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DIT Independent, 1st.-31st. of March, 2002

DIT: Students Union

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**By Alding Casey**

It is estimated that the DITSU Students Union lost €71,000 after efforts to attract as many as 6,000 partygoers to what was dubbed as their highlight of the year. However, this number included complimentary tickets, which the union had handed out.

Although members of the Students Union were unavailable to the DIT Independent for comment, the DITSU Board of Directors have stated that they are treating the loss “very seriously and are currently looking at cost cutting measures which can be taken to recoup the money loss.”

Although an insurance premium of €3,200 was taken out by DITSU for the event, it merely covered public and employer liability.

Several students (who wished to remain nameless) said that the holding of the Ball, Valentine’s Day, with many students choosing to spend the romantic evening with loved ones was a major mistake.

It was a disaster,” said one DIT student. “The event was riddled with inaccepance. DITSU clearly hadn’t learned anything from the mistakes of last year’s event.”

The price of €10 per ticket has also been cited as a deterrent to students at the end of a long and costly week of exams. DITSU was supposed to raise funds for charity but does that mean that “our students have to suffer along the way?” wrote another student to this paper recently.

“I wonder how much of the students’ money have they lost and how will our Overall-President justify his actions?” DITSU’s Jarlath Molloy reiterated criticisms of the Union’s handling of the week, stating “I would like to thank the DITSU Executive for running a brilliant show. And congratulate them on all their hard work and effort.”

For those who did attend the event, the night was widely acclaimed as a great night out. DITSU assembled a line up which included the Classic Beatles and Zac2.2. It did not cover lack of student support for the event and consequent cancellation.

Several students (who wished to remain nameless) said that the holding of the Ball, Valentine’s Day, with many students choosing to spend the romantic evening with loved ones was a major mistake.

Although an insurance premium of €3,200 was taken out by DITSU for the event, it merely covered public and employer liability.

Kevin Street’s drama queens

By Stephen McFlinn

THIS is what it’s all about, all the hard work, all the rehearsing, all the fretting about lines, all the last minute costume fittings. The culmination of DIT’s Drama Week, where stars are made and hearts are broken... Sort of. The DIT Drama Society Award Ceremony, held in the Hilton Hotel on March 1, saw prizes handed out by the judges in a much more jovial fashion than the Oscars.

There was a distinct lack of gushing speeches (much to my dismay), Russell Crowe was nowhere to be seen, and there were no post-ceremony cleaning up. The DIT Drama Society Award Ceremony was a success, its failure to attract the masses is all the more a disappointment to Overall President Marguerite Fitzpatrick.

Although DITSU’s Board of Directors are looking at cost cutting measures to recoup the loss, at this time, there is no assurance that future funding of the Union will not suffer as a consequence.

Kevin Street’s ‘04/05 Drama Society executive felt they had put their “heart and soul” into making this year’s RAG Ball a success, its failure to attract the masses is all the more a disappointment to Overall President Marguerite Fitzpatrick.

Upon arriving at the Hilton I was quickly seggragated from the access having been identified as the press and an enemy of art. That was until the Kevin St. table felt sorry for me and allowed me to sit with them, on condition I told them how great they were.

At the end of the night there was still need since the judges didn’t fit for more or less a clean up.

Of the four plays entered for the awards the night definitely belonged to Kevin St. with sticky fingers, which picked up seven gongs. These were: Best Costumes- Xenia Ostrovskaya; Best Supporting Actor- Iain Herbert; Best Comic Actress- Nicki Cunningham; Best Comic Actor- Marc Murphy; and Best Overall Performance.

They also picked up the coveted ‘Alfie Award’ for Neil Woods’ immortal line “No wonder everyone needs promoting all the time”.

The Cathal Brugha St.- Bolton St. alliance managed to walk away with most of the rest of the awards for their production, Ubo Cosa. They claimed Best Set; Best Actress- Sarah O’Malley; Best Actor- Michael Burke; Best Group Within a Play- Bolton S1.; Best Actor- Michael Burke; Best Group Within a Play- Bolton S1.; Cathal Brugha St.- Billy Fitzgerald (who made his acceptance speech by live satellite link-up... mobile phone).

Once the solemnity of the ceremony was taken care of all present proceeded to get unceremoniously drunk, leading actors to think they could dance and journalists to think they could make coherent conversation with attractive young women.

The only bit of scandal I could dig up was that Peter Jackson tried to kill one of the judges because Lord of the Rings wasn’t nominated. Well, it could’ve happened! These Irish thespians are just too well behaved...
Don't overlook us, Minister

DIT is not part of the Government's plans for an Irish Academy of Performing Arts. Victor Merriman says it's time for the real debate to begin

IT is now more than two years since the government established a steering committee to look into the idea of an Irish Academy for the Performing Arts (IAPA). The notion of an IAPA was rejected as a proposal in a report, commissioned by Michael D. Higgins, former Minister for Arts, Culture and Gaeltacht.

Minister De Valera continues his further report, on taking office in 1997: the Renshaw Report. The Gaerty School of Acting, the Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM) and the National College of Dance in Dublin then sponsored the Deloitte and Touche Report, of which Peter Renshaw, from London’s Goldhill School of Music and Drama, took account.

Renshaw’s version of the proposed IAPA was adopted by the government. It was to have three centres, the Gaerty School of Acting, one in a new, purpose-built facility at the Dublin City University (DCU), University of Limerick (UL), and one at the Firkin Crane Theatre, Cork.

The DCU node would house the administration of IAPA; music drawn from the UL and the Gaerty School of Acting would contribute more music, perhaps, to the MA in Dance. The Firkin Crane Centre would become an Institute for Choreographic Studies.

The steering committee has had a difficult history, with high profile defections by RIAM and UL, and uncertainty as to the future of DIT’s involvement.

However, recent reports in the Irish Times suggest that a Governing Body for IAPA will be constituted shortly. In January 2000, the funds available to develop IAPA stood at over €1 million (300,000). Anyone would welcome a commitment to spend that kind of money on the education of performers in Ireland. The question as to how one might spend this money might be asked, but has still not been adequately aired, mainly because a new institution appeared from the outset as the only option, and because too many groups active in the field have not been consulted. Neither has there been any discussion of appropriate models or education for the 21st Century.

The Conservatory of Music and Drama (CMD) at DIT is not addressed in Renshaw or Deloitte and Touche. This struck many people, including students and staff at the National College of Dance, as odd. The Conservatory is the largest provider of education and tuition in music and music performance in the state. It also attracts almost 800 applications per year to its three-year diploma in acting, and will shortly have a 4-year honours degree in the area. The CMD has postgraduate students in both music and drama, and offers a taught MA in Music Technology at Rathmines.

Many outstanding musicians are graduates of CMD, and as it is still known to many, The College of Music. Some of the finest of our group of vocal, opera and drama students, including traditional musicians - including traditional musicians - teach at the Conservatory. Some 1300 young people and adult learners avail of individual and class tuition across the range of orchestral, keyboard, musicianship, vocal, opera and drama studies. Dr Bernadette Greevy, founder artistic director of the Ignite International Opera Festival, is our artist-in-residence.

The exclusion of the Conservatory of Music and Drama from Renshaw’s map raises serious questions about its reliability as a guide for policy makers. And there are other problems with the IAPA concept. Specifically:

• 44.5 million will not be spent, in 2002 and beyond, on what it might have purchased in 2000.

• The current, particular need to create a Cork School of Music alone has a budget in excess of this figure.

• No-one knows how the recurring costs of IAPA would be met.

• No-one knows how existing provision will be resourced, if IAPA goes ahead.

Since Renshaw, there have been developments in performance education in the country which would not have been taken into account in either Renshaw or Deloitte and Touche.

All courses compete internally in their own institutions for funds which may not always be adequate to their needs. In other countries, it is recognized that the education of performers, like the practical education of scientists and engineers, requires dedicated facilities and funds. This is not followed through in Ireland. However, as students and staff at CMD are all too well aware.

There is a need for properly funded and planned performance education in the capital. The Conservatory of Music and Drama at DIT has played a major role in this field, and has the staff, programmes and vision to support a first class performance academy.

The question of educational models, as well as that of access to art form education and training needs to be addressed as the debate before any decisions are made.

Conservatory’s approach to lifelong learning and to the rounded education of practitioners of music and drama, underpinned, has proven highly effective in enabling graduates to earn their living from their art form, along European lines, equally effectively as performers and teachers.

There is a need for a full debate on, and strategy for, developing a high quality education in performance and related fields, as well as to seek to develop careers in the arts and in the cultural industries.

