to governmental policy level.

"Gender roles become established in early childhood with girls typically taking on the role of carers, a fact which can be noted when observing boys and girls at play," said Fitzpatrick.

"In early years services, staff encourage both boys and girls to experience a wide range of play opportunities as part of a gender equity policy.

"The area of early childhood studies is definitely a growing area and there's now much more variety in the employment opportunities for graduates. Even the prison service has a childcare service for children and a number of DIT graduates are working in the play service in Mountjoy prison."
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All-in-one Business Faculty by 2012

By Samantha Rowntree

FROM October 2002, Aungier Street, DIT is expected to house all Business Faculty Programmes to become the largest business school in Ireland. The Faculty will provide 5,000 students at all levels of study.

The first phase of the Aungier Street development was completed in September 1994, which relocated the former College of Commerce in Rathmines to Aungier Street.

The second phase of the DIT masterplan will extend teaching facilities, bringing Accountancy, Business Studies and Marketing together on the one site.

Autumn 2000 saw the beginning of this second phase of the Aungier Street development.

The new 12,700 square metre building will incorporate extensive Information Technology facilities, lecture theatres, classrooms, staff offices, a new library and a restaurant, as well as extending the student social/recreational area on campus.

At the signing of the Phase Two development, the Minister for Education and Science, Dr Michael Woods T.D., by bringing the various Schools of the Faculty together on one site the Institute will benefit from economies of scale in terms of class sizes and all of the academic synergies and potential for development of existing and new programmes.

In explaining the Government's commitment to developing third level education to top class standards, Dr Woods said, "the Government recently announced details of £5.35 billion to be spent on education as part of the National Development Plan (2000-2006), of which approximately £1.6 billion is for education infrastructure."

DIT's Faculty of Business director Paul O'Sullivan is delighted with the new development which will bring all business courses under the one roof for the first time: "The new library and IT centre is a tremendous resource for DIT students, right in the heart of Dublin's business district," he said.

"Currently, the faculty is spread over several campuses but this expansion will provide for a totally integrated business centre in Aungier Street," Commenting on the expansion, Peter Durning, President of Aungier Street Student Union spoke of the changing face of the Institute.

"It is a one-year support and management development programme which helps graduate entrepreneurs start-up and run their own businesses.

The programme offers participants, office space and facilities, advice and counselling, financial support, management development training, access to an enterprise network and access to DIT resources and expertise.

The Fast Growth Programme tends to the very specific needs of Ireland's small growing businesses. Built on a number of successful company development models including the Centre's own, the Fast Growth Programme is a three-pronged support system.

It includes interactive workshops, individual strategic and investment counselling and assistance, in order to facilitate the company's safe and successful growth.

The Small Enterprise Seed Fund, a Designated Business Expansion Scheme Fund, was initiated in 1995 in order to create a source of equity funding for small companies.

The Project Development Centre (PDC), an effective resource centre for entrepreneurs providing them with support and training through the start-up and growth phases of their business development.

Initiated by the DIT, the Centre's aim has been to assist entrepreneurs in the areas of innovation, product development and enterprise creation, and to create a highly supported resource - the pool of highly skilled graduates.

The Centre operates under the Directorate of External Affairs of the Dublin Institute of Technology.

The Project Development Centre Director Rea O'Neill has been a full-time lecturer with the Dublin Institute of Technology.

He currently holds the position of Industrial Liaison Officer in the Dublin Institute of Technology and is responsible for college-industry cooperation programmes.

He is also chairman of the Bolton Trust and is a Director of Castle Hill Fund Management Ltd., which operates the Small Enterprise Seed Fund. He has been extensively involved as an adviser to small business for almost fifteen years.

The PDC method is one of facilitation. Through this process, the entrepreneurs are helped to draw from their collective experiences, focus on priorities and apply their skills in a way that allows them to confidently take key decisions in their businesses.

Since 1991 the Centre has run its renowned Enterprise Development Programme.

This year the programme is aimed at those who have a clear idea of what they wish to do, but need help to turn it into a successful business proposition.

