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DIT: Students Union

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DITSU Trading - back with a vengeance

by Fergal D'Arcy & Kieran Dineen

DITSU Trading Ltd. is being bailed out by a €400,000 euro rescue package from DIT. On the day before Christmas Eve, DITSU released a statement saying talks had broken down. DIT agreed to give the loan following the threat of an official SIPTU strike for Monday 10th.

Sources close to the DIT independent have divulged that if the strike had gone ahead, DIT would not have opened. According to Chris Rowland of SIPTU - "We put on extreme pressure and the strike focused everybody's minds in finding a solution."

Only eight out of the eighteen workers are returning to DITSU Trading Ltd. They will be getting a 'back to work' bonus, amounting to roughly six weeks wages. Some workers had difficulty claiming social welfare because they were still employed by DITSU Trading. Discussions with SIPTU over further financial matters are currently under way.

Cathal Brugha Street and Mountjoy Square shops are currently closed due to a lack of personnel which shall be resolved in the coming weeks. Mountjoy Square canteen will reopen but in a limited capacity. In relation to this DITSU President, Jarlath Molloy said - "The bottom line is the original costs were high in Mountjoy Square. Because of this we might have to raise prices and reduce the range of services / products in order to rescue the facility."

The SU canteen and shop combined in Mountjoy Square lost approx €15,000 last year, but will remain under their control. Former DITSU Trading director, Ross O'Daly said - "The only decision I regret is investing in Mountjoy Square canteen." At DITSU Council earlier this year, Nick Reilly indicated that this was the catalyst to Trading's problems.

The company will now have two directors as oppose to eight. The directors will be Peter McKenna, stadium director of Croke Park, and the Student Union President, Jarlath Molloy.

'Pool and video' used to help finance DITSU Ltd. All money raised from pool and video games will be used to aid DITSU Trading in paying off the loan. This will leave DITSU Ltd. without its second largest funder. Jarlath Molloy has indicated that the cost of rectifying the whole ordeal will be 35 to 40k euro. Maggie Fyn is the new general manager of Trading Ltd.

Workers wages not put into pension fund

by Kieran Dineen

SHOP workers pension money was deducted from their wages for over 18 months and not lodged into the pension fund with Irish Life. SIPTU payments were also late and worker's PRSII PAYE money wasn't paid by DITSU trading.

Chris Rowland, the workers SIPTU representative, said "pension money should go directly to the staff's pension account. We (the staff) didn't know the money wasn't going to the pension. We don't know where the pension money went as we don't have access to the accounts. Pension payments would usually go to the pension provider in no longer than a month period. The problem with the pension money was that the people dealing with the pension provider were the same people effectively (who were running DITSU trading)."

"The SIPTU money hasn't been paid in about a year. Usually SIPTU money would be paid either monthly, quarterly, or twice a year. We have worked with DIT'S trading for many years we had no reason to fear that the payments were anything but late. Now in light of the financial difficulties of the company we know differently. We have now been guaranteed that the money will be paid back. We need to have a meeting to discuss the finer points and find a comprehensive agreement."
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Rage Against the Machines

by Sean O'Proinntigh

PROBLEMATIC and neglected vending machines are an issue throughout the various D.I.T. locations. The vending machine in D.I.T. Portland Row distributed out of date goods and was then left empty for a number of months. Due to my investigation signs have been placed on all machines with a number to contact for complaints.

Anthony Collins a Print Technician in D.I.T. Portland Road said: "They have no facilities, I was forced to consume chocolate from a vending machine that hadn't been restocked or serviced and that chocolate was sub-standard."

When questioned as to why this problem had arose Joan Delaney area manager for Campbell Catering said that Vendit a separate company had sub contacted the Portland Row machine and hence they were responsible. "We have removed the Pot Noodle vending machine and are in discussions about upgrading the cold drinks vending machine", she said.

Dr. Cline resident physician for D.I.T. Aungier St. said regarding the out of date chocolate "The chocolate would be of poor quality but it would be unlikely that there would be a health risk."

Up the road from D.I.T. Portland Row in D.I.T. Mountjoy Square there are no vending machines and a canteen which has been dormant since the dispute with the shops began.

Jim McGrath a third year journalism student was also a victim of machine theft "I put money into the Luczoade machine and my money was eaten up."

Alan Mac Stoifain D.I.T.S.U. Sabbatical when asked who was responsible for the maintenance of the machines said "Campbell's Catering are responsible for all the machines without exception."

Although D.I.T.S.U. had attempted to take control of the machines and later found out that the deal was unfeasible.

Over to you........annoyed about the delay in opening the students shop?

Catherine Stapleton, a Nutrition student in Kevin St., said "It's a disgrace. We had to go off to Clarendon medical to buy white lab coats. We had to wait a couple of weeks for them to get the coats in. Normally the student shops would have that amenity."

Maura Fay, asked some students what their opinions were

Claran Byrne, a Mechanical Engineering student in Bolton St., said "I think it is a bit stupid because the shop was never empty so I don't know how they were losing money. It was very unfair on staff in the shop. Whoever was taking care of the accounts should be questioned."

Chris Grant, a Culinary Skills student in Cathal Brugha St., said "It's terrible [that the shops are closed], you can't get a drink. The student's union are getting lazy. The president of the union should be blamed."

David Griffiths, a Mechanical Engineering student in Bolton St., was irritated with the delay in opening the shops: "They said the shop was opening up. They should have opened it a lot sooner. There should have not been a delay at all."

Erin O'Connor, a third year Culinary Arts student in Cathal Brugha St. missed the convenience of the student shops: "Well, it's kind of annoying because when you're in your whites you can't get a drink. If you want a coke or something you can't get one."

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President's Voice

Hi again,
Welcome back to college after the break; hopefully you enjoyed the holidays. The next few months will fly along! No doubt you already know that a rescue package has been agreed which allows the SU shops to reopen this week. We appreciate everyone has been greatly inconvenienced by the temporary closure of DITSU Trading Ltd and for this we sincerely apologise. We thank you for your continued support and urge you to support your shop services & staff as they re-open. More information is available on the SU website.

A special thanks also from myself, Sharon and Alan to the Class Rep Convener and Part Time Officers, Governing Councillors and Class Reps who all helped out over the last few months.

The DIT Students' Union has already begun to re-focus on implementing the Strategic Review, as voted upon last year. Alan Mac Stiofain is working hard on the infamous RAG Trip! All proceeds go to Temple Street Children's Hospital.

RAG week is currently being finalised

Any budding "I can do better than them" campaigns ready; nominations open after 2nd week of March 2005.

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**Ballymun wind band on the rise**

by Cillian O’Chonchuir

“A Fanfare for Ballymun,” the remarkable work of the DIT Media Production Unit aired on December 22nd last on TG4 to high acclaim. The documentary followed the lives of children from St Joseph’s Primary and the Ballymun Comprehensive involved in the Ballymun Wind Band Project and it conveyed the importance of Department of Education’s ‘Break the Cycle’ initiative, which it grew from.

“This Documentary gives ample evidence of what can be achieved when music becomes central to the learning environment,” stated Dr Tomas Cooke, DIT Community Links Manager. He continued to say that, “This is a wonderful community project with huge parental support and input. These children practice from 7.45 to 8.45 every morning which is a major commitment from all involved; parents, school staff, the community and of course the children themselves.”

The Project is an initiative of the Dublin Institute of Technology, the Department of Education and Science and the schools involved. As part of the project all of St Joseph’s 600 students are exposed to instrumental music making, which begins with recorder lessons in 1st class. This continues all the way through to their final year. From these lessons students are then selected to form a band that comprises an extensive range of wind, brass and percussion instruments.

The band in St Joseph’s Primary includes a 40 piece wind band and a 30 piece string band while Ballymun Comprehensive has a 23 piece strong wind band. Musician, come teacher Ron Cooney is the heart and soul of the project and has developed the abilities and knowledge of the young musicians to an extremely high standard.

The biggest feat to date has been to perform with the National Symphony Orchestra in the National Concert Hall. It has also blown audiences away in the Axis Theatre and at a state governmental dinner. It has brought the respectable standard.

At this time of year the advertising space is very crowded with competing messages from across the higher education spectrum, and we believe this campaign will ensure that DIT’s message stands out – we want to encourage applications from students currently preparing for the leaving certificate and also mature students considering returning to learning.

Our career-focused programmes are very much in tune with the national objective of underpinning the knowledge economy, and the slogan “It’s a step closer to the real world” reflects that very accurately. The advertising brief also indicated that the campaign should address a perception in some quarters that honours degree programmes are only available in institutions with the title of university. In fact, DIT has earned the authority to award degrees up to PhD level as a result of its extremely rigorous Quality Assurance programme. An honours degree awarded by DIT is a guarantee of academic excellence.”

According to Gerry Kennedy, Creative Director at McConnells Advertising, “We wanted to create a buzz about DIT and highlight its strengths and excellence along with doing something different.” The media choice was made on three levels: outdoor, radio and press. Outdoor was chosen to gain dramatic cut-through from the competitive set in the weeks prior to the CAO deadline. The message appears on 260 bus supersides and it, very evident throughout the city.

Reaction to the ad campaign has been very positive, particularly to the ‘super-sides’. In devising the campaign, McConnells advertising were keen to underline the Institute’s city-centre locations and its accessibility. Dublin Institute of Technology has been a part of Dublin’s education landscape for over a hundred years, and the coverage provided by cross-city buses reinforces its position. While the slogan refers in particular to the professional relevance of its programmes, the radio ads also emphasise the academic excellence and range of subjects offered by the Institute’s degree and certificate programmes.

**Budget cut shock**

by Maura Fay

The Social and Cultural budget has been cut by €20,000 and money that was carried forward from previous years due to under spend, approximately €33,000, has been diverted back into student services. This money is used for the funding of DIT societies.

Almost €20,000 of the money that had been carried forward was earmarked for spending this year. It was hoped to use it to fund a number of large events and the purchase of equipment. As a result of this budget cut, the annual budget has been reduced from €180,000 for 2003/04 to €160,000 for 2004/05.