As the provider of education in music and drama from pre-instrumental, to PhD in performance, Conservatory of Music and Drama, DIT, will continue to contribute profoundly to any such initiative.

Victor Merriman is Senior Lecturer in Music at DIT and Acting Head of the Conservatory of Music and Drama. He is a member of the Institute for Technology.
DIT Student Union Elections

Overall president candidate

Sole presidential nominee says inconsistency is "killing the Student's Union stone dead"

By Aoife Stokes

Hugh O'Reilly is the only candidate running for the position of Overall President of the DIT Student's Union in DITSU elections on March 13th.

Speaking to the DIT Independent, O'Reilly said that, "I have always contended that the Student's Union can be a great organisation, however it has been let down by inconsistent performances of the sabbatical we elect from year to year".

Speaking about the fact that there is only one candidate for the this year, current Overall President, Marguerite Fitzpatrick said that it is a shame but that if the students aren't happy with having just one nominee then they should try for the position themselves.

"I'm sure Hugh will still put the same amount of effort into his campaign even though he's the only candidate running."

22 year-old O'Reilly has attended DIT Mountjoy Square for the past four years and is currently in his final year of degree in Furniture Design. Throughout his college career he has been involved in the Student's Union undertaking a range of responsibilities.

He has been a class representative for the four years and has also been a member of the Student Council.

O'Reilly held the presidency of the DIT Drama Society over the academic year 2000/2001 and was a founding member of the society. Under his presidency the society won 'Best Society', 'Best Event' and 'Best Society Individual' at the first DIT SU Awards in 2001.

The main aims of O'Reilly's campaign are to bring greater levels of professionalism, communication, accountability and planning to DITSU.

"I am not contending that if elected I can immediately transform the union and all will be bright and wonderful this time next year. I am realistic and see that only as a team the union can go forward and improve the facilities and services provided to students. At the turn of the 21st Century we need to embrace changes and improvements because unprofessional standards and practices are no longer acceptable by a demanding student population."

Cathal Brugha St under-represented as nominations announced

By Aisling Casey

The nominations for Student Union sabbatical and part-time officers were announced earlier this week with no sabbatical candidates going forward to represent Cathal Brugha Street.

This wasn't the only surprise for the election candidates, especially those attending Mountjoy Square, Aungier Street and Rathmines, all of whom will be competing against each other for votes.

From September 2002, Mountjoy Square students will no longer attend the Northside campus.

Instead business students will move to Aungier Street, while arts students will be accommodated on the Rathmines campus.

It will prove difficult for candidates attending any of those three colleges because canvassing will have to be done on all sites. This also includes sites at Portland Row and Temple Bar. Candidates in this position were given extra materials for attracting voters.

There will be two polling stations in Mountjoy Square, one for students who will be attending Aungier Street in September and another for those who will be attending Rathmines.

Cathal Brugha St were underrepresented at the meeting of election candidates, with no sabbatical candidates going forward. Philip Gannon was the only part-time candidate put forward by Cathal Brugha St. He is hoping "to provide a better standard of social life for the campus."

There is only one nominee for Overall President this year. Hugh O'Reilly is this year's candidate. Hugh, who has been involved in student politics over the last four years and is eager to make the Students' Union more approachable for students.

He said, "I have the ambition necessary to do a good job."

Voting will take place on Wednesday 13th & Thursday 14th March, with Northside and Southside campuses voting in different stages. This is being done to eliminate unfairness in cross border voting.

With campaigning well underway, nominees and their canvassing teams are under strict instructions not to deface other candidate's posters, as it will result in immediate disqualification.

The election supervisors committee will monitor the breach of election guidelines over the coming week. Candidates must now publicize their campaigns as much as possible.

They will be given the chance to state their manifestos at a compulsory session of election hosting early next week. The count venue has been named as 'Planet Murphy's' and the count will take place once polling stations have been closed.

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**Name:** Brian Whitney  
**Age:** 21  
**DIT Campus:** Rathmines  
**Nomination:** President  
**Previous experience in student politics:**  
- Entertainment Officer  
- Rathmines, Councillor, Disciplinary Committee, Social and Cultural Committee Rathmines, and Class Representative.  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- Fair representation for Rathmines and Applied Arts students in Mountjoy.  
- "I'm the only one for the job and I know what it's like to come from a college with poor student facilities and lack of representation, where the larger DIT Sites refuse to recognise Student needs in smaller sites".

**Name:** Clarion Horan  
**Age:** 21  
**DIT Campus:** Aungier Street  
**Nomination:** Deputy President  
**Previous experience in student politics:**  
- Business Studies  
- Fourth  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- To improve the representation of the Mountjoy students  
- "I believe that I have the motivation to build up a strong Union".

**Name:** Joe Savage  
**Age:** 22  
**DIT Campus:** Mountjoy Square  
**Nomination:** Deputy President  
**Previous experience in student politics:**  
- Outgoing clubs and societies officer  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- To increase the popularity of the Student Union  
- "I am very approachable for students 1 am representing".

**Name:** Naoimh McNamee  
**Age:** 20  
**DIT Campus:** Bolton Street  
**Nomination:** Deputy President/Welfare - Bolton Street  
**Previous experience in student politics:**  
- Chairman of SRA, Class representative and Site Public Relations Officer  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- To enable a seamless integration of Mountjoy Square into Aungier Street and become more in tune with the students.  
- "I am very approachable for the position of Welfare and I genuinely wish to improve the quality of life of the students I am representing".

**Name:** Marc Murphy  
**Age:** 28  
**DIT Campus:** Kevin Street  
**Nomination:** Deputy President/Welfare Officer  
**Previous experience in student politics:**  
- Class representative for four years (92-96) during apprenticeship, and currently the Participation officer for Kevin Street.  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- To extend the hours of the welfare office to cater for part-time students, to get students more involved in their Union, to establish a part-time entertainments team.  
- "I want to run for this position because I feel that I have the experience that the job requires.  
- "I feel that I have an excellent knowledge of the workings of DITSU and a great deal of valuable experience to offer the students of Bolton Street."

**Name:** Joe Lynch  
**Age:** 24  
**DIT Campus:** Aungier Square  
**Nomination:** Deputy President  
**Previous experience in student politics:**  
- Class representative  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- To extend the hours of the welfare office to cater for part-time students, to get students more involved in their Union, to establish a part-time entertainments team.  
- "I want to run for this position because I feel that I have the experience that the job requires.  
- "I feel that I have an excellent knowledge of the workings of DITSU and a great deal of valuable experience to offer the students of Bolton Street."

**Name:** Alan Malone  
**Age:** 20  
**DIT Campus:** Aungier Street  
**Nomination:** Site President/Aungier Street  
**Previous experience in student politics:**  
- Usi congress delegate and best virgin speaker award, Eastern area conference delegate.  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- To extend the hours of the welfare office to cater for part-time students, to get students more involved in their Union, to establish a part-time entertainments team.  
- "I want to run for this position because I feel that I have the experience that the job requires.  
- "I feel that I have an excellent knowledge of the workings of DITSU and a great deal of valuable experience to offer the students of Bolton Street."

**Name:** Paul Malone  
**Age:** 20  
**DIT Campus:** Aungier Street  
**Nomination:** Site President/Aungier Street  
**Previous experience in student politics:**  
- Chairman and founder of DIT's first techno society.  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- To extend the hours of the welfare office to cater for part-time students, to get students more involved in their Union, to establish a part-time entertainments team.  
- "I want to run for this position because I feel that I have the experience that the job requires.  
- "I feel that I have an excellent knowledge of the workings of DITSU and a great deal of valuable experience to offer the students of Bolton Street."

**Name:** Michael Muldoon  
**Age:** 20  
**DIT Campus:** Bolton Street  
**Nomination:** Deputy President/Welfare Officer  
**Previous experience in student politics:**  
- Chairman and founder of DIT's first techno society.  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- To extend the hours of the welfare office to cater for part-time students, to get students more involved in their Union, to establish a part-time entertainments team.  
- "I want to run for this position because I feel that I have the experience that the job requires.  
- "I feel that I have an excellent knowledge of the workings of DITSU and a great deal of valuable experience to offer the students of Bolton Street."
**DIT Student Union Elections**

**Part-time officers**

**Name:** Alan Keane  
**Age:** 19  
**DIT Campus:** Kevin Street  
**Nomination:** Participation Officer  
**Current course of study:** Electrical & Control Engineering  
**Year:** First  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- To change and improve the Irish language and its place in college life, including courses.  
- "I have a distinct passion for the language and a desire to see its everyday usage".