The Project Development Centre Network in conjunction with the Bolton Trust promotes the Fund.

Apart from this new Prospect project, the Project Development Centre is also involved in a number of other activities including student exchanges and work placements programmes.

For further details contact: (01) 2401500 or e-mail: info@pdc.ie

Good prospects in research programme

By Samantha Rowntree

A NEW programme called Prospect was recently launched, bringing together DIT and two of the country's major business bodies.

This six month programme has been initiated with the support from Docklands Innovation and Enterprise Ireland to help researchers in third level institutions commercialise their research.

The programme runs over a six-month period from January to June. Interactive workshops are held at weekends to accommodate the regular work schedule.

The workshops deal with commercial issues and are supported by a panel of experienced mentors and consultants.

Under the terms of the scheme, there are several options for commercialising research available: for example you may be interested in setting up a business venture or do your own or with a partner, or you may wish to patent your research.

This will enable students to obtain a license to sell technology research to an outside company.

The programme team, based at Docklands Innovation Park in Dublin city centre, has been working on the programme with an experienced team in supporting the start-up and growth of Irish companies, through practical and innovative programmes.

Support for researchers from commercially experienced business counselors and trainers, the team has been successful in launching over 30 businesses annually and supports a network of about 300 companies.

This programme is part of the DIT's commitment to information technology, both as a discipline and as a learning tool. Our graduates are spearheading growth in the e-business sector.

This means the prospects and opportunities for graduates are numerous.

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Forget Paris? Pas de chance

By Natasha Reid

Forget Paris, the movie was titled - not a chance! I can still smell the fresh chocolate croissants and see the fallen autumn leaves that dotted Champs Elysees last September.

While France's capital is famous for its breathtaking beauty, no photograph or film footage can compare with the real thing. Yours truly went on a three-day trip to the city by the Seine. I didn't think a city could be as beautiful as Paris.

I stayed on for a week, because a weekend just isn't long enough to do justice to the City of Light. It seems a shame to conduct business in this charming town, which began as a village on an island on the Seine many centuries ago. Walking down any boulevard in Paris, a person would imagine that the whole city was designed and built to be admired and adored.

Every amenity is available to tourists, right from complimentary maps on arrival, to cafes and restaurants on every street corner. What more does a holidaymaker want after a long day sightseeing, than an exquisite French meal and a few foreign beverages, all served up by a cute Parisian? As for the myth that only the rich could afford to enjoy Paris - it's just a matter of shopping around and being a student comes in handy. Of course, a cup of coffee could easily cost up to a fiver in this romantic city, so the secret is not to drink coffee - drink wine instead!

To get to this haven of culture takes only minutes on the web. A package holiday would cost a student an arm and a leg, while some low fares airlines have unbelievable deals on their websites. When I went, it cost me £90 return. A week later, the same flights were going for a tenner. It's the luck of the draw, but £90 was still a great deal. Finding suitable accommodation was more difficult. There are literally thousands of hotels to choose from, ranging from modest one star, right up to the celebrity studied Hotel Concorde de Lafayette. I stayed at a two-star hotel with no bar, much like an Irish Bed and Breakfast. It cost £30 per person sharing, and breakfast was extra.

Of course, no trip to France would be complete without a day in Eurodisney! It's about 50 miles away, but is accessible from any Metro station and takes under an hour by train.

Paris is the type of place people visit for a few days, but feel they were destined to live in. With Valentine's Day just around the corner, the City of Love beckons. There's no excuse not to go, folks - Bon Voyage!
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Star Wars Episode II: 18 months to go

For the second episode of the new trilogy which simply remains entitled Star Wars: Episode II, is in its final months of production, but a sense of anti-climax is increasingly hard to avoid when one trawls through the many websites devoted to the franchise.