This sum is divided between the 79 currently functioning societies within DIT and is also used to fund events like Tradfest and Art and Design week.

The budget is controlled by the Social and Cultural committee which is made up of nine DIT staff and four student representatives. It is a separate allocation from the money that the students union receives from student capitation fees.

Alan Mac Stiofain, student union vice-president, said “They’ve effectively taken €53,000 off us, and it’s left us terribly short... I don’t think it’s even right that they went near the €33,000”. He said that although he was concerned about the impact the budget cut would have on societies this year, it was “more worried that we wouldn’t be able to get this money back next year.”

“Societies are going to suffer terribly. What happens to the new societies set up next year?” he said. He said that, as the money was taken and reallocated into student services at the beginning of the year, it would be difficult to get the budget restored to its original size, as “budget increases are normally in line with inflation.”

Approximately €16 of the €750 that each student pays in capitation fees goes into funding societies.

Careful negotiations are currently underway to persuade the committee to restore the budget to its original size. “I would urge each society to spend all the money available to them if we are to have a credible argument to get the money back” said Anita Conway, Societies organiser.
DIT Independent

A warm welcome back to one and all. While some of us have been in and around DIT for January, some lucky souls won't be returning until late January or early February.

Whichever, most of us would have sworn to wipe the slate clean on New Years Day, in the time honoured spirit of tradition and the best intentions. Also in the spirit of tradition, many of us will have broken some vows and sullied that clean slate already. It is somewhat late in the New Year, then, that DITSU Trading has a new clean slate to work with. The opening of the shops is imminent in Aungier St, Bolton St and Kevin St. The shops in Mountjoy Square and Cathal Brugha Street are also to be opened shortly. We hope that they may stick to their resolutions a little more steadfastly than we keep to ours, and that the shops remain open.

The losses of DITSU Trading have yet to be fully understood. How did they lose so much money? How can we be sure that the situation is so different as to ensure that severe losses will not be incurred again? Why has it taken four months to agree the deal which sees DITSU Trading back in business?

Despite the efforts of this paper over the past few months to clarify matters, it remains incompressible to students that DIT sites have not had a shop.

Fewer students are applying for third level institutions. The new DIT recruiting slogan - as seen across many a Dublin bus - refers to DIT as "A Step Closer To The Real World". Ironically, students have had to take a few steps closer to the real world just to buy a pen or a floppy disk...

Some DIT students of course grumble about not having a student bar. Whether a student bar is a necessary service is debatable on a number of levels. A shop service is, however, a fairly basic expectation. Questions remain unanswered as to why this service has not been available in recent months.

Having said this, the re-opening of the shops is more than welcome. Along with the reopening of pool and games rooms, it is hoped that a more vibrant atmosphere will evolve.

Indeed, along with the opening of the shops, Rag Week is imminent. This year Rag Week will replace the uncertainty that was the Rag Daze of recent times. As previewed in these pages, proceeds from the event will go to a good cause. Any excuse for a bit of fun will do, and that's as good as any.

On a serious note, concerns about DIT affairs are somewhat dwarfed by events such as the South-East Asia tsunami disaster. We were all affected in one way or another, some more directly than others. The contributions on the disaster which feature in these pages are welcome. They offer both levity and inspiration. Despite our troubles we are, after all, fortunate people.

Enjoy 2005, and make it your year.

Ed

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I have a bone to pick, albeit a rather lean bone at that. Having been a student at DIT, Aungier Street for just over three months I have noticed my once somewhat rounded cheeks begin to vanish and a ribcage which hadn't protruded since my teens, reappear. With every rib that sticks its head out and begs me to feed it, I harbour evil thoughts against this college and the eatery prices we have to pay.

Having spent five years chomping my way around this tasty and tempting old world, I have to hold my hands up and say DIT has the most expensive college menu I have happened upon.

Now before you hold aloft your carving knife and aim it at my grumbling stomach, let me vehemently state that it is not the quality of the food I am muttering about. The canteen staff and the food they serve are solid, up there with the best of them. So is the selection of food available which varies adventurously each day.

Where are you going with the prices though? It's a sorry state of affairs when the healthy option is ignored because it's too damn expensive. Rather than fork out eatery prices we have to pay.

Lower these prices. Rattle the government's cages. Few and far between are the politicians who look like they need a good dinner. Subsidise and students, it's a healthy choice.

Yours sincerely,
Shea Tomkins.
Go focail

Céad Mile Fáilte?

by Fiachra ó Muiré

Fuair mé bus ó lár na cathrach ar tháithínne fuaor go luath san athbhailiúin. Mise an chéad duine ar bord an bhús agus d'áir an t-íomháin orm sui sa stóchasóis utánaise dái shuíochán féin. Fear ó faithar na hÉorpa a bhí ann, ón Uíocháin ná Poblacht na hÉireann b'fhéidir, agus bhí sé ag obair mar tháinig ait chéile air, don chéad uair d'fhéadfadh sé an t-áiríocht. D'fhéadfadh sé aithne or sé féin mar aon bheith air, agus bhí sé ag obair mar tháinig ait chéile air, do chuid aon bhfuil mór leis an rath. Do chuid aon bhfuil mór leis an rath, do chuid aon bhfuil mór leis an rath.

Aisce isteach sa tseachtas, shiúl fear ón chomhrá a bhí ann. D'fhéadfadh sé an ghealláin a thugadh ar a dtugadh, agus bhí sé ag obair mar tháinig ait chéile air, do chuid aon bhfuil mór leis an rath.

An bhfuil mór leis an rath, do chuid aon bhfuil mór leis an rath, do chuid aon bhfuil mór leis an rath.

Céad Mile Fáilte?

by Cian Fitzsimons

Room with a viewer case settled

by Cian Fitzsimons

A landlord accused of spying on her tenants has paid over €8,000 in compensation to the first of her ex-tenants to take a court action. She also agreed to pay the plaintiff's legal costs.

The case followed on from the controversial eviction of ten students, including two from DIT, in November of last year. The group were given four hours notice of their eviction by the landlord.

The student taking the case, Ms Patricia Hegarty, alleged that the landlord, Ms Rita McKenna, used electronic devices to spy on the residents of an annex to her house at Moah Road, Glasnevin.

Judge Alison Lindsay had adjourned applications to have Ms McKenna imprisoned for alleged breaches of a court order to allow the student, her solicitor and the gardaí to search the premises. Mr Conor Bowman, counsel for Ms Hegarty, told the court that the group were kept waiting outside for an hour, during which the power was turned off and people were seen moving from room to room with torches.

Ms Hegarty claimed that holes had been drilled in walls in the house for the purpose of spying on the tenants and that she had been kept under surveillance prior to being evicted. A cheque for a rent deposit had been stopped on her after she was evicted.

Counsel for the landlord stated that a fuse had blown just as the group arrived. He also said that the holes in the walls were part of an old gas vent.

Ms Hegarty had been seeking €38,000 in damages, but said she is satisfied with the settlement. The remaining ex-tenants are now considering seeking damages.
These choux were made for walking

by Maura Fay

Second year culinary arts students in Cathal Brugha St. have had a complaint they made about one of the kitchens they used ignored for over three months. Back in September, for their pastry module, the class was split in two. One half used the new state-of-the-art pastry kitchen and the other half used the old, small pastry kitchen. Unhappy with the conditions of the old kitchen, two members of the class, Phillippa White and Laura Murray, wrote a letter of complaint to Joseph Hegarty, the head of the school of Culinary Arts and Food Technology. Complaints about the kitchen included that it was too small for 15 students, one of the ovens did not work and there were not enough utensils. The students received no reply to their letter. "They were thrown down into the old kitchen" said Jen Lynch, the class rep. "No thought was taken about it. Smaller classes could have gone in there."

The second year culinary arts class are now finished their pastry module but may have to use the kitchen again for exams. "We only had four weighing scales in the entire kitchen" said Fionnuala Quinn, one of the students who had to use the kitchen. "It was a bit hectic when 13, or at one stage 15, of us were trying to get stuff weighed."

As the "proving" oven was broken, students had to take their uncooked bread up a flight of stairs to the new kitchen and use the oven up there. "Hygienically, it was really bad. The food wasn't covered" said Phillippa White, co-author of the letter of complaint. Despite numerous phone calls, the DIT Independent was not able to get in contact with Mr Hegarty to ask him for a comment. Unhappy with the conditions of the old kitchen, two members of the class, Phillippa White and Laura Murray, wrote a letter of complaint to Joseph Hegarty, the head of the school of Culinary Arts and Food Technology. Complaints about the kitchen included that it was too small for 15 students, one of the ovens did not work and there were not enough utensils. The students received no reply to their letter. "They were thrown down into the old kitchen" said Jen Lynch, the class rep. "No thought was taken about it. Smaller classes could have gone in there."

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DIT goes to NUI for second round debates

by Niamh Cahill

The second round of the Irish Times Debating competition began taking place on Saturday 15th January. The debates have been taking place in colleges throughout the country and have been well received by spectators.

The competition, sponsored by the Irish Times newspaper, has been running since 1960 and takes place every year. The competition is somewhat different from other debating competitions as it has both teams and individuals in the final rounds. The first rounds contain only teams but the panel of adjudicators can put through individuals as well as teams from each round.

The first round saw an individual and a team from the debating and political society of DIT go through to the next round. The successful team of two took part in the second round debates at NUI Galway this month. Kevin Roche (26) and Niamh Sweeney (24) of Aungier St. proposed the motion that 'This house would celebrate a National Independence Day'.

The pair argued the case convincingly but their motion was denied. Niamh Sweeney, a Masters in Journalism student, did however go through to the semi-finals as an individual. The semi-finals are a black tie event and will be held in February.

Niamh, obviously delighted with the win, was eager to highlight that DIT does not have an established tradition of debating. Hopefully, she will aid in changing this. The only ever individual winner from DIT was Marian Finucane, the former Liveline presenter, who won the competition in 1971. Niamh has said "I would love to follow in the footsteps of Marian and win DIT another debating title".