**Name:** Amy Cahill  
**Age:** 19  
**DIT Campus:** Kevin Street  
**Nomination:** Public Relations Officer  
**Current course of study:** Speech and Drama  
**Year:** First  
**Previous experience in student politics:** Class representative  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- To make the Union more equal and open to all people regardless who they are.  
- "I have the experience to do the work. Two years as a part-time officer and one year as a class representative, I feel I still have a valuable input into the union to make it stronger and more student friendly."

**Name:** Colin Saunders  
**Age:** 19  
**DIT Campus:** Mountjoy Square  
**Nomination:** Clubs and Societies Officer  
**Current course of study:** Management and Marketing  
**Year:** First  
**Previous experience in student politics:** Currently Clubs and Societies Officer and Class Representative. Member of the DITSU Council.  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- The setting up of a debating society to rival that of Trinity College Dublin.  
- "I have previous experience and have a good understanding of the Union. I also have clear goals for the future."

**Name:** Georgina Daly  
**Age:** 18  
**DIT Campus:** Kevin Street  
**Nomination:** Equality Officer  
**Current course of study:** Applied Science and Computers  
**Year:** First  
**Previous experience in student politics:** Elected Irish Language Officer 2001. Currently Class Representative.  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- To continue the work I started in DITSU last year.  
- To try to make the Union more equal and open to all people regardless who they are.  
- "I have the experience to do the work. Two years as a part-time officer and one year as a class representative, I feel I still have a valuable input into the union to make it stronger and more student friendly."

**Name:** Francis Patrick Fox  
**Age:** 19  
**DIT Campus:** Bolton Street  
**Nomination:** Clubs & Societies  
**Current course of study:** Transport engineering/ motor industry management  
**Year:** Second  
**Previous experience in student politics:** Elected Irish language officer 00/01  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- A greater awareness of the clubs and societies  
- "I have a good knowledge of the Union and work well with and for other people".

**Name:** Gary McDermott  
**Age:** 20  
**DIT Campus:** Kevin Street  
**Nomination:** Clubs and Societies  
**Current course of study:** Applied Science  
**Year:** First  
**Previous experience in student politics:** Unsuccessfully ran for entertainments officer  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- A paintball society and debating as well as encouraging first years to get involved.  
- "I'm willing to get involved with anything and interested in many of the societies".

**Name:** Jenny McGowan  
**Age:** 20  
**DIT Campus:** Mountjoy Square  
**Nomination:** Entertainments Officer  
**Current course of study:** Management & Marketing  
**Year:** Third  
**Previous experience in student politics:** Elected Irish Language Officer 2001. Currently Class Representative.  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- To improve the communication link between the SU and the Clubs and Societies ensuring they understand their rights.  
- "I have been a member of the clubs and socs and I'm aware of the problems they face. I believe I can improve clubs and socs within Kevin Street".

**Name:** Peter Bennett  
**Age:** 19  
**DIT Campus:** Kevin Street  
**Nomination:** Entertainments Officer  
**Current course of study:** Electrical and control engineering  
**Year:** Second  
**Previous experience in student politics:** Elected Irish Language Officer 2001. Currently Class Representative.  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- Have a wider selection of entertainments in the college.  
- "Because I'm brilliant, I feel I can provide a wider selection of entertainment, i.e. anything other than the Palace every Wednesday."

**Name:** William Kinsella  
**Age:** 19  
**DIT Campus:** Bolton Street  
**Nomination:** Equality Officer  
**Current course of study:** Electrical and Control Systems Engineering  
**Year:** Second  
**Previous experience in student politics:** Formerly class representative, member of DITSU council and on the course committee for Electrical and Control Systems Engineering.  
**Major proposals if elected:**  
- Awareness of the Irish culture and language in DIT  
- "Because I have a fluency in Irish and wish to increase the love of our language at all levels in the college."
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10 PART SUBJECT DIVIDER
A4 RING BINDER
A4 HARD COVER SCIENCE BOOK
HEXIL ENGINEERS SCALE RULE
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A4 SPIRAL LAB BOOK
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RAG Week R.I.P.

The loss of over Euro70,000 incurred by the RAG Ball is a massive source of concern to us all, regardless of whether the night in question was enjoyable or not. The fact that only a sixth of the total tickets available for the night were sold and the Ball was an unmitigated failure for the Union.

If RAG Ball was the biggest single event of the DITSU year, then one could excuse those who made the trip to the Point with only 15,000 supporters turning up for an all-Ireland event.

One can only imagine the backlash that the GAA would receive for charging exorbitant prices for their showcase event—which were such a scenario to ever unfold, Croke Park, would ensure that such a public relations disaster would never be repeated.

DITSU lost Euros4,000 on the Halloween Ball last year, an event which was a solo run on behalf of the then DITSU President. A unified DITSU in 2002 contrived to lose Euros2,000 more as a collective unit than a ‘lone assassin’ managed last year.

The figures speak for themselves. Did the Union honestly expect that students would flock to the Point in the thousands for an event that they have already spent more than they can afford and fork out Euro2 for a ticket? Clearly they did and therein lies the problem.

Less RAG Trip tickets were issued this year at the SU shops of the Students’ to get more students to go to the RAG Ball—again this tactic proved a failure.

The whole concept of RAG Week as students are currently financed to be addressed and an overhaul of the event is definitely required. ‘RAG days’ have been such a success in the past, however it is at risk of figures close to the Union and surely this would be a more stable solution.

With respect to the acts that performed at the Point, a headline act would surely have enticed more students to the most inaccessible venue in the capital. Even the hosting of two RAG Balls in two more easily filled venues would have generated a better atmosphere and attendance.

With respect to this year’s efforts, a little more homework was needed to be done by the incoming DITSU Executive for RAG Week 2002 than this year’s grand coup came up with.

US’s lazy referendum campaign

As US has made voter registration a cornerstone of their policy during the current academic year it was remarkable to see the varied campaign in the aught just before the poll on March 5th.

Regardless of the result, which will be known as this paper is published, President Richard Hammond’s decision to make US’s position known to the student populous just several days before the vote is remarkable to see a group that seems to have affiliated the Irish student movement.

While this paper did its best to present both sides of the argument to the students, it is increasingly difficult for anti-DITSU advocates to explain why the results are anything other than a warning for the future of student politics.

DITSU failed to take a stand on the issue—another remarkably ill advised decision.

And while this was going on, US’s chief was sitting on his hands. US is currently engaged in a television debate on an issue on an issue he said he is ‘deeply affected by’. How do those figures and student representatives alike be ashamed of the roles they played in the build-up to March 6th.

If the policy of the DIT Independent to correct any inaccuracies or misrepresentation as they occur. An corrections or clarifications will be printed in the next edition of the newspaper. It is also the policy of the DIT independent to offer the right of reply to any person who feels aggrieved by comment or opinion contained within.

Please forward any correspondence to: The Editor. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the DIT Independent.

The DIT Independent

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Hyland’s efforts deserve our support

A charity, I recently read the article, ’Chinu Challenge’ written by Clara O’Connor and published in the February edition of the DIT Independent.

The cause for which Adam Hyland is trying to raise money, is one in which we, the Sinn Fein Cumann of DIT feel very strongly about. It is true that the issue of homelessness in Dublin and its surrounding areas, is a serious problem and we in fact believe is not being dealt with in the manner in which it demands. It has been agreed upon with the local Sinn Fein cumann engages in will see half the proceeds go to help Adam in his expedition. I would appreciate if you would pass the message onto Mr. Hyland, and let him know that it will be considered in other way in which can aid him, will do our best.

Go rath maith agat.
Sean MacDarmad
Sinn Fein Cumann, DIT Bolton Street.

Letters to the Editor

Praise for DITSU RAG efforts

Dear Editor

I would like to discuss the recent RAG Ball in the Point Depot.

I would like to thank the DITSU Executive for running a brilliant show and congratulate them for all their hard work and effort that went into it myself and I have to say that enjoyed the night thoroughly.

Unfortunately though, the night was not a complete success, insofar as a loss was made. RAG Week this year stood for “Raising And Giving*”, specifically to the St. Christopher’s Action/Research which will take place in Ireland next year. It seems likely that less than 1,500 DITSU Students held the same conviction to this worthy cause. Therefore the loss was inevitable.

Questions will now be asked of the whole venture, which is no bad thing. It could be said of last year’s fiasco, that it was attributable to no person. However, the same cannot be said of this year. From the beginning, the decision was made by the Sabbaticals (Executive) of the Union to run the event. I’m sure however, that voices of discontent will rear their heads from within the Executive e.g. "I was against it from the beginning" etc.