With summer 2002 pencilled in by Lucas as a release date, the boffins at Industrial Light & Magic (ILM) have got their hands on the first rough cut of the movie and selected takes, etc; will be heavy on CG!. All will say for now is that George and Rick are "stressing" over a looking reworking like a January 2001 Features of the Empire' and may wail action of the Sith promises ILM's explosions, starships screen backgrounds, awaiting and planets that the main Australia, Italy and Tunisia have been filmed with blue of special effects to the bones rough cut of the movie and counted in by Lucas as a release date, the boffins at Industrial Light & Magic (ILM) have given a EPISODE 2 (still no title) so far at ILM. 2 1/2 hours of rough effects work / plates and selected takes, etc; will be heavy on CGI. All will say for now is that George and Rick are "stressing" over a major reworking of the storyline. It's putting deadlines back and makes our work extremely frustrating. There are whispers that Spielberg is coming on board to help with the editing and story. It's a total shambles! Everyone wants another Empire Strikes Back.....the team is aware of this, but we're a long way off." — anon

Can this be believed? I doubt it. Everywhere one looks for info on SW II rarely finds the number of the prequel-sequel written as anything other than a Roman numeral. All official Star Wars documents feature 'Episode II' rather than 'Episode 2' and anyone working at Industrial Light & Magic would be aware of this.

A small detail it may be, but Lucas is a master of keeping the script a secret and anyone involved in the production of the film would be aware of this fact. Secondly, the apparent foundation of Knowles's posting this 'exclusive' report came from comments made by producer Rick McCaffin on the official Star Wars website. "There's a lot of work to do," said McCaffin. "You go through various emotional stages when reviewing this footage. At times, you face the truth of what you didn't get and what you hoped for. The second stage is that you're amazed by all the things you didn't even think you got. And then the third stage is that you see certain things are infinitely better than you could have even imagined." Maybe it's just me but I don't feel a sense of despair from Lucas's number two (or is that 2 or III?) from the above excerpt, "ILM is ready to pounce." McCaffin added. That's not what Harry's mole would have us believe!

The famous Mandalorian battle armour, worn by Boba Fett in the original trilogy, will be donned by Temura Morrison who will play the role of Boba's father, Jango. The truth of what you didn't get and what you hoped for. The second stage is that you're amazed by all the things you didn't even think you got. And then the third stage is that you see certain things are infinitely better than you could have even imagined."

The burning questions for this fan remains: what won't we know about Episode II (which won't be called 'The Rise of the Empire' and may yet be titled 'The Clone Wars') by the time the movie is released, in 18 months?

It's proving difficult to wait for more lightsaber wielding action from the bearded Ewan McGregor, Natalie Portman looking like a knockout and the reappearance of Mandalorian battle armour a la Fett. Better start counting stormtroopers in my sleep.
Alternative health for the new year

Along with the New Year resolutions to drink less, eat less sweets, eat more fruit and do 50 sit-ups a night there's a need at this time of year to account for the Christmas excess and plan to reverse the damage caused, writes Samantha Rowntree

Holistic health is one alternative way to prevent illness and maintain health as well as health restoration and cure.

At the heart of holistic health, is the belief in patients' own power to heal themselves. Practitioners help activate the patient's own healing powers. Some of the holistic health treatments available include:

- Homeopathy affects cure through small, individually prescribed quantities of specially prepared natural remedies capable of stimulating deep healing responses without the worrying toxicity of conventional medicines.
- Acupuncture originated in China more than 3,000 years ago. It is a complex medical system that involves the insertion of fine pre-sterilised needles at predetermined points on the surface of the body, activating the patient's healing energy.
- Reflexology alleviates or treats a range of conditions by applying pressure to reflex points in the patient's hands and feet, which correspond to all the glands, organs and parts of the body.
- Acupuncture (right), reflexology (centre) and various forms of alternative medicine are often quite expensive and not easily available. While the advantage is that it's growing in popularity and you can avoid overusing conventional medicines like antibiotics in these treatments.
- If you are thinking of trying out one of these it's a good idea to check out a few prices and always use a recognised practitioner.

The New Year is not shaping up to what it is supposed to be. Things aren't quite going as planned and this is more than likely down to the entry of that troublesome duo, Mars and Neptune, into your main house of affairs.

The best advice the stars can offer you is to throw away those ridiculous New Year's resolutions and wing it.