Simon Harris of Kevin St. went through to the second round of the competition as an individual and will be taking part in that round at the end of the month.
Tsunami - A Reflection

by Joe Mc Grath
Lecturer - Faculty of Business

I was in Thailand in the hours and days after the Tsunami. Images that you saw on your television screens over the Christmas holidays captured the brutal ending of so many lives.

For a day or so afterwards things were confused. Nobody had any sense of the scale of the devastation. Nobody knew what had happened in other villages and communities. It seemed like everything was focused on dealing with the tragedies that had happened just in front of you. We heard that the Thai king's grandson had been killed in Phuket along with maybe one hundred people.

The waves did not discriminate. About half the bodies strewn like discarded dolls on the beaches, golf courses and resorts were Thai. They were hotel workers and their children, fishermen, taxi drivers, beach-workers. The rest were white people, Farangs, the Thai word for foreigners. Most were Europeans on holidays. But it was hard to tell the difference. The mud and the sand covered the dead.

Thai soldiers and sailors joined tourists in searching for the living and the dead. A Thai soldier, held a stunned young boy in his arms. The boy had a piece of paper with his name and the message - I am looking for my parents. The soldier was crying as he carried the little boy to the place where the lists of the missing and the dead were.

Another Thai soldier is kneeling over the body of a child. He is washing the mud off the child's face and head with exquisite tenderness. The hair is blonde - probably another Swedish kid. Sweden lost so many.

The aid agencies begin to arrive in great numbers and it seems that all the world is trying to help. The morgues are full. The Buddhist Temples arrive in great numbers and it seems like everything was focused on dealing with the devastation. Nobody knew what had happened in other villages and communities.

Meanwhile, thousands of hotel workers, hotel staff, hotel workers, hotel staff. The rest were white people, Farangs, the Thai word for foreigners. Most were Europeans on holidays. But it was hard to tell the difference. The mud and the sand covered the dead.

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Another Thai soldier is kneeling over the body of a child. He is washing the mud off the child's face and head with exquisite tenderness. The hair is blonde - probably another Swedish kid. Sweden lost so many.

The aid agencies begin to arrive in great numbers and it seems that all the world is trying to help. The morgues are full. The Buddhist Temples become a temporary resting place for the dead. The corpses are being wrapped in white sheets held together by duct tape. Every sight, smell and sound seems grotesque and unreal.

Thailand is known as the Land of Smiles. But everybody is crying. Tourists, soldiers, aid workers, hotel staff.

Only when I arrive back in Ireland do I realize that the size of the response matches the devastation of the Tsunami. It seems like every organization in the country is collecting money to send to Asia. I know a little about raising money for charity through the Students 10K. No matter how hard you try, most of the time you encounter apathy and indifference. What makes the Tsunami different? I learn that it was on the television screens throughout the Christmas holidays. The pictures were dramatic. Celebrities are queueing up to donate their hard-earned millions. I think that Asia is going to be hit by another flood - a flood of aid money. It may be that there will be more money for charity through the Students 10K.

Meanwhile, thousands of people are dying a much less merciful death in forgotten Africa. Are African children less important than Asian children? Do Sudanesse parents suffer less when they hold a dying child in their arms? There is no shortage of suffering in this world.

When are we at our best? This is a question that I have been reflecting on for a long time. Compassion, charity, generosity, the ability to listen to and respond to human distress. These are not virtues you can buy in the marketplace. We are at our best when we are giving, when we are connected to each other. It is the way we are meant to be. If we feel good because we have responded with compassion to those in need, it is because we are meant to feel good when we connect to those who are suffering.

If there is a Judgement Day, we are going to be judged, not on what we have acquired, but on what we have given away. Perhaps the Tsunami has taught us to be compassionate. Perhaps.

Candle used in Aungier St ceremony to be presented to the Finnegan family

Eilis Finnegan remembered

A mass was held in Aungier Street to commemorate the victims of the Indian Ocean disaster and our own Eilis Finnegan. Eilis graduated in November from DIT with a diploma in Management Studies. She had also attended DIT a number of years previously, completing a certificate in Travel and Tourism in 1998.

Eilis (27), from Ballyfermot in Dublin, was on holiday in the Thai island of Phi Phi with her boyfriend, Mr Barry Murphy, when the tsunami struck on December 26th. They had been on the beach for just 15 minutes when disaster struck and they were separated by raging torrents of water.

Mr Murphy also graduated in November from DIT with a diploma in Management Studies. He remained on the island to identify the body.

The couple had met while working together for United Airlines in Clontarf and had been going out since September of last year. They had initially intended to travel to Argentina for their Christmas holiday but had to look for an alternative when they were unable to get flights.

Eilis had a strong love of the Irish language, music and travel. In her spare time, she taught in her local GAA club, the Liffey Gales.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Dermot Ahern, issued a statement expressing his "deep sadness at the Finnegan family's announcement of the positive identification of Eilis's remains in Krabi, Thailand".

Left: the power of the tsunami as it sweeps away cars, homes and trees

Right: an aerial view of the devastating effects of the tsunami
J1- Summer in the sun

By Ronan O’Conner

Anyone who thinks that resorts with long sandy beaches and mega-rich tourists are restricted to California would be very wrong. The island of Martha’s Vineyard is a paradise and a favourite East-coast getaway for the rich and famous.

I spent last summer working and relaxing on the island in Massachusetts. Martha’s Vineyard is a small island (roughly 20 miles wide), just off the coast of Cape Cod. Having spent the previous day-and-a-half traveling solo and staying in a Hostel in Boston, I was very relieved to arrive on the island and meet my friends who had flown out a week before me. The benefit of arriving later was that I never had to worry about getting accommodation, which can be a huge problem for students. Because Martha’s Vineyard is such an exclusive island, the cost of living and housing is exorbitant. The three of us ended up staying in a basement that consisted of three rooms and only one window. The standard of accommodation was not too much of a concern as we spent as little time as possible in our digs. Our apartment/dungeon was in the town of Vineyard Haven, a ‘dry’ town - it serves no alcohol. It is a very picturesque village that is much quieter than the two other towns of Oak Bluffs and Edgartown.

I managed to get a job ‘scooping’ ice-cream in Mad Martha’s in Oak Bluffs, which has all the lively bars and a huge harbor, that fills up with luxury yachts at the height of summer. At times the work could be difficult, but it was always fun because no-one took their job too seriously. Summer work is very easy to get as the whole island looks to hire workers for the busy summer months. My pay-packet as a lowly ‘scooper’ was not great, so most of my time off was spent on the beach or having barbecues. Working with American students was a brilliant experience as I got to meet a wide range of people, rather than the usual ‘Irish-on-tour’. If you want to go somewhere warm and spend time with your friends, go to Spain. What is the point of spending so much time, effort and money going halfway around the world just to go drinking with your mates?

In my experience American students have a lot more to offer than Michael Moore or George Bush would have us believe. The stereotype of them is as accurate as the one about Irish people and leprechauns. The people I met in the summer were witty, clever and a great laugh. It takes a little bit of effort to get to know new people, but it is well worth it.

We all packed in our jobs in the middle of August (two and a half months was enough to spend with tons of ice-cream), and went traveling through upstate New York.

Anyone who wants to go to the US this summer should try and book a place on either USIT or SAYIT’s program as soon as possible. USIT will keep their program open until their allocation is full, but those applying after 8th February will have to pay in full upon application. Applicants need only pay a deposit of €34 to book their place before this date. SAYIT say that their program is not restricted to numbers but people should book early to get the best flights. SAYIT applicants need to make a deposit of €50 to book their places.
New Year's revolution

by Kate White

DITCHING the bitching, whipping out the nicotine patches and joining the pioneers, at least for a month, let's face it, it was never going to happen. Chances are, before the last line of Auld Lang Syne was belted out, you'd already broken whatever resolution you solemnly promised to keep for the New Year. So why don't we concentrate on improving D.I.T this year instead. It's not hard to see it's in more need of a makeover than any of us students.

OK, I'm in no way suggesting we make the lecturers take up yoga and pilates, as funny as it might be to see some of them twisting into the eagle position. But it's definitely time to get some student atmosphere back into D.I.T. Yes freshmen, back in the day there was more to D.I.T than classes and an excuse for a students' hangout.

At this stage the reopening of the student centre, where shops is as likely as all our lecturers turning up to class in the morning sweep across 'campus' there was one thing that everyone wanted to change about college-the infamous and very absent 'student bar'. The million other pubs within a stones throw from the college just aren't enough for the Bulmers generation. How are we supposed to get through accounting or politics without a pint? Considering our predecessors' fight for their right to a liquid lunch was in vain, I predict that we will do no better. Although packing a cup of soup might ease the immediate cravings.

This isn't a matter of life or death - it's far more important than that. It's Valentine's Day.

This isn't a matter of life or death - it's far more important than that. It's Valentine's Day.

The date we love to hate

by Hugh Casey

FEBRUARY rolls around again, and just as we're recovering from all the stress and strains of exam time, we're hit by something far more antagonising than a pen, a paper and numerous pages of recycled tripe. You better hope you've come prepared, because there will be no gawking over the shoulder of the lad beside you. This isn't a matter of life or death - it's far more important than that. It's Valentine's Day.

If you fail this exam, you'll be up the creek without a paddle. Hell, you'll be lucky to have a boat. You're not just representing yourself here, lads, you're representing your woman as well. How is she going to cluck away to her fellow hens, when all she got was a bouquet of flowers that cost €8.99 from a petrol station forecourt? And how is it going to look when compared to Louise, who was awoken at dawn to be serenaded by U2's "With or without you" as performed by the National Symphony Orchestra.

Face it lads, it's a competition that has no winners. There's always some smarmy Casanova who'll ruin it for the rest of us. So I propose that this year we hit the shops early and buy up the entire Valentine's stock. We'll build a bonfire, and destroy every card, every cuddly toy and every last copy of Billy Ray Cyrus' "Achy Breaky Heart".