Such is the nature of democracy however, that when a project is initiated, every one who has been associated with it help carry it out—usually with their objections taken into account incorporated into the same. Therefore the Executive should not honestly split over the issue— as we ALL know what it can lead to... Therefore, Sabbaticals must take the back on the chin and try not to see points in the up coming elections, which could do so will be seen for what it really is—a pitiable electioneering tactic. Quite rightly we must examine what precedes the decision was made, and how such safeguards to ensure it cannot happen again. After the decision was made however, I personally cannot fault the Executive. It is a shame more people didn’t see and witness the hard work that went into the event.

I personally think that the right decision was made to run the Ball and not pull it at the last minute. We could not sustain such a mashup again and it is also proved that we are capable of running such an event effectively, even if it was only to 1,500 party goers. Finally, maybe all those who will criticise the event could identify who were actually at the Ball before launching an attack on the Union.

Regards

Jarlath Molloy

Part-time student discrimination

Dear Editor

An EGM of DITSU Council was recently held to discussed the impending move of all Sabbatical Officers to Aungier Street next year.

This presented a constitutional problem—how would the business students vote? The decision was that the Sabbatical and Part-Time elections?

The obvious answer was that the 1,000 students concerned should be included in the Aungier Street electorate. In fairness I personally cannot recall such a black and white issue ever being placed before Council before. And yet of course this proved not to be the case.

On the night the motion for Constitutional reform was was propelled by another motion. We were also told that Mountjoy Square and Cathal Brugha Square Sabbatical positions should be reduced to one position and that a single Deputy President/Welfare Officer should serve both campuses.

This is an issue that was extremely erotive for both sites concerned, and an issue that deserved discussion in its own right. It’s my feeling that this issue has been tagged on to the coat tails of the two Sabbatical Officers that will entail. But as theParticipation Officer in Kevin Street I wish to criticise her conduct on the night. On behalf of the part-time and apprentice students I will go as far as saying she has discriminated against part-time students.

We were given a set of figures of student numbers for September 2000. Without the student mix, it was difficult to justify the loss of the Sabbatical Officer. I will here print those figures along with the reasons why we considered the motion to be a bad thing.

Questions will now be asked of the whole venture, which is no bad thing. It seems likely that less than 1,500 DITSU Students held the same conviction to this worthy cause. Therefore the Executive should not honestly split over the issue— as we ALL know what it can lead to... Therefore, Sabbaticals must take the back on the chin and try not to see points in the up coming elections, which could do so will be seen for what it really is—a pitiable electioneering tactic. Quite rightly we must examine what precedes the decision was made, and how such safeguards to ensure it cannot happen again. After the decision was made however, I personally cannot fault the Executive. It is a shame more people didn’t see and witness the hard work that went into the event.

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Regards

Jarlath Molloy

RAG week - will DITSU ever learn?

Dear Editor,

Well, after last year’s episode of the Point, it seems like history has repeated itself. Do these Students’ Union ever learn? I remember the surveys and questionnaires that were conducted, only 2,000 tickets were sold this year.

The tickets cost close to €35,000 and we are not even taking into account of the performers’ fees. I understand an event cancellation insurance policy was purchased, but I also understand that it did not cover the lack of ticket sale. We were supposed to raise funds for charity but does that mean that our students have to suffer along with the rest of us?

I wonder how much of the students’ money have they lost and how will our Overall President justify her actions?

Yours with great concern, T. (wished to remain anonymous)
You don’t have to be rich......

to see the world

Any country that gave birth to Homer Simpson, drive-in wedding chapels and UFO paranoia has got to have a lot going for it. Its not a myth, the USA really can be the land of opportunity. But to get there costs money - and thats where Bank of Ireland can help you. We’re offering a six month interest free, J1 visa loan which includes up to €1000 emergency cash*. In addition you can also avail of a student credit card*, an interest-free ESS Tax Rebate Loan* and even get help dealing with the red tape that is the US tax system.

So call in and talk to Susan at Bank of Ireland Camden Street, ph : 4784766, or Bernie at Bank of Ireland 34 College Green, ph : 6793777 and don’t dream it - live it.

with our J1 Visa Package
Althoung Las Vegas say be all glitz and glamour, Dublin's equivalent is not so extravagant. Montague Street is home to two of Dublin's private members clubs where the privileged few can spend their life savings on a game of cards. Being the debonair playboy that I am, I decided it was time to get a piece of the action at the Montague Leisure Club.

It's AIM and everywhere else I've competed. The bouncer shows us in and hands us forms to fill in, to certify us all as temporary members. We duly fill in false names and forwarding addresses for the junk mail.

The entrance hall looks like a small hotel lobby. Big desk, security camera, fake Englishman in a cane suit, ash tray. Once the formalities of the front desk are over, we make our way into the arena.

In an attempt to ingratiate myself with the atmosphere I am immersing myself in, I order a glass of whisky in the corner, service as an ashtray. Once the formalities are out of the way we make our way into the arena.

My dreams of neon lights, Elvis music, hookers and free alcohol are dashed on the rocks of a room Laura Ashley would be proud of. Seven tables of either blackjack, or roulette divide the floor. Each table has a small huddle of gamblers, quietly staking their chips, overseen by a croupier and a supervisor seated on a high chair, like an umpire in tennis.

The atmosphere is at best subdued with the light background music broken only by the quiet murmur of voices and the innocent click of the roulette table.

I am in completely uncharted territory, with virtually no back-up. There is a strict no alcohol rule, and although there are free drinks you will not find a drop of illicit substance for blood or money.

The nearest thing I could find to a season's reward has attached itself to a nearby blackjack table, and I follow suit. Quickly tiring of the spectacle sport, in the pure interests of journalism and absolutely nothing to do with greed I hand over my 20 euro. The croupier slots it into a hole and hands me a pile of chips. Let the games begin.

Blackjack is a deceptively difficult game to master, and I have no idea what I am doing. I look around the table but there is no Mavis Beacon character to show me how to take money off the English girl fanning cards at me and unmercilessly asking me questions to which I have no answers.

Everything about the casino is a cliché. The good-looking girls in the black dresses dealing out cards at me and my partner on a set amount which they can lose. Only the very good, the very foolish and the very desperate play with chips and the whole experience seems somewhat unreal.

Most of the gamblers are completely indifferent to the monopoly money they throw on the table. One punter muscles in beside me and throws a single 50 euro chip down. He doubles it to 100 euro and lets it ride. It doubles again and he decides to try once more. Bad move, and the dealer collects 200 euro.

I have no idea what I am doing. I merely shrug and move off to another table. Most people go into casinos with a set amount that they can lose. Only the very good, the very foolish and the very desperate play with chips and the whole experience seems somewhat unreal.

In an attempt to ingratiate myself with the atmosphere I am immersing myself in, I order a glass of whisky in the corner, service as an ashtray. Once the formalities are out of the way we make our way into the arena.

My dreams of neon lights, Elvis music, hookers and free alcohol are dashed on the rocks of a room Laura Ashley would be proud of. Seven tables of either blackjack, or roulette divide the floor. Each table has a small huddle of gamblers, quietly staking their chips, overseen by a croupier and a supervisor seated on a high chair, like an umpire in tennis.

The atmosphere is at best subdued with the light background music broken only by the quiet murmur of voices and the innocent click of the roulette table.

My combat antennas peak at around 45 euro, and the battle swings back and forth for a while. For about 15 minutes I sustain heavy casualties, but just before I call for reinforcements, I'm back on track and looking set to regain all lost territory. The problem here is that you rarely see cash. You are playing with chips and the whole experience seems somewhat unreal.

When asked if he sometimes feels guilty, he shrugs. "I'm not forcing anyone to throw their money away," I realise my pony stake is insignificant when my new best friend tells me he once knew a man who lost €100,000. Five nights in a row.

The dealer has obviously been around the blackjack block, so I figure he must be damn good at the game. "No", he replies, a judicious glint in his eye. "I never gamble", I feel like I should have learnt some sort of lesson at this stage.

Things have gone from great to worse. The battlefield beds Ill and my reserves are considerably depleted. I haven't been watching the cards and I'm in dire straits.

All my treacherous blue chips have surrendered and I send in the last of my light wallet brigade on a rescue mission. Desperation clouds my judgement and my high hopes of Bond girls and martinis by the pool are swallowed whole by a somewhat sympathetic croupier with an 'I told you so!' look on his face.

My fool's paradise has burned to the ground, I decide to call it a night, and my only regret is that I have no money to tip the dealer. I step outside and Camden Street is deserted, save for some friendly pigeons. I have lost in a big way tonight, yet I haven't felt this good in ages.

The only thing I know for certain is that I will have my revenge on that damned casino. Probably next weekend.