Your natural charm and persuasive personality means everything will be going your sweet way by the end of the month.

Destiny is a silver car.

Our DIT astrologer predicts what the month ahead holds everywhere

Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
The Lunar Eclipse earlier in the year, a lot of your emotional energy burst open on the conveyor belt.

But it is probably better that the problems you have been bottling up during the past 12 months are finally out in the open, Run with it. This is the year for resolving past grievances.

Destiny is a yellow box.

Cancer (June 22 - July 23)
The Lunar Eclipse earlier in the year has affected your mood greatly. All of a sudden everything seems easier than ever before.

Difficulties regarding work matters will be resolved thanks to your new positive attitude.

Your good humour is even attracting a potential new romance. If in all, it is shaping up to be a pretty good month. Good times are on the cards around the 25th but watch you don't over exert yourself after the 27th.

Destiny wears light blue.

Leo (July 24 - Aug 24)
The New Year opened up a lot of old wounds for poor old Leo. Thank to that blasted Lucky Virgo! This month, you could be calling Peter to pay Paul. Well, 2001 has the potential to be a profitable and successful year.

Virgo (Aug 24 - Sept 23)
Lucky Virgo! This month is the time for serious loving! Single Virgos can expect to get lucky around the 15th.

Those who are already in a relationship can expect a wert surprises. Issues of health will become the main focus towards the end of the month when Pluto moves into Aquarius.If you have been putting off that visit to the doctor, then now is the time to make that appointment.

Destiny listens to an elder.

Libra (Sept 24 - Oct 23)
Libra is the party animal of the Zodiac. But I hate to break this to you, Christmas is over, so get on with it! If you have been dithering about getting down to some serious work, take heed.

There are plenty of people out there waiting for you to trip up so they can muscle in on your patch. Get your act together and show those in high places that you have what it takes to go the distance.

Destiny is an expensive restaurant.

Sagittarius (Nov 23 - Dec 21)
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Destiny is an expensive restaurant.

Scorpio (Oct 24 - Nov 22)
Everyone loves a fresh start and what better time to begin one, than the New Year. It is an ideal time to start new projects as Mars, Venus and the recent Lunar Eclipse all shine brightly in Scorpio this month.

Anything started around the 15th has more than a better chance of succeeding, so take full advantage of this lucky time. Matters concerned with the heart also improve greatly. All round it is a profitable and successful few weeks.

Destiny is a forgotten photograph.

Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 20)
Relationships are the focus this month. The collision of Mars and Jupiter in your sixth house of communications means there are rough waters ahead.

If you are in a serious relationship, you may want to reconsider your long-term plans. A forgotten misde­meanor rears its ugly head and puts a spanner in the works.

Strong-willed Capricorn has the resilience to overcome it. But can your partner?

Destiny is a typed invitation.

Aquarius (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
Lucky arrives in drils and drabs this month. You will succeed in achieving a long-held ambition around the 5th but a manipulative accomplice could claim credit elsewhere. Copyright anything written or produced between now and then, so as to guard against such a possibility.

Your intuitive powers will heighten around the 23rd. Go with your instincts at this time, as it will pay off.

Destiny is a legal document.

Pisces (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
Last year's finances weren't so hot. You constantly found yourself robbing Peter to pay Paul. Well, 2001 sees an end to your money problems, for this month anyway.

Cash flows in from all directions and a welcome bonus sees you living it up around the 17th.

But going on last year's financial records, it is suggested you put some away for that rainy day. Bills have a tendency to crop up just when you have spent your last penny.

Destiny indicates a small windfall.
CAST AWAY (Opens January 12th)

Director Robert Zemeckis teams up with Tom Hanks for the first time since Forrest Gump six years ago. Forrest Gump, the simple story of a sweet moron who troubles through 20th Century America and comes up smiling, was showered with awards alike it was released, including Oscars for Best Picture and Best Actor.

As a lot of people liked it, a hell of a lot of people loathed it with an almighty passion that left their insides as biter and twisted as a dried-up sweet moron who trundles away the com­pany jet plunges spec­tacularly into the Pacific ocean and the real story kicks in.