Or maybe this year I'll embrace Valentine's Day, to see what all the fuss is about. Every year, a local shop puts an enormous teddy in its window with "I wuv you" embroidered across its chest. Maybe, this year I'll buy that teddy!

Not that I'm eager to get to class or anything. I just can't stand the wait. Especially when I only walked to this lift because the main one was about to burst with more lazy people desperate to reach the second floor. So why not install extra lifts in place of the present staircases and give us a few more buttons to push?

With such physical barriers preventing us from reaching our full attendance potential, I feel the need to move on to the more liquid obstacles. On a morning sweep across 'campus' there was one thing that everyone wanted to change about college-the infamous and very absent 'student bar'. The million other pubs within a stones throw from the college just aren't enough for the Bulmers generation. How are we supposed to get through accounting or politics without a pint? Considering our predecessors' fight for their right to a liquid lunch was in vain, I predict that we will do no better. Although packing a cup of soup might ease the immediate cravings.

All things considered, perhaps it is time to start the student revolution.
by Ceri Teggin

Uh oh, the post-Christmas blues have come. With a glum eye and an empty wallet you rifle through your wardrobe each morning only to blinded by sparkling dresses and haunted by the jeans you still can’t fit into. To make it worse those tweed culottes that took all your money in the sales really do resemble a piece of carpet. It’s looking bad girlies, you have absolutely nothing to wear and not a penny to buy it with. Feeling depressed yet? Well not to worry, there is a chance for skint students to pick up trendy Spring threads without spending squillions.

Vintage clothing is still hot property for fashion followers this season, so if you fancy getting your hands on some genuine fare at bargain prices, look no further than your local charity shops.

Yes, I said charity shops. These little havens are the hunting ground for many a fashion conscious lady, think Sienna Miller's bohemian chic. She may be picking up her clothes in vintage boutiques but with a keen eye and good rummaging skills you too could have just as much luck rifling through your local Oxfam.

Charity shops are usually buried deep in suburbia. On the southside the affluent areas of Dun Laoghaire and Rathmines are favourites, where shoppers might just find a little Dior or Prada hanging next to that yellowing gym slip.

For northside style head to Phibsborough where clusters of these shops can be found, and in the city centre check out Dorset Street and Camden Street.

So now you know where to go, what exactly is it you do? While hardened hunters have code names for clothing - retro, vintage, almost new etc., novices are still trying to get their heads around the idea of wearing other people's discarded clothes. But have no fear, for I have compiled a list of survival tips, essential for every charity shopper. So take heed and learn, for you will not be told twice.

1. Be warned that nice old ladies with tea cosy hats turn into vultures around assorted bric-a-brac. Have a firm elbow and don’t be afraid to use it.

2. Musty smells come with the territory but steer clear of any item with a particularly potent odour. Year-old cat wee is one that even the dry cleaners won’t be able to get rid of. And don’t be fooled, if you can’t smell it anymore it hasn’t gone away, it just means that you probably smell of it too.

3. If brave enough to buy shoes, avoid anything with imprints in odd places that were clearly not made by toes but by corns, bunions, growths etc. Yellowing insoles are also not a good sign.

4. Avoid the underwear rails (yes, they do have them.) If you want cheap knickers go to Pennys.

5. Charity shops tend to use the term ‘changing rooms’ loosely. Don’t be surprised to find yourself undressing in the storage space next to some old boxes and a naked mannequin. If you value your dignity it’s probably better just to spend the €2 and chance it.

So go on and get stuck in. But most importantly try not to take yourself too seriously. After all it is for charity!
DIT on the Rag......the week in preview

**Monday 7th February**
This will be local launch day in all campuses. There will be inflatable games, a bouncing castle and perhaps a pool competition. There will also be a collection for charity, the benefactor of which will be the Temple St. Children's Hospital. A fairly light-hearted day will be had, before the wild, harebrained antics of Tuesday.

**Tuesday 8th February**
The rag trip begins at 11 o'clock in all campuses. This years rag trip ticket will cost you 25 euro, a five-euro increase on last year. The destinations are of course, a closely guarded secret. However, it has been confirmed that there will be free food at the second stop of the trip. There will also be food at the third stop; unfortunately, this food will not be free. The organisers have taken great care to choose a last stop venue that doesn't kick out people they consider too drunk. A chill-out room will be provided for those too intoxicated to do anything else but sleep, so rest assured you won't be out in the cold.

**Wednesday 9th February**
As many of you will spend most of the day in bed recovering from the rag trip, today's events will be quite low key. Various events will take place at local campuses. Competitions will be organised and games will be available for your amusement.

**Thursday 10th February**
Today is carnival day. Previously held in Grange Gorman, this year's carnival will take place in Aungier St. On entering the foyer, you can expect to be greeted by an information station, detailing the schedule for the day's events. There will be music played by DJ's and the juggling and karaoke societies will also be displaying their talents. Bungee jumping will take place and candyfloss will be available for all you sugar lovers. You may also have the privilege of seeing some bands perform on a Guinness rig in the courtyard area, and not just any old bands. Although, nothing has been confirmed, it has been hinted that a well-known girl band may take to the stage. Watch out boys!!

**Friday 11th February**
After a very busy week of carousing and bungee jumping today will be a chill out day.

So that's the proposed schedule for this year's rag week. If you have any comments or suggestions, feel free to contact your SU.

RAGWEEK wouldn't be the same without the highly entertaining, yet revolting iron stomach competition. Throughout the week, every campus of D.L.T will host the competition, each creating its own mix of food and drink fit to make anyone hurt, even just by looking at it. The competition normally consists of five rounds, but only the real iron stomachs make it to the fifth. Participants can expect to consume anything, depending on the college. Bolton St. is renowned for its particularly disgusting iron stomach competition, devouring raw liver, cow's hearts and cooking oil. Animal lovers at Kevin St are a little more tasteful however; nine out of ten students preferring cat food to other cuisines. Culture vultures at Aungier St. are much more conservative it seems, knocking back raw eggs and gone off beer in a very polite fashion.

So if you have a penchant for all things vile and nauseating and have a belly made of steel, then join in this stomach-churning event coming to a college near you soon. Just don't say we didn't warn you.

**Can you stomach it?**

THIS year the DIT SU have wisely decided to reintroduce the sorely missed rag week into its schedule. The previous two years have been absent of rag week; instead students have been subjected to rag daze. These 'daze' consisted of four days of events and philandering, like those organised for rag week, but were strung out over a two-week period.

The reasoning behind introducing rag daze stemmed from, the perhaps misconstrued idea, that student bank accounts couldn't handle the financial strain of rag week (getting pissed every night being much more expensive than it used to be).

The inability to actually make a profit from previous rag week events may also have had an impact on the idea ditch rag week for rag daze.

The important thing is that rag week is back (so empty your piggy banks people) and is shaping up to be a very entertaining and fun-filled week. Here is the proposed schedule; much has yet to be confirmed.

How can students in other colleges find the cash to enjoy rag week while our beloved students of D.L.T cannot? Or is it perhaps that rag week events in D.L.T were badly organised and thus not worthy of our participation and hard earned money? Perhaps, we'll never know!

DIT Rag Week returns in full force

by Niamh Cahill
THE THIRD JAMESON DUBLIN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

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Fond Memories of Indonesia

For weeks the world has been rocked by the truly devastating images of south east Asia. The tsunami that struck on St. Stephens day brought with it horrors that were almost unimaginable. Now as the cleanup continues, whole communities are struggling to get their lives back to normal and to rebuild the homes and businesses they once had. Here, Ross O Connell remembers his travels through beautiful Indonesia, and reminds us that it is now more than ever, that the country needs our support in keeping its biggest industry alive.

IT'S almost been three years since I visited Indonesia and still I can picture every place I visited in detail. I remember what it felt like to step off the plane at Denpasar and feel the heat that seemed to swallow me up. I remember every hotel and every hut I stayed in, every beach and every island I visited. I remember every boat trip and every road trip.

It was almost surreal being somewhere completely different from anywhere I had ever been, meeting people whose lives were so different from mine. I felt truly alien. I remember being treated like a celebrity anytime I ventured out of the big cities and the unnerving friendliness of every person I met. Since my time in Indonesia, I have travelled around Europe and up the east coast of South America and still I remember Indonesia better than anywhere else I've been. It's that kind of place.

To put it in context, the first time I'd ever been on a plane was a month before, when I took a weekend trip to Paris. So to me, even being on a plane was a new experience. But it was more than the novelty that caught me. Indonesia is a fascinatingly beautiful country. I found it difficult to know what to photograph because every beach, valley and street scene has been taken from a postcard or stolen from a holiday brochure.

It seems fitting then, that people who live there are so laid back and happy to be where they are, all of the time. Indonesia is a poor country. My daily allowance was about twenty-five dollars, about the same as a schoolteacher there earns in a week. This didn't seem a problem though. People are incredibly content. Crime is almost non-existent. Perhaps this was why I was so astonished when the week I left, a bomb exploded in a night club on Bali. The same night club I had been to the night before I left.

When I heard the news, I was genuinely sad for the Indonesian people I had met. People who were so welcoming and so peaceful, who could not possibly anticipate that this could happen to them. People so unfamiliar with that level of devastation, that it would feel as unreal as Indonesia had felt to me when I first arrived. It seemed so unfair that they would have to pay in the form of a massive drop in tourism, the livelihood of almost every Indonesian.

I felt the same thing on St Stephens day, when I heard that a massive tsunami had wiped out entire towns and had killed off generations of families in Indonesia. In the space of about an hour 160,000 people ceased to exist. That's a phenomenal number. It's enough people to fill the Point thirty two times.