Laurence Mackin cashing his chips. Honestly.
A

Independent D

11

year's National

this

These games are held every four

A
test run is the Irish National Games

held by Special Olympics Ireland.

Ireland for the first time in

dIfficulties will be joining them. as

the cost of staging the Games is around

locations throughout Dublin. This

will be held in Ireland for the first time in

years, but the difference this year is

that not alone will Irish athletes be

competing, but a further 300

European and a transport linking
difficulties will be joining them, as

the potential venues and teams for

next year’s World Games are put

through their paces.

If you hadn’t heard of the

National Games before, you may

be amazed at how big the event

actually is. 1600 athletes will

compete in nine sports, in 11

venues over five days. The total

cost of staging the Games is around

£750,000, which comes from a

number of different sources - the

Irish Sports Council, the

Department of Health and

Children, the event’s primary

sponsor, Eircom, and various other

sponsors and fundraising activities.

Special Olympics Ireland caters

for athletes with learning

disabilities throughout the country.

There is year-round training for the

athletes, as well as regular

competitions. According to Pat

Costello, the Director of Special

Olympics Ireland, “there are about

270 Special Olympics clubs around

the country. This is a legitimate

sporting organisation, and one

athletes train as hard as any

others”. The Irish Special Olympics

Team for the 2001 World Games

will be selected at this year’s

National Games, so there’s extra

pressure on the athletes this year.

The fact that the Games will be

held in Ireland next year also

means that the competition is more

accessible for Irish athletes than it

had been in previous years. “This is

the first year in the history of the

Special Olympics that the Games, held in the USA.

Consequently, there will be more

Irish athletes than ever before, part

to the fact that the range of sports has

increased. In previous years, the

Irish team would have had about

70 athletes, but this year there

could be up to 300 competing”,

added Mr. Costello.

A

through the excitement of

hosts the World Special

Olympics threatened to

overshadow this year’s National

Games, Mr. Costello believes that

“the athletes have refocused on

this year’s competition, probably
due in part to the fact that Team Ireland

for 2003 will be selected at it”. The

forthcoming events are also

beginning to receive increased

attention from the public and the

media. “In general the media

coverage has been very positive,

there has been great support and

interest,” said Mr. Costello. He

dismissed the infamous Mary Ellen

Synon article about Special

Olympics athletes as

“controversial, but seen by most

people as a personal opinion”.

The increased attention from the

media will help the organisers of

the National Games to impress

upon the general public how

important their help will be in

staging the Games. “Special

Olympics Ireland couldn’t survive

without volunteers. For the

National Games this year we will

need 5 000 volunteers. For the

Olympics next year we need 30

000, although not all of them will

be Irish, a lot of them will travel

with the visiting teams. But for this

year we need people who can spare

some time, be it a week or a few

hours”. There is a wide variety of

jobs for volunteers, including

Games Officials, chaperones for

the various teams, venue

organisers, parking attendants,

signposting, security and medical

aides. With the exception of the

medical attendants, we only require

experience. It is expected that the

medical attendants, who have

previously treated the public and

媒体, nuclear safety and

medical aides. Will the exception of the

medical attendants, to previous

experience is needed. “We will

provide full training for any

volunteers, and anyone who has

any free time can approach us, we

will consider any offer of help”
said Mr. Costello. Ideas for

fundraising are also appreciated.

This year’s Games will take

place in a number of venues in the

Dublin area, including UCD, UCD,

St. Patrick’s College in Maynooth,

Blanchardstown and Ringsend.

Events will kick off on June 19th

with a ceremony in Pearse Park,

and will conclude in the RDS on

June 23rd. If you fancy doing

something different after the

events, Pat Costello and the team

at Special Olympics Ireland would

be delighted to hear from you. “We

need to get more young people on

board, and we will work around

their schedules”.

If you are interested in helping

out at the National Games, contact

Special Olympics Ireland at 01-

8823972 or e-mail

info@specialolympics.ie.

Will you have some time to spare this June?

If you’ve got a few extra hours, Special

Olympics Ireland needs your help. lanice

Gaffey spoke to Pat Costello, the Director of

Special Olympics Ireland

I

Irish athletes at the Special Olympics World Winter Games 2001

in Alaska. Picture courtesy of Special Olympics Ireland

A

Mugabe’s democratic deficit

When Robert Mugabe first

came to power in

Zimbabwe, the country was a one party state, with no

opposition. According to Tawanda

Gono, there was a positive attitude to

Mugabe at that point in time.

“Robert Mugabe was voted into

power by the majority of the

people, you know, they expected

that he would do good for the

country. But this is just it, you can

never know with anything in the

beginning whether something is

wrong or right but, by and large, I

would say people had faith in him

and trusted him with running the

country with a "hands on"

approach.”

However, while that may have

been the case in the beginning,

the situation began to decline

during Mugabe’s rule. “Mugabe

began to alienate the people in power for

the past twenty years. Personally I

would say after about five or six years

people were beginning to notice

signs of corruption within the

country and noticing that things

were not as good as they were in

the previous ten years. These were

just signs that you know,

something was amiss,” Tawanda

explained that the first

discrepancies people noticed were

economic.

“First off, you know, the currency

was almost at par with the British

pound. And then things began to

become more expensive, these

were basic commodities. That was

just one of the initial signs that

people were noticing, that things

were not as good as they had been

during the previous years.”

Although people denounced

corruption, that was as far as it

went. “People have spoken against

it, it was never taken very far any

further than just words.”

One of the major issues in

Zimbabwe throughout the past 20

years has been land ownership.

“Land distribution has been

promised to the people since 1980

and from what I know personally,

seeing that my own brother

worked for Land and Resettlement,

they tried to redistribute land but

the whole thing fall apart because

eventually most of these farms

were given to people in government

and never really to the people

who were supposed to be

settled.”

Another issue has been that of

compensation for war veterans.

Tawanda explained that “it’s hard to
distinguish whether you could call

a person a war veteran, but, by

and large, I would say that”.

criteria the government was using

was people who have fought for

the attainment of independence.”

Compensation has been rife in the

awarding of compensation to

these veterans. “With

compensation it was actually a

requirement for anyone who was a

war veteran to go on a test in order to

be looked at; see if they had any

disabilities either from the war or

anything of that nature. But this

was again badly mishandled, you

know people were using it in a
corrupt fashion. They were using it

most probably, to one particular

doctor. He would give a person up
to sixty, even up to a hundred per

cent disabilities and yet these are

people who can still do everyday

tasks you know? The very people

who, I would even say, are on the

rampage on the streets of Harare

at this particular moment.”

Tawanda is hopeful of a positive

outcome from the elections. “It’s

not only myself, I’d say the

population of the country would

actually set be happier if a new

government is voted into power.

Zimbabwe is a country that has

taken severe battering from

mismanagement, being terribly

stolen from, plundered from. We

even supported wars that we had

nothing to do with for many years

so, if anything, it has suffered
tremendous losses. Whether there is

not something that is going to

come overnight but at least these

would be footsteps in the right
direction.”
A Labour of Love

Joan Burton is preparing for another general election campaign in a bid to regain her former Dáil seat. Alana Doogan caught up with the Labour councillor as the May poll looms.

Aungier Street lecturer Joan Burton was one of the people who went to college when speaking to the DIT Independent. "I joined the Labour party in the context of Ireland joining the E.E.C. which I was very opposed to," she said. "I saw it as a very big loss of sovereignty." As a native of the inner city, Joan felt compelled to engage in the political process given that the capital faced an accommodation crisis during that period. In Dublin the really big issue was housing because the housing situation was just appalling and the quality of people's accommodation was appalling. Acting as an active member of the party as opposed to forwarding herself for elected representation initially, Joan's role in the party changed some two years into her involvement.

"Noel Browne was having one of his conscious difficulties with the Labour party. He had been meant to represent some branch at the Labour party's annual conference in Cork, but for various reasons, ended up not being able to do so. I was involved in this branch and a number of people asked me to arrange for him to be delegate of the branch. And of course I was delighted." Browne was a man ahead of his time in Irish politics - the instigator of the ill-fated Mother and Child scheme in the first multi-party government lead by John A. Costello from 1945-51, a policy which would lead to his resignation as Health Minister after some negative noises from the Catholic hierarchy.

It was through working with the late Dr Brown that Joan met a man called Pat Carroll, who was to become a candidate. "At the next election, Pat ended up being nominated as a candidate for my area (Glasnevin Road in Cabra) and he got elected. About a year later, we got married." She added with a grin, "politics is not all about slogging - there are interesting times as well."