When most of your film concerns a character, a real story kicks in.

The film works so well in capturing Norland, s isolation (there is no musical score until the last act, only sound-effects) that when the time comes for him to return home, the audience is brought back to earth with a jolt.

There are precious few ways that Cast Away might have ended that would satisfy the average audience. And Zemeckis doesn’t.

For the last twenty-five minutes you’ll be tapping your fingers and checking your watch.

The film returns to civilisation, but you’re left won­dering: Why bother? If, like me, you take reg­ular medication to ward off the adverse effects of over­work, psychological sensitivity, you should know that this film contains scenes of mawkish, emotional yearn­ing involving Helen Hunt.

Luckily, the worse you’ll go away with is a light rash.

BEAUTIFUL CREAT­URES (Cert 18, Released January 19th)

It’s a sad thing, that every Bond film released since Lock, Stock & Two Smoking Barrels must run the risk of being laughed off it clum­sily. Wenz and Lynch are appealing enough, but we are told next to nothing about their past, and given little indication of their future.

Consequently, we don’t particularly care what hap­pens to either of them. If girls-on-top-crime-caper giga­boat your boat, you’d be well advised to check out the mar­vellous Bound instead.

UNDER SUSPICION ( Cert 18, Opens February)

Under Suspicion could have had two hours of Morgan Freeman and Gene Hackman just staring at each other and it still would have been com­pelling cinema.

With actors of this calibre, the script could be the most inert, derivative schlock churned out by the lowest of Hollywood hacks and would nonetheless be able to raise the hairs on the back of your neck.

The fact that Messrs Freeman and Hackman are credited as executive producers should be enough to put your mind at ease, though. Based on the French film Garde a Vue which in turn was based on English novel Brinkwater, Under Suspicion takes place over the course of one intense night in Porto Rico. Prominent lawyer Henry Heurt (Gene Hackman) drops into the local police station to clarify a statement for Captain Victor Benezet (Morgan Freeman).

The previous day, Heurt had come across the body of a young girl — the second such victim inside of a month.

What starts out as a few routine questions turns into a long hours of questioning, as Heurt’s stories start chang­ing under pressure. His car was seen in the slum area where the first victim was found.

His private life is in shambles and his much-younger wife doesn’t, seem interested in defending him. Benezet’s private life is in no great shape either and Heurt raises the suspicion that his own interrogation may be the result of the other man trying to jockey a promotion.

Director Stephen Hopkins is a surprising choice. His previous works Brainwash, Under Suspicion shows a maturity that as much I, ll simply tell you that the answer is a

ON DVD AND VIDEO

THE PERFECT STORM

Also known as The Perfect Storm, this film comes out on DVD by some unknown, cynical people who were less than over­awed by Wolfgang Peterson’s dump mis­epic. It blew away the compet­itors at the cinema, but well it cause ripples on the small screen or sin­gle without a trace? Rather than pursue in further maritime-related word-play, I’ll simply tell you that the answer is a definitive “Yes, well, maybe.”

George Clooney and his motley crew of fishermen bravely (or stupidly, depending on how you call it) venture out into the Atlantic ocean just as the Perfect Storm, of the title turns natty on them. It’s worth seeing this one as big a treat as possible as the CGI weather tends to overshadow the less­convincing Human elements.

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE - 2

2000 was a bad year for films with Mission, in the title. You’d imagine that Mission to Mars was bad enough, and that lightning couldn’t strike twice. I thought so, until the summer rolled around and this monstrosity appeared in every multiplex around the country. John Woo has directed classics like Hard Boiled and The Killer. Tom Cruise was terr­ific in films like Magnolia and Born on the Fourth of July.

Screenwriter Robert Towne wrote Chinatown for Chinatown for the love of God!

What the hell went wrong? How can we get rid of every single thing that made the first Mission: Impossible film so entertaining? How can you make something this ridiculous? HOW?