Over the past number of weeks, I've talked to a lot of people who are rethinking holiday plans they had for the area and looking at somewhere else to go. This seems incredibly unfair to the people who have lost everything and rely on tourism to survive. There is so much fund-raising and yet people are seriously rethinking plans to go. Last Tuesday, I booked a flight into Vietnam, where I will travel through Cambodia, Thailand, Burma, Bangladesh, Nepal and fly home from India. I can't wait. Thoughts of Asia are keeping me sane as I head towards my finals. It's an amazing place to travel and while the emergency aid is important for recovery, it's the tourist dollar that keeps it alive.
Lights Camera Fashion Show

by Louise Conlon

THE DIT Charity Fashion Show is back! On Tuesday Feb 22nd a bevy of DIT beauties are gracing the catwalk in Vicar Street, in aid of the Marie Keating Foundation. The night promises to be a melting pot of glitz, glamour and all things gorgeous, featuring an eclectic mix of high street cool and young designer funky.

The theme this year is Carnival, featuring the wildest collections, dancers, body paint artists, break dancers, drag queens, and lots more, think mardi-gras goes to the circus!

Our core model crew are all DIT students, handpicked during November’s Model Week, where we scoured all DIT sites with our cameras and measuring tapes, and will be lead by the stunningly chic Sarah Mc Govern, ex-DIT president, and one of Ireland’s top models.

Other celeb guest appearances are being lined up but are top secret until the night of the show. The aftershow party is shaping up to be an event of its own, taking place in The Shelter and continuing on with the Carnival theme, with fabulous goody bags as the icing on the cake!

The profile of the show is huge as a result of last years success, and is attracting much attention already. Look out for appearances on TV3’s Ireland AM and in all the major newspapers, and radio stations in the run up to the show. The Fashion Show is also offering 3 students the chance to get involved on the night through NETSOC. Netsoc in association with the show are running a ‘Pimp my Nerd’ competition, where the best entries get to appear in the show!

The Young designer collections are still being reviewed, with applicants coming from NCAD, Grafton Academy, and Sallynoggin. However, we want any DIT designers with a collection ready for Feb 22nd, and interested in exhibiting, to get involved. Last year we featured collections from Lyndsey Moran and Aoife Twohig-Donfield, both DIT students.

Any interested applicants should contact louise on 085 7 353 353, or email louise.conlon@student.dit

We are still looking for dressers, assistant stylists and runners for the night of the show. The Fashion Show committee meets every Monday, 5pm in the Aungier Street SU, which is where you should come if you want to get involved! There is a model contract up for grabs on the night, as well as a best young designer competition. Tickets are €15 and available from all DIT shops from the middle of February. Tickets are limited and demand will be huge so get yours soon! See you February 22nd!
Clubs and Socs Round-up

Drum Aungier St:
They are continuing to hold workshops every Wed from 5pm - 7pm in the Multi Purpose Room beside the Students' Union in Aungier St. They will also be taking part in the DIT Drama Festival taking place next Feb along with the other Drama Societies in the DIT.
Contact: Juliette Bonass
juliette.bonass@student.dit.ie www.didrama.ie

Poker Soc:
Plan to meet every second Monday, with an intervarsity taking place on the 9th of February in the Gresham, entry is €20. Contact Paul at the details below for more info.
Contact: Paul Redmond
paul.redmond@student.dit.ie

Jugglers:
Meet Every Wednesday at 8pm - 9pm in the Kevin St Gym.
Contact: Tony Flynn
dit_capoeira@campus.ie

Dance Soc:
Dance Soc meet every Monday in the Multi Purpose Room beside the Students' Union in Aungier St and shake their thang from 6.00pm - 8pm!
Contact: Edana Gorham
fairy_dust_5@msn.com

Drama Mountjoy Sq.
Drama Soc meet every Wednesday from 5.30pm - 7.30pm in room 323. Weekly work shops and also trips to the theatre.
Contact: Brian Whitney
y2smeg69@hotmail.com

www.didrama.ie

DJ Soc
DJ’s meet 6pm - 8.30pm every Tuesday in the multi-purpose room in Aungier St beside the Students‘ Union. Regular open decks night in Carnival bar on Wexford St after the workshop.
Contact: Ene Keenan
ditdsociety@yahoo.com

Sign Language
Sign Language meet every Wednesday from 4.30 - 5.30 in Mountjoy Sq. The meeting room may change. Generally it is room 214 but you can always contact Sarah to confirm.
Contact: Sarah Banks
sadie_444@hotmail.com

Drama Cathal Brugha / Bolton St
The Soc meet every Tuesday at 6 o'clock in Cathal Brugha St M102. And Thursday’s at 6 o’clock in Bolton St Room 149.
Contact: Deirdre Maguire
deirdre.maguire1@student.dit.ie (Cathal Brugha)
Niall McCarthy
niall_t_me_carthy@hotmail.com (Bolton St)

Rainbow Week on the horizon

by Niamh Cahill

FOR the past few years the LGBT Society has been running their version of pride week at DIT. The event, called Rainbow Week, aims to highlight certain issues in society, such as homophobia and challenge these stereotypes.

The society hold an event every night of the week, while also creating an awareness campaign about their society by putting up posters around various campuses of DIT. The society currently boasts a membership of around 120, which is constantly growing.

The schedule for this year’s Rainbow week is still under discussion, but a review of last years events should give anyone interested in participating a taste for what’s to be expected this February.

On Monday evening, the society held an informal video night in the Games Room at Aungier St. The society launched there first ever magazine on the Tuesday. The small glossy magazine, called ‘Amach’ was well received among the students of DIT and the second issue of the magazine should be available during this year’s Rainbow Week.

Organisation night was held on the Wednesday. It was a preparation night for the following evening’s event called Diva Night, held at the Temple Bar Music Centre. The occasion included a two-hour student drag show and music was played afterwards. The charity event was a huge success, raising 1,500 euro for Dublin’s Samaritans and Simon Community.

This year, the DITs LGBT Society hopes to reverse this trend. They aim to show the other education institutions that DIT has a debating force to be reckoned with!

The Debating & Political Society is eager to gain new members and is always open to suggestions on motions. Contact your SU for more details.

Societies organiser: Anita Conway
Tel: (01) 4027123
email: anita.conway@dit.ie

Don’t miss out, keep an eye out for posters of upcoming events or drop into the societies office for more details.

Societies Office:

Anita Conway, Eóin Kearney
01 402 7123 01 402 3172
086 637 6374 eoin.kearney@dit.ie

DIT debate teams get cracking

by Laura Whelan

THE Society got off to a busy start this year, with various debating activities keeping most of the members on the go in the first term.

This year four teams represented DIT in the first round of the Irish Times Debates, which were held at UCD. Teams from all over Ireland travelled to compete in the competition. Those who took part competed at a very high standard. From the four DIT teams who took part in the debates, one team and one individual progressed to the next level.

In December the inaugural debate for the Debating & Political Society took place at DIT, Aungier St. The debate was presided by former President of the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) and ex DIT President Colin Jordan who kindly took time to host the event. The motion, that "this house believes DITSU is responsible for the lack of atmosphere in DIT" was regarded as quite controversial. The debate had a large turnout with both DIT President Jarleth Molloy and USI President Ben Archebold defending the Union’s position and opposing the motion.

A pizza and wine reception followed afterwards. The prizes for best speakers went to first time debater Kieran Dineen and USI’s Ben Archebold. The prize for best line went to Eamon Cossens.

The Debating & Political Society plan to hold many more debates in the near future. Unlike other universities and colleges in Ireland DIT does not have a strong tradition of active debaters. This year, the Debating & Political Society hope to reverse this trend. They aim to show the other education institutions that DIT has a debating force to be reckoned with!

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This year, it has been confirmed that Diva Night will be taking place again but the society also hope to have a masquerade ball, giving a prize for the best mask. If last years events are anything to go by, this year’s rainbow week promises to be just as good, if not better than the last one. The week will be held on 14th to 18th February. For more information, check out the societies website at www.ditlight.org.
Velvet Revolver stick to their guns at The Point

by Keith Reilly

CHANCES are you’ve heard of this lot. Their debut album Contraband announced their arrival when it claimed the No. 1 spot in the US Billboard charts upon its release last summer. Hardly unexpected when you consider the musical talent that comprises Velvet Revolver: ex-Stone Temple Pilots vocalist Scott Weiland and talented rhythm guitarist Dave Kushner are joined by three former members of Guns ‘n’ Roses. The trio in question is Michael ‘Duff’ McKagan, Matt Sorum and crucially, Saul ‘Slash’ Hudson.

With such a stellar line-up of musicians, it came as little surprise to see this band making their Irish debut at a venue as big as The Point. They’ve already been lauded as the first supergroup of the 21st century, so when the dust from the whirlwind of hype had settled, could Velvet Revolver justify their reputation on stage? Thankfully for the huge crowd, the answer was an unreserved YES.

After support band The Datsuns finished their set, the expectation within the assembled throng of fans grew steadily in anticipation of Slash and co.’s arrival on stage. Shortly after 9:00, The Point erupted to the opening bars of ‘Sucker Train Blues’ as Velvet Revolver launched into a set that would prove to be around two hours long - not bad for an act with a solitary album in the can.

Considering the band’s personnel, comparisons to Guns ‘n’ Roses are inevitable, and Velvet Revolver undoubtedly have the potential to please the frenzied hordes, but there was always a sneaking suspicion that the band might throw in a couple of surprises. So it proved when, after scathing renditions of ‘You Got No Right’ and an extended ‘I Used To Love Her’. However, it was the final segment of the show that really brought it home. It began with Slash nonchalantly deriding the smoking ban while enjoying a cigarette himself, continued with G ‘n’ R favourite ‘Mr. Brownstone’ and the excellent ‘You Got No Right’, and concluded with a rollicking performance of debut single ‘Slither’.

Although The Point proved a fantastic venue for this gig, it has to be said that Velvet Revolver are a throwback to the glory days of stadium rock with crunching power chords, screaming guitar solos, pounding drums and roaring vocals. If they continue to produce live performances and music of such high quality, it’s a safe bet that their next show in Ireland will see them playing without a roof over their heads - which should come as a relief to poor Slash, who must have been sweating buckets in his leather pants...