As well as representing Dublin West in Dublin City Council, Joan Burton lectures business and journalism students in DIT Aungier Street, a position that she immensely enjoys.

An excellent Leaving Certificate result saw the young Joan rewarded with a scholarship to University College Dublin, where she studied Commerce and English. "I was the first person from my school to go to university and probably the first person from O'Connell Road to do so." She noted that while socio-economic constraints have improved the situation for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, the current student population still reflects the difficulties for aspiring students from areas of economic difficulty. "In the 1950's and 60's the people who went to college were the better off. There was no system and it was just a matter of having the money, or for a very small number of people like me, getting scholarships. Though nowadays you look at the statistics and the number of working class kids who go to third level is still quite tiny."

By the time the obstacle of university education had been successfully cleared, Joan committed herself to Labour and was a noted member of the party's anti-coalition extreme left. By the advent of the 1980's, she was honorary secretary of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, "before it became fashionable." By 1983, following her husband's resignation from Dublin Corporation, Joan and Pat moved to Tanzania, where both strongly felt that more women should be pushed along as candidates," she said. "I then found myself having to become a candidate in order to supply a quota of women. I wasn't madly enthusiastic and I had quite a seminal experience, in that as soon as I became a candidate, back from Tanzania. It's a one third Muslim country, where obviously women's rights are traditionally circumscribed. Women are not terribly advanced, and the country was dirt poor, although it's a lovely country, but nonetheless they have the right to divorce and remarriage. I

Aungier Street lecturer Joan Burton is preparing for another general election campaign in a bid to regain her former Dáil seat. Alana Doogan caught up with the Labour councillor as the May poll looms.

"The conduct of the disgraced Liam Lawlor could provide Burton with the votes of many disillusioned Dublin West voters."

people decided they didn't want me as a candidate. Probably, if people had thrown open their arms and said "please be a candidate" I wouldn't have been terribly interested. The fact that I ran into a certain amount of opposition about being a candidate actually made me put my foot down and be one."

Her first campaign in Dublin Central was not a success, but with her father and stepmother living in nearby Dublin West (the country's most famous plot of political land thanks to Prisoner 6409 in Mountjoy), Joan decided to teach her political gospel in a new neck of the capital's woods.

The experience garnered as part of Mary Robinson's Presidential election team in 1990 enhanced her reputation within the party and locally and in the space of two years became a Dublin City Councillor, a Teachta Dála and a Minister of State (including a stint at Foreign Affairs).

By the end of what she dubbed "the Spring tide" of Labour populatity, with the punters in 1997, Joan had lost her Dáil seat. "I was very unfortunate, in that I got about 13 per cent of the vote but still didn't get a seat. It was really to do with how Fianna Fáil split the vote and the fact that they got PD transfers. A very large PD transfer elected Liam Lawlor and Brian Lenihan in the context of what's happened, it's ironic."

The conduct of the disgraced Deputy Lawlor could provide Joan with the votes of many disillusioned voters in Dublin West. Given that a speech she delivered in 1993 led to her fighting 43 separate libel writs which highlighted several of the major issues which are now the subject of the Flood Tribunal, Joan Burton has a realistic chance of a return to chambers in Leinster House.

DIT's loss could well be the Dáil's gain.
Why not to do the J1

There are those for whom the J1 is the best thing since sliced bread. And then there’s another school of thought which regards the J1 as being about as appealing as a summer in Sing-Sing. Based on the experiences of one and the opinions of another, Aoife Stokes and Janice Gaffey compiled a list of reasons to avoid the H like the plague that it is.

1. Chances are that you won’t make any money, or at least no more than you would have if you had worked closer to home. A significant number of returning J1ers don’t have the price of a pint of ale when they land on Irish soil, and count themselves lucky if they break even and can repay the bank/parents/jimmy-the-Note.

2. The reasonable likelihood of being arrested if you’re under 21 and attempting to get drunk on a fake ID. It’s illegal to drink in the US if you’re under 21, and if the President’s daughters can be done for it, you can too.

Generally those using fake ID (or real ID belonging to someone else) are caught, unless you frequent only the dodgiest emporium in the neighbourhood. In which case, ID is the least of your worries.

3. If the summer is for you to immerse yourself in American culture, the J1 is not necessarily the way to go. The areas where the majority of Irish J1 students end up are flooded with other Irish J1 students, and most US students are in a bit of an Irish ghetto, generally living, working and socialising with other Irish students. And where the Jay-J 1 sun fun in that?

4. This won’t apply to everyone, but the Irish J1er is slightly sensitive to the sun, and even if you’ve got a free hand with the Ambre Solaire, you’ll end up looking like a muggle. Given that a huge amount of J1-ers head for beach areas and the humid east coast, it genuinely could happen, and bear in mind that if you don’t have medical insurance, many American hospitals won’t treat you.

5. If you’re fond of life’s little luxuries, then the J1 is not for you.

The living conditions are likely to resemble an activity centre hostel in the West of Ireland, with anything up to 12 people sharing a two-bedroom apartment, and

Is it all it’s cracked up to be? Eight reasons not to do a J1

After twelve days my boyfriend and I left New York for Cape Cod, a coastal area in Boston. It was a huge difference from the massive skyscrapers and bustling urban jungle we had left behind.

1. Chances are that you won’t make any money. We secured jobs in a small pizzeria in a quiet town on the Cape and our accommodation came with the job. Two friends followed us down and began sharing our cramped one-bedroom cottage.

2. Speaking of food, it may be worth pointing out at this juncture that several J1-ers spend three months eating at McDonald’s or Burger King, with a few taking a cultural leap and progressing to Wendy’s. (Note that this is not a good idea.)

3. Not only will you have to deal with ubiquitous phrases such as “Have a nice day” or “My name is Brad and I’ll be your waiter”, but you’ll be expected to use them if you get any kind of service industry job.

4. Finally, remember that despite growing up under the impression that Americans love the Irish, IT’S NOT TRUE! J1 students are regarded by many Americans in much the same way as a suburban bus-load of Spanish students in Ireland.

Employers do not love you, and if they do it’s only because they see you as slave labour. Fair enough, if you’re waiting tables, the customers may like you, but they’ll also ad offensive questions about the war back home, or whether or not you know Paddy-Joe O’Shea-Kennedy from Knocknabally. (The answer is yes, you know him well, and he’s a great man. Otherwise you will have to recite your local history in case you know someone related to him.)

5. So if you’re heading off on a J1, the best of luck. Chances are that the only way you’ll be able to tell the difference between your three months in America and your seven months in Rathmines will be the weather.

The best bit was cycling home from the local pub.

More than once in my drunken state, I ended up in a bash, or falling off the bike altogether. We were a good ten miles away from the biggest town on the Cape, Hyannis, so for entertainment and drink we would venture to a nearby pub which looked like a small run-down shed from the outside.

This legend of a bar served pitchers of beer for five dollars and didn’t examine our dodgy fake driving licenses.

It’s worth noting that Americans go go to the pub if they’re depressed and don’t go to get locked. The only reason I saw leaving the pub in a bad state were my friends good, but when it rained it flooded.

At times like that I would be a prisoner in my little cottage, with no TV and forced to listen to the same ten CDs for the zillionth time.

The weeks and months flew, and by the time I touched down in Dublin Airport, it felt like it was all a dream.
Paycheck, Paycheck

Only time will tell whether Xbox can establish itself in Ireland against the hugely popular Sony PlayStation 2

By Jamie McCormick

Microsoft are very well known as a developer of some excellent games in recent years. Names come to mind like Age of Empires or the Flight Simulation series. On the 14th of March, their first foray into console gaming will be launched in Ireland – the Microsoft XBox.

The console has been greeted warmly in the US when it launched in November last year, and quite the opposite to what some people thought, it has shown that Microsoft can pull off quite a lot with a bit of effort (and $500 million to spend marketing it worldwide).

Having played the console itself, I can tell you that it is impressive. Physically it is bigger and bulkier than the PlayStation 2, and has a controller that takes quite a while to get used to. On paper, it is about twice as powerful as the PlayStation 2, offering gamers plenty of room to manoeuvre in the future.

It also features a built-in hard drive, allowing games to be much larger than before with little if any loading, and is ready for the launch of broadband internet services whenever NTL gets around to it.

Don’t be fooled though, the console is a games console, not a computer, and you will not be able to surf the Internet through it. When the service gets launched in Ireland you will beable to play in Internet leagues that are being set up for the hit games. Also those of you who are hoping to use a DVD player with your console will be disappointed. Although it does allow DVD playback, you will have to buy an additional peripheral to activate the feature.