Beautiful Creatures (Cert 18, Released)

Jamie Hannigan reviews the latest movie releases and those recently out on DVD and video.
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And Stay Clued Into College
Ray Nangle is a busy man. As President of the DIT Karting Club, which won the DIT Club of the Year last April, the profile of the club, coupled with impressive financial backing looks like making 2001 another year to remember for the success story of the college's sporting outfit.

"What have we done since I founded the club is ensure that everybody that joins DIT Karting is treated the same," Nangle told the DIT Independent.

"Last year we had 600-odd people sign up, but only 300 went racing. So at the AGM in May last year we launched a membership card scheme with a £2 subscription fee to ensure that only dedicated members would join the club.

"This was a great success with membership fees raising just over £2000 with 1045 members joining the club."

The £2 subscription means that DIT Karting is the only college club to charge for membership, but Ray Nangle believes that this has served well.

"What this has allowed us to do is to maintain a balance between the ordinary driver and the elite group of drivers," he said. "We still have a decent balance and I'm very happy with that."

The success of the club over the last year has been exceptional by any stretch of the imagination. The DIT team won:
- The Munster Inter-varsities title.
- The Connacht Inter-varsities championship.
- The All Ireland Inter-varsities crown amongst stiff competition during the 1999/2000 season, and
- The DIT Club of the Year.

Another notable success was the participation, in varying degrees, of all 685 members during the year. "A great club is a club that can win championships and facilitate its ordinary members throughout the year." said current Chairman Simon Clarke.

With over a thousand members this year, the club has seen almost 70% of the signatories participate in the various races that the club has run to date.

Over 100 members turned out for a great day's racing at this year's Sportday, which got the new season off to a great start.

Nangle has secured excellent funding, which has aided the club immeasurably and should see the club's All-Ireland Champion team to compete in the English Grand Prix at the famed Silverstone circuit in April, as well as an event in Wales.

"Another notable success was the ability to represent Ireland, an honour that no other DIT club can aspire to. We've done it because we're All Ireland champions and we don't want to pass up an opportunity to represent our country."

Nangle said that the Sports Council simply did not have the funding to meet the club's wishes, which makes the extensive financial backing all the more welcome.

"When it comes to that, I don't think we're in the same category as any other club," Ray commented.

"This year, we've secured sponsorship from the Bank of Ireland, Planet Murphy's, Heineken and we're currently in negotiations with Eire cellul, who will come in with sponsorship money if we go to England, which we should do."

"We bought a Formula B kart, which is capable of speeds in excess of 100 miles per hour, and last year we sponsored Paul Taylor in the Irish Motorsport Formula A Championship."

"This is a serious piece of machinery and we're hoping that we can sponsor someone for this summer's championship."

The only way, it seems, is up for DIT Karting Club and their trip across the Irish Sea next April brings with it the prospect of more laurel wearing and great nights of celebration.
DIT Mountaineering Club’s Ruth Phillips reflects on a December outing to the Burren, which provided as much downing as it did climbing!

It was late on Friday evening, December 1, as the trusty coach (pay careful attention to the state of coach – it was not to last) ambled out westwards into the setting sun. At least, I am sure it would have been a glorious sunset if it hadn’t been bucketing down in torrents.

At least the canoeists were unaffected by the possibility of a very wet weekend.

Kevin Street Mountaineering Club was off down to the Burren for a weekend - and the Canoe Club was coming too just for the ride.

The Caving Club was represented by a jolly fellow called Malcolm, who was determined to coax people underground somehow. His job is by no means as easy one. “Hey why don’t we go caving this morning?”, he announced.

“We get to crawl down this really cool dark passage on our knees and then turn around and crawl back again - and we might even have to abseil down in the dark. What a time for a photo opportunity!”

Mr Coach Driver was well in with us by now and joined us in getting basically hammered

for climbing in Ireland because of the variety of routes ranging from easy to Grade E4 (or “What the Hell am I doing Up Here” level).

We were lucky enough to have Wil Rock (seriously that is his name) to instruct us over the two days.