Framing the New Year

The Frames rocked-in the New Year in style, at Dublin’s Vicar St, bringing to an end a remarkable year for the band. With special guests “Daves Radio” Ireland’s answer to Greenday, and Mark Geary the Frames thrilled a near sell-out crowd for over two hours. If “Daves Radio” came on stage unknown to the audience they did not leave in the same fashion. An hour later it they played yet another brilliant gig at Whelan’s, which did their prospects no harm. It was evident from both performances that they have something. The next U2? Maybe not. The next Greenday? Possibly.

Where “Daves Radio” and Mark Geary left off, The Frames quickly took on. They have the rare ability to incite crowds without the usual, "we love you Dublin" or "Dublin is our favourite city", which are so often used by bands. New Years Eve 2004 was no exception. They were at home in their hometown and as they opened up with "Dream Awake" I began to see their appeal. Add Colm Mac An Iomaire's mind blowing violin playing to Glen Hansard's lethal vocals, guitars to the max and Glen's soul-stirring guitar work you get a fantastic sound. The Frames are a throwback to the glory days of Anti-Records in 2004, but still release in their early '90's heyday. As the gig progressed, Weiland's ability to work a crowd became obvious. The vocalist's serpentine movement and penchant for singing through a megaphone made for quite a spectacle, as did a fetching (and utterly ridiculous) hat that came and went throughout the set. Add to that his propensity for using the 'f' word and talking complete rubbish between songs, and you've got the perfect blueprint for a rock 'n' roll frontman. Allied to a rhythm section containing Duff, Matt Sorum and Dave Kushner, you have an extremely solid foursome. Add in the virtuoso lead guitar skills of Slash, though, and you've got the formula for something special - which is exactly what these guys produced.

A straight run-through of Contraband’s track list would certainly have been enough to please the frenzied hordes, but there was always a sneaking suspicion that the band might throw in a couple of surprises. So it proved when, after scathing renditions of ‘You Got No Right’ and an extended ‘I Used To Love Her’. However, it was the final segment of the show that really brought it home. It began with Slash nonchalantly deriding the smoking ban while enjoying a cigarette himself, continued with G ‘n’ R favourite ‘Mr. Brownstone’ and the excellent ‘You Got No Right’, and concluded with a rollicking performance of debut single ‘Slither’.

Although The Point proved a fantastic venue for this gig, it has to be said that Velvet Revolver are a throwback to the glory days of stadium rock with crunching power chords, screaming guitar solos, pounding drums and roaring vocals. If they continue to produce live performances and music of such high quality, it’s a safe bet that their next show in Ireland will see them playing without a roof over their heads - which should come as a relief to poor Slash, who must have been sweating buckets in his leather pants...

Framing the New Year

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Irish artists perform for Tsunami aid

by Fiona Scally

It was Irishman Bob Geldof who proved that a song can change the lives of those in need. And it is this same creed that is driving Irish musicians into the country’s venues to raise money in aid of the survivors of last month’s tsunami disaster.

The cause has seen several venue managers handing over their stages for free to the numerous musicians who have banded together in the name of this worthwhile cause. As a result, Dublin will see some superb nights of music and entertainment over the coming weeks, and music-lovers will find themselves encouraged to donate much-needed funds in order to get in on the action.

Vicar St. will host two particularly exciting nights of music and comedy on February 1st and 2nd. The earlier of the two features Bell X1, Mark Geary, Dr Millar, The Chalets, and comedians Eddie Bannon and David O’Doherety. The following night, David Kitt, Mundy, Turn and Life After Modelling provide the music, while Jason Byrne, John Henderson and Dermot Carney provide the laughs. Tickets for each night are €25 via Ticketmaster and a fundraising auction will also be held on both nights.

However, if you feel you can’t wait until February to see the Chalets, you’ll also find them in the Temple Bar Music Centre on January 22nd. They share the bill with Joe Chester, Nina Hynes, Sack, 8 Ball, Jove, and Val Francis. The night is being run by the FMC (Federation of Music Collectives). Tickets are €10 and are available on the door.

The Olympia is the venue for Eurovision for Asia, featuring some former stars of everyone’s favourite song contest. The action takes place on January 23rd and sees Linda Martin, Niamh Kavanagh, Paul Harrington, Charlie O’Dempsey, Eimear Quinn, Mickey Harte, Chris Doran and Red Hurley perform. The number of these former contestants who actually won the contest in their respective years of entry is surprising! Shirley Temple Bar and Twink join them on the night. Tickets are €40/€25.

CPU Records are behind another great night of music in Eamonn Doran’s on January 23rd. Delorentos, Me in the Park, Jove, The Handles, Rob Smith and Rob Crosbie from Texas Galaxy are currently on the line-up. More will be added shortly. Everybody attending will receive a free album from various artists who have donated material. There will also be raffles on the night. Keep an eye on www.cpu.ie for additions to the line-up as they are announced.

Both Delorentos and Me in the Park appear again when Irish music collective Goldenplec holds PlecAid, which takes place in the Sugar Club on February 4th. Polar will headline and The Licks complete the line-up. Tickets are available for €8 from Road Records on Fade St.

Proceeds of all of the above gigs go to the Irish Red Cross Tsunami Appeal. Contact venues for further details.
**White Hot Rock**

**Album: Future's Burning**

(Various Artists)

by Ronan Flanagan

THIS legendary BBC radio DJ John Peel who died last year. If the broadcaster was still around he would certainly mark his stamp of approval on this release. Future's Burning is a collection of the most exciting British bands around at the moment. Franz Ferdinand had a massive year and they are the most established band along with the brilliant Libertines on view.

Thankfully most of the album stays away from mainstream players and concentrates on who we'll be listening to at Oxegen and such events this year. Those of you who listen to Jenny Heuston on 2FM or Tom Dunne will be familiar with many of the bands. If you're not familiar, check out this album.

Looking down the tracklist it's hard not to be impressed. Bloc Party seem to be the hot tip for the year. Razorlight, whose hatred of Keane is well voiced, have 'Stumble and Fall' as one of the highlights of the album. The Coral have a song from their second album while fellow Liverpudlians The Zutons appear and continue to make waves.

It would have been all too easy for this collection to be pure indie-rock but there is a good variety of music. Most notably Scotsmen Dogs Die In Hot Cars come in with a ska track. "I love you 'cause I have to". Even gangsta rap is put into the mix thanks to Goldie Lookin' Chain who will be playing the Village in February. These guys come straight off the streets of Southport in Wales and supply some truly brilliant rhymes and lyrics ("you fuckin' knows it!").

Future's Burning is the perfect introduction to the alternative to fm orientated pop and will make you seem very knowledgeable when these bands make it really big. Another good thing is that nearly all the featured artists have played the smaller venues in Ireland last year and return regularly, so if you like what you hear you can check them out live. First and foremost though, you really should get this album.

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**New kids on the Bloc**

**Single: So Here We Are (Bloc Party)**

by Fiona Cuskely

Bloc Party have a slightly more original sound than most of the guitar bands around today. They have a jagged, futuristic style, and will have you tapping your foot along with the pulsing bass line, if not dancing around the room. 'So Here We Are' starts off with a slow guitar solo that lives up as the song progresses. It is a really catchy song, and I can see it having great success in the charts in February.

If you're a fan of Kings of Leon, Muse or the Strokes, then you are sure to like Bloc Party. Bloc Party, a sure hit for 2005, are already booked to play Glastonbury and Reading festivals, and are in talks with T in the Park and Oxegen. They came second in a recent BBC Radio News 'Sounds of 2005', a survey of 110 impartial critics, and with their new single 'So Here We Are' out on January 31, the year has started on a great note for the band.

The other two songs on the single, "Positive Tension" and 'Helicopter', are much more upbeat than 'So Here We Are' and fall more so into the 'rock' category, whereas the latter is more 'dance-rock style'.

The band has just announced details of their biggest ever UK shows. In March, they play four locations from Edinburgh to Portsmouth. With no Irish dates currently on their gig calendar, Bloc Party will almost definitely be this side of the pond by summer.

The group's debut album, Silent Alarm, comes out on February 14.

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**Elektra sparks but fails to ignite**

by Keith Reilly

I can't say I was looking forward to this. Comic book adaptations have traditionally proven a tad difficult for Hollywood to master. In recent years, both Bryan Singer and Sam Raimi have managed to buck that trend with their X-Men and Spiderman movies. However, for every Batman, there seems to be a Hulk or a Daredevil lurking in the shadows like a superhero's arch-nemesis. So, how does Elektra fare?

Well, it's certainly not going to figure at this year's Oscars ceremony. On the other hand, it doesn't manage to plumb the cinematic depths typified by the likes of The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen. Jennifer Garner offers up the eye candy as the title character, an assassin who finds herself fighting to save the lives of a single father and his daughter having originally been assigned the task of killing them. Gorn Visnjic (of ER fame) acts as a wooden love interest of sorts, while Terence Stamp plays the obligatory martial arts master - despite the fact that he's blind (laughable, I know, but this IS based on a comic).

Elektra certainly has one or two redeeming elements. The villains are deserving of special mention, due to their imaginative powers. 'Tattoo' and 'Typhoid' are particularly entertaining. This is obviously down to the comic books rather than the scriptwriters, but their various abilities are adequately showcased in the brief amount of time they spend on screen.

Unfortunately, many of the film's other elements fall flat on their face. The acting is painfully mediocre, while slow-motion fight scenes now induce tedium rather than the exhilaration that greeted The Matrix in 1999. Also, the numerous flashbacks that unravel Elektra's ho-hum back story quickly become irritating. While I can't say that I have any familiarity with the Elektra comic books, on the basis of this movie it seems that Hollywood film studios are now scraping the Marvel barrel in search of any kind of fodder to translate to celluloid.