The console is very much a multiplayer gamers dream. Each console can plug four controllers into the front, and on top of that, you can also network up to four machines for multiplayer tournaments.

The launch title Halo supports this, allowing up to sixteen players on four television screens to fight it out to the death in first person mode, or team up for a more tactical game. When the Internet services become available, this will be further extended.

The console launches on Thursday, March 14th around the country. Weighing in at an expected price of €299, it may be a little too hefty for most students.

But for those of you who will be fortunate enough to land yourself one of the consoles within launch, you will be very well looked after. Microsoft has learned from the mistakes of other console launches.

While others and even notably Nintendo have launched consoles with some great games, there tended to be a drought of titles for a number of months after.

This is not seemingly the case with the XBox. Microsoft have announced an impressive line-up of titles for the launch period. On the day, twenty titles should be available. These will include the much anticipated and excellent first person shooter Halo, graffiti hit Jet Set Radio Future, Project Gotham Racing, Dead or Alive 3 and Tony Hawks Pro Skate 3.

There have also been a host of great titles announced for the first three months of the console’s European life including Samurai title Gennos Onna Nanshin, Crash Bandicoot, Championship Manager, Chuck, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, FIFA World Cup and Spiderman. These games are expected to sell at around €64.99.

The official launch of the console takes place in Virgin Megastores on Aston Quay, and will feature an Xmas theme (for those of you who put off Christmas presents to get it). Santa will feature giving free presents to the first hundred to get an XBox, and there will be Game Poles out of the store to allow gamers to taste what games are on offer.

Only time will tell whether Xbox can establish itself in Ireland against the hugely popular Sony PlayStation 2, but with the line-up the console has going for it, it will be an interesting year!

Prepare for Xmas all over again

Life caught on the run

By Debbie Flood

By taking thirty minutes out of going to the movies, pub or a gig and doing something different, I found something that is equally interesting and entertaining. The Gallery of Photography in Temple Bar is holding the Eirelcci/Vodafone Irish Press Awards.

A collection of over 100 of the best press photographs of the year is on display for the public to view, free of charge.

The exhibition provides the perfect opportunity to view the amazing images that have featured in the national and regional press in the last year. The photographs are broken up into eight categories: news, sport, features, people, the arts, politics and individual study.

There are three prize-winners in each section and an overall winner.

The exhibition features a selection of photographs which made the news in 2001, and encompasses a range of light hearted lifestyle pieces, images from the year in sport and some of the most disturbing events from the year.

One such photograph is ‘Thin Ice’, a dark and foreboding image of the Garda sub-aqua team stretched across a frozen lake, attempting to recover the bodies of two girls who had fallen through the ice. The bleak colours and disturbing composition convey feelings of desperation and isolation.

Many of the images are quite lightweight emotionally, a humorous and fascinating image of a bird catching its own reflection in the mirror is truly memorable, along with a photograph of two little boys at a pro-life rally.

This image is a typical example of photographers playing with people’s perceptions of a controversial issue, and is a heavily loaded image that has been in heavy circulation in the run up to March 6th.

A favourite for many is a photograph of a small boy surprised and bewildered by two drag queens. The image captures the changing nature of Irish society.

The winner of the Eirelcci/Vodafone Irish Press Photographer of the Year is Brenda Pittinmann. Ten works from this Irish Times photographer are on display, including ‘Earth Angels’, which features five little girls walking to their navalty play. The lighting, colour and tone have an overall magical effect, and convey the aura of innocence and fairylike ambience associated with such childhood events.

Life caught on the run

Life caught on the run

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Life caught on the run
Deafening silence

By Clara O'Connor

Ah, sweet mystery of a seated venue. For some reason, a place like the Project Arts theatre has a soporific effect on what is normally an animated crowd.

The NPB (previously National Prayer Breakfast), Deputy Fuzz, Future Kings of Spain gig was a definite test of the bands’ quality, as the excruciating silence only contributed to the widely held perception that these bands are utterly professional, and note-perfect.

The opening act was Lisa O'Neill and John McNeagh from Ballyfermot Rock College. They played two original folk/ acoustic songs, which warmed the place up considerably. Lisa’s soulful voice with a strong country twang is complemented well by John’s quiet, soft rock style vocals.

Their harmonies are exquisite and their timing impeccable.

The Future Kings of Spain were the next act to tread the boards. They are a well-publicised and much discussed group; however, it was the first time I had been subject to their powerful rock. Looking exceptionally stylish in suits (we won’t mention the trainers), the FKOS bring a new meaning to the word noise. The silence between songs was clearly unnerving for them and I’d safely say their regular crowd does not sit deferentially in their seats and pay full attention.

Next up were Deputy Fuzz, what a weird band. Their consistently outlandish vocal sounds married to a demo on a Casio keyboard (remember Xmas 1987?) make for a very bizarre treatment of songs about everything, from sandwiches to pet gofers to a tribute to Samantha Jones from Sex and the City. The whole act was a mish-mash of 40 second to 2 minute long snippets of what new and old sounds the band had managed to formulate. Pay they didn’t spend just a little longer on the musical quality of what they are producing as, at least, it is really original. Basically they are a crescendo of strangeness.

If that’s what you like, and many people did, then their debut album, Music, For Toys is out on March 14th.

Finally, the headlining act, 3... ye olde reliable NPB.

"Paranoid America" country stadium rock, is how the band describe themselves, yet this may be a tad convoluted. Always a slight to behold on stage, NPB’s unique clapping, punk and garage rock sounds break the silence and really get the crowd moving (finally).

What with Darragh on his knees playing keyboard and guitar, Patrick falling about the stage and their new and permanent guitarist jumping madly about the place, they were never boring, and energetic as always. Their new material is surprisingly heavy, and vocally Patrick gets better every time they play, it seems.

However, their old stuff was still a resolved preference with the crowd as roars for Feeding Frenzy rang out before the encore. As usual, the band’s relationship with their audience is what makes their gigs extra special, and their ongoing banter initiated some really crazy dancing.

Playing a mixture of material from ‘The Sociables Prefer Pop Music‘ their debut, and their great new 10 inch ‘This is my Happening and it **** me up‘, both new and old material was fondly received by a belatedly enthusiastic crowd.

Revs rock Ambassador

By Andrew Rea and Kieran Dineen

"They’re thinking of changing their name to Number 3 inspired by their ideal: U2, 2 Unlimited, Five, Six and Club 7 but that is all hearsay!" or so said the rather jubilant announcer before The Revs took to the stage.

Donegal’s finest were here to rock and they did just that.

From the off they engaged with the young audience getting them worked up, moshing and jumpin’, through their own brand of exhilarating, fast pop-punk music. This threesome play simple catchy tunes keeping their music accessible to all ages yet not selling out to the mainstream. Both Rory Gallagher (lead singer) and John McIntyre (bass guitarist) worked the stage as if they have been years on the circuit and Rory’s ‘scissors-jumps’, were a true crowd pleaser. Indeed songs like ’We love America‘ which was dedicated to the touts in the venue, show just how much they have improved since their ‘Battle of the Bands’ winning days.

Their satirical tribute to Louis Walsh, which has taken on a cult-like status, was one of the high-points of the night. It is testament to the Revs that the lyric ‘Louis Walsh said, Rock & Roll’s dead’ remains only an ironic anachronism. The band have been nominated for the Best Newcomer/Hope for 2002 at the upcoming IBMA awards alongside Louis’ trio of pop sensations Six, Reel and Bellefire. They championed their own cause throughout the night as the only credible choice for true music fans.

The unique style with which they blended their own songs almost seamlessly with popular songs is something which sets them apart from other contemporary acts. Also of note was their slant on Kylie’s worldwide smash-hit ‘Can’t get you out of my head’ (or bed as the boys crudely interjected), played a la Travis’ rendition of ‘Hit me baby one more time’, The Revs’ singles ‘Wired to the Moon’ and ‘Still alone with you’ harboured the most expectation and again failed to disappoint.

We feel obliged to say a few words about the second support act Deputy Fuzz. They are playing in Whelan’s on March 16th. Let’s just say we will be somewhere else come the 16th. The first-support band Cody were not half bad however, possibly worth another look.

The Revs’ cover of Hendrix’s ‘Foxy Lady’ proved a perfect end to a great night even though the security at times seemed a bit over-enthusiastic. Let’s just hope that the Revs win the IRMA beating those “bubble gum disposable mass marketed over-hyped Frankenstein creations”.

The next single from their debut album Sonic Tonic, “Turning Japanese” has been tipped as an Irish Wold Cup anthem.