This is of particular benefit when it comes to demonstrating setting up good belays - the method by which a climber is fastened to a rope to prevent injury in the case of a fall.

On Saturday night we went (predictably) to the pub.

Try telling them in Doolin that in Dublin we queue for 40 minutes at the weekend outside one of the trendy new bars only to have the primates of a bouncer (whose ear-piece gives him immediate superiority) telling you your shoes are wrong.

McDermots was packed and the craic was mighty (I know, I just had to put that phrase in!)

Mr Coach Driver was well in with us by now and joined us in getting basically hammered.

For the next trip there will be no need for Mr Driver, as Brian of the canoe club spent most of the weekend teaching himself to drive the coach. He never did figure out the windscreen wipers.

Sunday was cold and windy and to the delight of all canoeists and surfers Lahinch was next on the agenda.

Now it’s back to climbing our indoor wall until after Christmas when we shall load the ice picks and crampons for a trip to Everest - or failing that, possibly County Wicklow, To the Sugar Loaf and beyond!

Anyone for caving?

Our motley crew take a breather.

What a time for a photo opportunity!

What a time for a photo opportunity!
GAA round up

Handball: Team does us proud

So far, the GAA year has been truly a mixed bag for DIT, with as many ups as there were downs. Pride of place belongs to the DIT Handball Club who clinched the Dublin Handball Title just before Christmas.

A comprehensive win over the Garda Club was a superb achievement and full marks must go to Padraic Gaffney and his team mates for their success last month.

This victory was, of course, the result of much team effort and long hours of committed put in over the last number of years, culminating in their winning the 2000 Intervarsity Championship and following it with their December success in Croke Park.

Well done to our handballers and we wish them all the best for 2001, in both national and international competition.

Hurling: An unsatisfactory start

Our hurlers, under new senior coach John Herbert, had an unsatisfactory start to their League season.

The planned game with the University of Limerick did not take place, the match against University College Galway was postponed until mid-December and the most difficult game of their League Group against the Garda College, which was to be their third game, turned out to be their first.

DIT pulled up an excellent show in Templemore and despite their best efforts, lost by six points to a quality Garda side. Victory over Galway Institute of Technology was a welcome result and despite a superb effort against UCG, our lads came out on the wrong side of the result.

The star performers for the team to date this season have been Wexford forward Barry Lambert and Fresher John Shaw who look set to establish himself as a player of great value to the team.

Damian McDonald has organised a series of challenging games to prepare for the challenge that Maynooth will provide DIT in this year's Fitzgibbon Cup, currently the property of Waterford Institute of Technology.

A win for DIT at Maynooth cannot be ruled out and we wish the team the very best for this crucial tie.

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'Sport from which a lot of money can be earned'

I am a full time coach myself and these judo coaches teach full time at more than 60 schools and colleges including areas such as Dundaungholin, Belevedere, Blackrock, Swords and, of course, here at DIT.

In terms of the whole DIT club set-up, we are one of the more successful.

Since we began back in ’97, we’ve gone from strength to strength, starting with two in the class and now composing 30 members, so the interest is growing all the time.

Up to Christmas, we had won 14 medals in the various events that we had competed in, including the North West Open in Derry where we won two gold and four bronze medals.

With several As part of my contract, Des O’Donnell reflects on the pre-Christmas GAA scene in DIT and looks ahead to what 2001 holds in store.

Our student sports star Chloe Mulvihill is currently injured but she will be travelling to the games in China.

As a coach, the emphasis is to teach and educate the students and to help them to gain an appreciation for the sport. We don’t just send people in to punch each other out, judo is not just about that.

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Chloe Mulvihilf of DIT Judo Club, who won an All-Star award at last year’s DIT Annual Sports Awards. Also pictured are Eamonn Coughlan and Dr Declan Glynn, who presented awards to the sporting students.

In judo, one tries to break your opponent’s balance and use their bulk against them, not to try and disable them with your own strength.

The ‘gentle way’ can prove to be the best way.

- Alan Martin was speaking to Laurence Mackin.
A reluctant hero

Kevin Street caretaker Christy Doyle is man with a rich sporting past. Brian Healy spoke to the former Shelbourne striker about his career.