Elektra is just about tolerable, but with a bit of luck this trend will step before we see the likes of Dennis the Menace and Desperate Dan up on the big screen...
Looking ahead 'Sideways' to the Movie Year

by Deirdre Reynolds

WE'VE now heard just about every reason as to why January is the most forgettable month of the calendar but allow me to indulge and add one more. January is the month when cinema-goers wear a cloak of sadness of Shakespearean levels. Before Sunset, Lost in Translation and their kin have now passed on into the archives of memory. And though Oscar season is rushing to embrace us in our misery, we know it's a false comfort that will invariably slide into a blur of summer blockbuster let-downs until the critical year slows to a sorry halt once more. That's the bad news.

However it's also a timely chance to speculate on the few gems that will spickle the coming movie year. We've had round-ups, round-downs and everything in between but industry navel-gazing on 2004 has finished. Let us look forward. Or more precisely, Sideways.

If you only see one film this year...well, shame on you. But make that one sojourn to the flicks in early February for the release of Sideways. DIT Independent would happily gamble its granny's life on Alexander Payne's musing on mid-life going beneath the radar to snatch a Best Picture Oscar from the likes of The Aviator or Finding Neverland. Statuette or not, director Payne (Elephant, About Schmidt) has reportedly delivered another affecting comedy about two middle-aged men on a road-trip to evaluate their lives. It has Paul Giamatti (American Splendour) in the lead as Miles, a failed novelist. And if that's not incentive enough, film-makers apparently took inspiration from last year's sleeper hit Lost in Translation. That was the sound of this writer's jaw hitting her keyboard.

Also to be filed firmly under "indie" are The Life Aquatic and Garden State. The first is director Wes Anderson's reteaming with Bill Murray following Rushmore and The Royal Tenebaums. Murray plays an oceanographer on a quest to avenge his partner, who was eaten by a shark in this surreal comedy. Garden State is Zach Braff's directorial debut about a chemically-altered son swapping tango has already impressed Stateside audiences.

Enjoying the finer things...Paul Giamatti and Thomas Haden Church in 'Sideways'

Portman is also the lynchpin of ensemble drama, Closer, alongside Julia Roberts, Clive Owen and Jude Law. Mike Nichols' sexually frank partner-swapping tango has already impressed Stateside audiences. Kinsey, on the other hand, with Liam Neeson as the infamous sex researcher, may have proved too explicit. DIT Ind welcomes any invitation for the said Irishman to talk dirty.

Bravery award of the year, however, must go to Kevin Bacon who plays a convicted parolee returning home from prison in The Woodsman. Bacon plays a child-abuser for the second time in his career here, although director Nicole Kassell has crafted a more human, even sympathetic, character than the villainous guard in Sleepers. The Woodsman promises to be a challenging drama.

Sticking to more commercial outings, last year's nodically biopic trend has been dragged into 2005 by The Aviator and Ray, respective accounts of media magnate Howard Hughes and jazz king Ray Charles. Fortunately these two are due to fare better than their predecessors and have collectively gathered Golden Globe nominations, a hint at how the Academy Awards lineup might look. Jamie Foxx is the nervous man's bet, looking a shoo-in for an Oscar, if not for Best Male with the glossy buoyant biopic then for Best Supporting Male with Collaboral.

On the sequel front, Meet the Fockers will frolic harmlessly at the end of this month while Ocean's Twelve will be one person sooner in February.

Seventy four-year-old Clint Eastwood, having first stunned audiences with Mystic River last year now lands the knock-out with Million Dollar Baby. Eastwood is brooding trainer to Hillary Swank in this boxing saga about a guiltless Catholic who bonds with his white-trash protege having driven his own daughter away years ago. Rumours abound that just when you've settled into the plot nicely along comes a side-hook to send you reeling. Guesses on a postcard to the usual address. But our likely favourite twist of 2005 is due out this week. The wonderfully thwarted Team America, a Thunderbirds style satire on Bush's so-called war on terror, takes a timely post-election swipe at just about everyone. Coming from the makers of Southpark, expect nothing less than shameless irreverence.

Come to think of it, we don't miss 2004 at all.

Indy Hits to star at the Irish Film Festival

by Deirdre Reynolds

EARLIER this month, as Hollywood luminaries were windswept into the Savoy for the Irish premiere of Alexander, planning for the 3rd Jameson Dublin International Film Festival was entering an advanced stage. It was as though two-fold proof that the Irish film industry, despite a near-death experience last year after the threatened scrapping of tax breaks, remains an international contender. Early programme highlights for the festival have been announced and include some of the best US movies of recent months. Kinsey, The Life Aquatic, and Woody Allen's anticipated Melinda and Melinda starring Will Ferrell and Radha Mitchell are among them.

The events, programmed by Michael Dwyer, runs from 11-20 February and will present over 90 feature films from all over the world, along with retrospectives and special seasons. Once again, the festival will be running films at all four cinema sites in Dublin city centre - the Screen, Savoy, UGC and IFI.

If the past year seemed to produce unprecedented native talent - on both sides of the camera - then much of this can be attributed to a strand of last year's JDIFF called The Irish Connection that promoted this. Among the new Irish films showing at the festival this year will be the world premiere of Flick. Another, director Finn Conolly's mellow and compelling romantic drama The Trouble With Sex, sees a barman and a lawyer tentatively getting involved with each other in present-day Dublin. The complete festival programme will be available from January 27th. For a comprehensive guide to the Jameson Dublin International Film Festival, see next month's edition of the DIT Independent.
Early goals too much for DIT

O'Byrne Cup 2nd Round
Louth 4-11, DIT 2-09.

After an excellent Christmas training camp in Grangegeorge, DIT senior footballers travelled to Drogheda to play Louth in the 1st round of the O'Byrne Cup full of optimism on the 2nd of January.

The harsh north wind added to the atmosphere in O' Raghallaigh park as DIT lost the toss and played into a strong wind.

A point from Odhran McCann after an excellent break by Peter Turley settled the students but from the kickout, Louth broke quickly down field and Cormac Malone rattled the DIT net.

Good work from DIT midfielders John Kermath and Tom Walsh opened a chance for McCann who again lobbed over the student defence. His performance get better and better for DIT this year.

IF DIT can overcome the challenges of Carlow IT and Cork IT and if they continue to play to the same levels they have so far this season, there is no reason why DIT can't end the season with the ultimate prize secured.

DIT's Sport round-up

by Ronán O'Connor

Mixed Hockey

DIT Men's and Ladies Hockey teams will be travelling to Kilkenny for the Irish Colleges Hockey Association Championships on Wednesday 2nd and Thursday 3rd February 2005. DIT women are favourites to win the Ladies section with Cork IT favourites to take the men's title. DIT Men would rate second in this competition and with a bit of luck could win it.

On Tuesday 8th and Wednesday 9th February DIT Kevin Street, DIT Bolton St., DIT Cathal Brugha St. and DIT Aungier Street will travel to Cork for a two day Mixed Hockey Tournament. This will involve 16 Colleges. Of those DIT's Aungier Street looks the strongest. They have senior international John Jermyn in their squad. On 13th February the Irish Colleges Hockey Association will be travelling to Belgium with a Men's and a Ladies Representative Team. Included in the panel of 31 players will be 12 from DIT. These panels will then play the Irish Universities Selection in March.

Aqua Aerobics

Aqua aerobics resumes at the Swimming Pool in Kevin Street on Tuesday next at 6 p.m. This is open to staff and students of the institute.

6-a-side soccer

The weekly 6-a-side soccer tournament will resume at Larkin College Cathal Brugha Street on Monday night at 7.00. This is a Astro Turf Pitch of the highest quality. All you need do is attend with a team and register. The cost is 20 euro per team. This will be restricted to the first 12 entrants and will continue each Monday from 7.00 to 9.00. The prize for the winning team is 100 euro.
High five for athlete Hynes

by Angel Strickland Fahy

Gary Hynes, of DIT Bolton Street, was on a team of five that took the gold medal in the Belfast International Cross Country, earlier this month. The race was held at the Stormont Estate and was won by American Darthan Ritzheim. Gary finished a credible 21st in a field that boasted world class Kenyans as well as top British and European runners.

He was also running for an Irish Universities team which won the team event. The team consisted of students from a diverse range of colleges: Mark Christy (DCU) 16th, Eoin Higgins (DCU) 15th Gary Hynes (DIT) 21st Brian Meade (UCC) 27th Fergus Meade (UCC) 36th.

Gary's sights are now set on winning a medal for the DIT athletics team that will in the Irish Intervarsity Cross Country. Again in Belfast but hosted by Queen's University the event promises to attract the cream of Irish athletes. He hopes to pick up both team and individual medals.

He urges anyone in DIT who is in the Athletics Club or who trains seriously to get in touch as there are still a few spots left on the team. He adds "it should be a great weekend in Belfast with a good night out after the race!"

The DIT Athletics club will also be hosting the Irish University Track and Field Championships at the new Athletics stadium in Ringsend this April. Again, anybody who has an interest in Athletics should go along as for what promise to be a great weekend of sport and socializing.

Hurlers continue to make progress

by Cillian Ó Conchúir

"If there is to be to a shock, it will be on the 2nd of February," was how DIT senior hurling manager, Aidan Hanrahan, rated the team's chances against University Limerick (UL) in the upcoming Fitzgibbon Cup clash. The team has gained immense respect with impressive performances against Wexford and Dublin in challenge matches and are hoping to put it up to the Shannonsiders. The team's dedication was evident as they braced the Christmas frost for a training camp in Offaly over the holiday season.

The result of this gruelling training program leaves the team in high hopes ahead of their Keohoe Cup meeting with Louth on the 23rd of January. The prize for the winner is an encounter the following Sunday with Meath. Mr Hanrahan believes that the commitment of the players has left the team well prepared for the forthcoming matches.

If they are to advance in both Cups they will need influential players John Doran, Willie Lyons and Martin Phelan at their best. The manager also stated that the support of the college for the team is vital if they are to overcome the highly rated UL team. When we went to print the Freshers were due to play Athlone IT in a match that should've see them qualify for the quarter-finals of the Championship. The manager, Damien McDonald reiterated Mr Hanrahan's comments on college support and said that qualifying for the quarter-finals would be testament to the team's commitment this year.