HE WAS Shelbourne’s leading goal scorer for three seasons in a row; he won a FAI cup winner’s medal, and gained two ‘B’ international caps. But to talk to DIT Kevin Street’s caretaker, you would think it was all just a kick about in someone’s back yard.

Being modest, Christy Doyle takes all the honours and records in his stride. He is proud of his achievements but doesn’t feel the need to boast about them. He was only recently made aware of his goalscoring record. “I wasn’t aware of that myself,” said Christy. “I only saw that recently I scored the odd goal but it wasn’t much real. Nowadays people look at statistics every week but back then you just got on with it.”

Christy grew up in Ringsend in the thirties and he can trace his interest in football back to his maternal uncle Jimmy Dunne, who played for Arsenal. But he didn’t feel compelled to emulate his uncle’s exploits and in school he participated in soccer for the enjoyment of the sport. From this enthusiasm sprang a natural instinct on front of goal. It was when he moved to Donnybrook that one of the biggest clubs in Ireland took note of his talent.

“There was a team starting up in Donnybrook that played in the Wicklow league. I played for them for a year or so and eventually I was invited down to Shelbourne.”

Shelbourne’s top scorer

Christy was 21 when he made his debut for the Tolka Park based club. He played for Shels from 1957 to 1961 and in that short time he made a great impression. In 60 league games he scored 36 goals, and three in 11 FAI Cup matches. He played as an inside forward; a position he admits that doesn’t really exist in the modern game.

“When I was playing everyone talked about inside forward, left half and right half. Nowadays it’s all midfielders and strikers.” The terminology may change but the skill required to score a goal doesn’t.

One goal that stands out in particular for him was the winning goal he scored against old rivals Shamrock Rovers in the 1960 FAI Cup. It was in the earlier rounds of the cup but Christy feels that that giant killing gave the team the impetus to go on and win the trophy at Dalymount Park. But Christy’s success wasn’t confined to the domestic league. His prolific goal tally earned him two ‘B’ international caps against Iceland in Reykjavik and Czechoslovakia at Dalymount Park.

However, Christy is keen to put his call up into perspective. “Nowadays in a B international the Irish players who play abroad are picked but back then it was more like an inter league panel and it was the local lads who were selected.” He is proud to have represented his country and has fond memories of the trip to Reykjavik where he played against a number of local teams and had the opportunity to see the city.

Career cut short

Unfortunately for Christy his career was cut short at his prime at the age of 25, due to a number of bad injuries.

“I had a cartilage operation done. It took me about a year to get over that and the other one started to give me trouble. So I lost a bit of enthusiasm for the game.” He was working as a television aerial fitter throughout his playing days and was not willing to jeopardise his ability to work for the sake of a few more years of football. “I said to myself: If I keep playing, who knows, by 30 I mightn’t be able to work anymore.”

But Christy is not bitter. He was privileged enough to have played for one of the country’s top clubs at a time when the FAI league was at the height of its’ popularity, and tournaments like the FAI cup were able to capture the imaginations of football fans nation-wide. “There was a terrific atmosphere”, he recalls. “There was no coverage of matches on television and if there was you’d be looking at snowy pictures, so obviously we had huge attendances week in week out. That just doesn’t happen these days.”

Despite the diminishing popularity of domestic football Christy still keeps a keen eye on his former club, who are currently sailing at the top of the Premier league. He believes that the standard of the football today is very high and is glad to see many of his former teammates still maintaining an active role in the league.

As for Christy, he’s busy working as a caretaker at Kevin Street and claims that he doesn’t miss the football that much and was just glad to have played alongside so many good players. When asked to name some of his favourite players, he was quick to come up with the likes of Liam Touhy, Paddy Ambrose, Ronnie Nolan, Brendan O’Brien. No doubt if those former stars were asked to name their favourite players, Christy Doyle would figure high on their list.

DIT Kevin Street’s Christy Doyle, whose promising soccer career was cut short by injury in the 1960’s.