DIT ladies the real galacticos

by Niamh McHugh

As the DIT continue to try to convince potential DIT students to join us next year, we need look no further than our DIT ladies soccer team to show the success and excellence our students are capable of. The team's coach, Stephen Dempsey, was recently singing their praises, and not without reason, as their current track record shows. Having won four out of five matches so far this season, including an incredible 18-0 defeat over Griffith College before Christmas, the girls are already a credit to DIT and look set to continue in their success.

Of the 18-0 victory over Griffith before Christmas, Mr Dempsey was gracious about his team's win. What the Griffith side lacked in experience, they made up for in sporting spirit, according to Mr Dempsey. "I never saw such a spirited team" he said of the Griffith college side. Their preservation and determination to finish the game were "a credit to them", although in the end the talent of the DIT ladies proved too strong for the perseverence of Griffith College. The ladies team are also currently playing Challenge Cup matches, which so far have all gone in their favour. The next obstacle between the team and the cup is the quarter-final match against Colaiste Ide, which is taking place on the 26th January. Although victory is not guaranteed, Colaiste Ide have been winning all of their matches and are in the league above the DIT ladies - it will undoubtedly be a nail-biting game which should not be missed.

Mr Dempsey said that the dedication and team spirit of the DIT ladies team were the reasons for their continuing success. Although the coach modestly agreed that the team "seem to be lucky", their "luck" is decidedly not without reason, as their current track record shows. Having won four out of five matches so far this season, including an incredible 18-0 defeat over Griffith College before Christmas, the girls are already a credit to DIT and look set to continue in their success.

Their first defeat in three seasons was against NUI Maynooth, and far from being disheartened at the result, the team's coach put it down to bad luck. "It's just what happened on the day", he said. The team's next league match takes place on 20th January, when they will come up against Sallanygoggin College.
Murphy jumps up trumps

by Angel Strickland Fahy

Aungier Street student Lee Murphy jumped to glory with a gold medal win at the World Equestrian Championships, earlier this month. The logistics and transport management student travelled to Tokyo, Japan where he and the Irish team took an amazing eight medals.

The competition including dressage and show jumping was held over three days during which the riders were tested to the limit. Lee came up trumps to bring home an individual gold in the show jumping and silver in the combined, in a competition that is usually dominated by Germany, England and Holland. He beat off competition from 19 competing countries to help Ireland to an overall third position, just behind Japan and Norway.

The show jumping semi final was a nail biting affair with just 2.11 seconds between Lee and the Japanese rider he pipped for the position. Andrew Bourne made it an all Irish final by knocking out France's Fabien Nizard. This ensured a one-two Irish victory.

Lee recently received a sports scholarship from DIT which no doubt helped him to compete at the prestigious event. He credits his amazing success was made possible only by his sponsors Murform Construction, Pegasus horse feeds and the support he received from DIT.

He is particularly thankful to CUSA and both John Jameson and Paul O Reilly from the school of management who made allowances for his hectic training schedule.

The competition was of a high calibre, run internationally and under FEI rules. The show jumping fences were a staggering 1.40 metres in height and each round was judged against the clock. In order to take the gold Lee completed five rounds of knockout jumping, each time on a new horse. Making the task more difficult was the fact that riders were given just five minutes to acquaint themselves with their new mount.

Lee, who specialises in show jumping, was confident of his medal chances in that area but was clearly delighted to take the top prize in such a high profile event. An added bonus and credit to his outstanding equestrian ability was a silver in the dressage phase. This discipline was judged by Olympic steward Marj Wintinge. The competition was attended by some 3000 spectators, who included his proud parents, and broadcast live on Japanese television. A media shy Lee was also interviewed for radio, television and a number of magazines after the event.

The future looks bright for Lee who has been asked to ride a number of horses in high profile events since his win. He is also seeking another sponsor to fund the ongoing training of his own horses.

We wish him continued success.

Sporting clubs: news in brief

by Ronán O'Connor

Sub Aqua club
At present the club have 12 new trainees who are nearing the end of their pool training. Since before Christmas, these trainees have been doing open water snorkels on Sunday mornings in Sandy Cove. This will continue until they have completed 5 snorkels each. The club are going diving to Baltimore in West Cork at Easter for 1 week. This is the first and biggest club trip of the year, with up to 60 people travelling. 10 holiday cottages will be taken by the club to cater for the numbers. All new trainees will become 1st divers on this trip.

If you need more information, please contact me.

DIT Caving Club
The caving club has been running a trip a month since the start of the year. Photos of recent trips are up on http://clubsoc.dit.ie/caving. This month's trip is on 21st-23rd to Clare. Anyone who wants to go on any of the upcoming trips can contact Lorraine on 086-3658130 or e-mail any member of the committee.

We're looking forward to the Student Caving Forum that is going to be held over St Patrick's weekend in Kinvara, Co. Clare. Details can be found at www.ucd.ie/caving/scf2005

Squash Club
DIT Squash Club training will recommence on Thursday 20th January in Phoenix Squash Club, Howth Road, Clontarf. The club trains every Thursday night (during term time) from 18:30 to 20:30. This year the club is composed of both students and staff from across the institute. Players of every level are welcome to join including beginners. Rackets and balls are provided by the club so there is no need for hard pressed students to go out and buy a racket immediately.

On Friday 7th January members of the DIT squash club participated in the Phoenix New Year Squash Competition. Unfortunately no DIT players were victorious on the night. If anyone is interested in taking up the sport they should email plunkett.clarke@dit.ie or phone 402 4509 for further information.

Badminton Club
The Badminton club are looking to recruit more players for the New Year. Unfortunately over Christmas their 2nd coach of the year has had to leave, citing personal commitments. DIT Sports are currently trying to get a new coach. When this problem gets solved there are plans to start an inter college league. The team also has several matches coming up, including the Intervarsities in March. To find out more, contact gerald.barry@student.dit.ie.
**Gym' ll fix it!**

**by Nuala Ryan**

Monday 17th January sees the opening of the new DIT Fitness Studio at DIT, Kevin Street, catering for students throughout all the DIT campuses.

Niamh O’Callaghan, a Sports Development Officer for DIT, gave the DIT Independent a sneak preview of the gym and spoke about the new facility.

So first off, what can we expect at the new fitness studio? “The equipment is aerobic orientated,” says O’Callaghan, before listing off the machines which will be available at the gym. There will be 24 machines on offer, from treadmills to bikes, rowing machines to cross trainers. There will also be 3 TV’s so there will be no need to miss out on that important match for the sake of exercise. A sound system provides the music to train to, while gym supervisors are always on hand to help with training plans and health and nutritional advice.

"The new fitness studio boasts two, fully qualified, gym supervisors, Antonia Martin and Jennifer Gibson," O’Callaghan says. "They are both fully qualified in their field and there will be at least one of them at the gym every day and both will be there during peak hours."

So does she think that there will be peak hours? What is the likely success of the gym?

"Well it’s trial and error at the moment. But the interest is definitely there. The staff have all been sent out emails about the gym. Details of the gym will also be sent out via text message to any student who has signed up to text messaging through societies. And we’ve been handing out leaflets. So far, the response has been great."

With gym membership in some colleges in excess of €200, membership for 6 months at €50 in DIT seems value for money. Is there a catch?

"Our gym is on a smaller scale to the likes of UCD, so it would not be feasible to charge more," O’Callaghan explains. "Also it is a facility for students, a service provider. It’s not competitively driven."

No expense seems to have been spared on the gym. Although space may be limited, the machinery is world class supplied by ‘Techno Gym’, the manufacturers who have held the contract for the Olympics for the past two years. They would have supplied the Olympians with their gym equipment, and they are now supplying DIT, on a smaller scale of course.

There are now also talks to upgrade the gym at DIT Bolton Street to the same level as Kevin Street’s new fitness studio.

However, with the various

### Membership Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per gym visit</td>
<td>€2</td>
<td>€3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>€15</td>
<td>€25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 monthly (Jan-March)</td>
<td>€30</td>
<td>€45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 monthly (Jan-June)</td>
<td>€50</td>
<td>€75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**O'Connor's cubs roar**

**by Ronan O'Connor**

The men's soccer team, under the stewardship of Tony O'Connor, will be hoping to kick off 2005 in the same manner that they ended 2004. In the second half of 2004 DIT went unbeaten on their way to clinching the CFAI Division 1 South title. There's much more silverware for the lads and NUIG. DIT have been handed a kind draw. They have been selected in one of the three-team groups, along with DCU and RCSI. This will offer a distinct advantage as this will give the players a brief respite from the gruelling schedule that will see them play five games in five days if they are to reach the final.

Last year DIT won the Collingwood plate final, beating UCD on penalties. They were unlucky not to qualify for the main cup, losing out to eventual winners, UCC, on goal difference in the group stage.

DIT can expect to progress to the play-off final of Division 1. DIT won their section, and as Colaiste IDe B finished second in Division 1 North, DIT progress directly to the final. They will meet either Carlow IT (who they beat one nil earlier in the year) or IT Tallaght in the final.

Also on the agenda for DIT this year is the CFAI cup, the draw for which will be made in the coming weeks.

The main reason for this season's optimism is the excellent squad that manager Tony O'Connor has assembled. Eirecom League marksman Eamon Zayed has been a constant threat for DIT. John Guerin has been scoring goals for fun this season and will be hoping to carry his good form into the Collingwood Cup. In midfield captain Shane Brennan has been a dynamo, constantly working up and down the pitch and supplying the bullets for Zayed and Guerin.

The defence has been developing a reputation for meanmess, with two clean sheets in the last three games, and just three goals conceded in the last four. Derek Treston has been partly responsible for this rejuvenation, leading the defensive line with his powerful aerial presence. Bray Wanderers Goalkeeper Graham McNamee has been left with little to do recently, but he has calmly handled everything that has sneaked through the back four. With some impressive fresher's like Dean Gibbons and a few new signings - Cavan GAA superstar Michael Lyng has been linked to the team - DIT can hope for a successful year on the football field.

Eamon Zayed, DIT's ace striker