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Ali
Starring: Will Smith, Jamie Foxx, John Voight
Director: Michael Mann

Depicting the life of the most famous man alive was always going to be a difficult task for director Michael Mann. The retelling of the life of Muhammad Ali is a story whose wholeness, controversy and drama could never truly be justified in a two and a half hour movie.

But to Mann’s credit, Ali is an interesting if not riveting account of the most turbulent decade of The Greatest’s life. The movie kicks off with Cassius Clay’s surprise victory over Sonny Liston and ending with his even more sensational knocking out of the human monolith that was George Foreman in the 1974 ‘Rumble in the Jungle’. Will Smith is a convincing Ali and his build-up physically and emotionally is evident in each of the movie’s excellently shot fight scenes. Ali’s relationship with TV sports presenter Howard Cosell (brilliantly played by a barely recognisable John Voight) is wonderfully retold and provides some of the lighter moments of a movie that offers glimpses of the AIi persona.

When George met Julia. The estranged Oceans meet in Ocean’s Eleven
Ocean’s Eleven
Starring: George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Andy Garcia and Julia Roberts
Director: Steven Soderbergh

While this is a movie that will not be winning any gongs of note, Ocean’s Eleven is a premier partner in the casino heist of the century, Brad Pitt is excellent and both work off each other brilliantly throughout. Matt Damon does a lot of walking around Las Vegas and delivers a performance which suggests he could make a fine Clark Kent were he ever offered the part, Don Cheadle’s cockney timbre is hilarious as one almost felt some Guy Ritchie influences every time he opened his mouth, while Andy Garcia walks around Vegas like he owns the place; the fact that he does own the place obviously helps! But could sport an Olympian guilt and appalling dressing sense and steals the show as a former casino mogul keen for revenge on Garcia, who bought him out. As for Julia Roberts, well, Julia Roberts has never been all that much of an actress in this reviewer’s opinion and a bit like Damon, she walks around a lot looking a little confused.

But this movie is just pure popcorn munching fun with a lively script, super soundtrack courtesy of the shifty eyed Richard E. Grant (something of an Altman favourite at this stage) the best of a stunning cast has commented on how good a time they had while making the movie and this party atmosphere is suitably captured by Soderbergh. Great fun and well worth checking out. (All movie anoraks look out for a tiny nod to Mr Cosell’s former life as Dr Doug)

Gosford Park
Starring: Michael Gambon, Maggie Smith, Helen Mirren, Ryan Phillippe, Kristin Scott Thomas
Director: Robert Altman

Robert Altman returns to form with a splendid murder mystery set in a stately English country house in the 1930’s, with an acting ensemble even more impressive than the mighty Las Vegas gang that Soderbergh grouped together.

The movie’s murder is almost incidental, something of a nod towards Altman’s last classic, ‘The Player’ as the environment surrounding the movie’s characters takes precedent to unfurling events. English aristocracy has never been so excellently crafted for moviegoers, as Altman satisfies a personal fascination with the life of the English gentry and his own entry into the murder mystery genre. With Michael Gambon putting in a simply stunning performance as the Lord of the manor, married to the materialistic hungry, Kristin Scott Thomas (also brilliant) the incursions of Gosford Park, host a weekend for their well-to-do relatives and ever so slightly snobby social circle. The upstairs downstairs’ philosophy is wonderfully depicted, with Helen Mirren, Alan Bates and the shifty eyed Richard E. Grant (something of an Altman favourite at this stage) the best of a stunning cast has commented on how good a time they had while making the movie and this party atmosphere is suitably captured by Soderbergh. Great fun and well worth checking out. (All movie anoraks look out for a tiny nod to Mr Cosell’s former life as Dr Doug)
By Laurence Mackin.

Once again Rag Week has come and gone and left in its wake a plethora of decrepit students with blurred memories, odd scarring and smiles on their faces.

Rag Week sums up all that is good about the carefree happy go lucky nature of student life, the kind of thing that leads accountants in their thirties to look back at their time in college, when they had friends outside of an office and didn’t use terms like “weekly SWOT breakdown” and “FVI financial solvency”, and come over all misty eyed. At least that’s the ideal. In DIT however, we dance to the beat of a different drum.

Rag Week has not exactly become the zenith of the student entertainment year. A cobbled together number of boozing sessions in some less than salubrious drinking emporiums, a Rag Ball that is a continual disaster year in and year out, a trip to the most centrally-located venue than Irish Independent

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All This Week

(Monday 11th - Friday 15th March)
Welcome to the DHIT Independent, March 2002.

If you are interested in seeing your team or club featured in the pages of the DHIT Independent, or if you have something interesting to share with students about sport or in general, please contact Sports Editor Miguel Delaney at 402-3071, or e-mail at ditsport@hotmail.com. This is your paper and we welcome your feedback.

**Gaelic games round up**

By Miguel Delaney

**Fitzgibbon Cup**

Limerick IT 1-14 - DIT 0-10

**Sigerson Cup**

DIT 0-14 - UCD 0-10

The DIT Senior Football team were knocked out of the Sigerson Cup, DIT's hurlers came to a similar fate in the Fitzgibbon Cup as they were beaten 1-14 to 0-10 by Limerick IT.

The hurlers failed to replicate the fight that the football team had given. However, DIT simply couldn't contain Tipperary star Eoin Kelly who turned in a top class performance and came out with a personal haul of 1-16, all from frees.

Despite starting the match brightly and ran Limerick IT close for the opening 20 minutes, every move more than two points behind. However Kelly's goal from a free minutes from the interval put Limerick ahead by 1-8 to 0-6 at half-time and secured to kill off DIT.

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**DIT teams lose out again**

With DIT's football and hurling teams once again falling at the first hurdle in the Fitzgibbon Cup respectively, yet another poor GAA season was wrapped up by DIT. With problems clearly not an excuse for failure, Miguel Delaney spoke to DIT's GAA Development Officer Des O'Donnell and asked him what can be done.

DIT's performances in both football and hurling this season have been far from enviable. The fact that a home draw in the Sigerson Cup preliminary round was the year's highlight says enough in itself.

In football, despite some good performances, the team was no league matches: the solitary victory in the league came against the UCDSA in the Fitzgibbon Cup. The hurlers enjoyed slightly better success in the league, defeating NUIG Maynooth who defeated them well in last year's Fitzgibbon Cup, but ultimately failed to win another game and couldn't make it past Limerick IT in the Fitzgibbon Cup. For Ireland's biggest third level college this makes for poor reading.

"The performance in Terenure against NUI Maynooth was a poor season to only draw against a formidable NUIG team confirming that, the question is at what level is it good enough to compete? Maybe its time to ask ourselves are we a high enough standard to compete in the Sigerson Cup. We haven't been successful in the competition since 1999 and it is becoming a bigger problem as time go on. The DIT football and hurling teams are going to have to go to the next level to see success at a lower standard."

"As the likes of DCU, NUI Maynooth and St Patrick's have shown, we can drop down to the Trench and Ryan Cups and do well. And perhaps success at this level could be something to build on. Again a debate on it is something to consider," Des believes.

"However sometimes dropping down doesn't look good. It seems as if we're moving backwards and giving up on higher standards. And you never know, every year brings new players and maybe next year's bunch will have the determination that had been missing in the Sigerson Cup.

And then if this is happening all the time, we as a college have to consider whether the hurlers and footballers are definitely there, or are we going backwards and taking a step ahead of us. Maybe its because we don't get the intermediate or under 21 county players that they do we have to look at it. However the hurlers will struggle on."  

The 2001/2002 season has therefore given rise to many questions for the football and hurling teams a lot to ponder. Are they to continue with poor seasons among the hurlers or see success at a lower standard?

**News in Brief**

- The DIT Annual Sports Awards Night will be held at the Imperial Hotel on Wednesday 20th March. All DIT Sports Clubs should submit their nomination forms to Niamh O'Callaghan before Wednesday 19th March. Guest speaker on the night will be veteran RTE commentator Jimmy McGhee.

- The DIT C.B.S. Room is hosting a barbeque on Saturday 28th February from 5 to 7pm in the Glasnevin Tennis Club. Contact Herbie McLelland on 087- 298 5849 for further details.

- Anyone interested in playing squash should contact Padraig Marrey, Youth Development Officer with Cycling Ireland, on 01-7828372 or e-mail ucddc@hotmail.com or call Niamh O'Callaghan on 087-298 5849.

- Larkin Gym opening hours have changed from the usual 6.30pm to 5.30pm Monday to Friday and 8.30-10.30pm on Wednesday nights. A qualified instructor will be on hand for fitness programmes and fitness testing. Contact the Sports Office for more information.

- If interested in playing squash in Phoenix Squash Courts in Clonliffe ring Joe Tierney at 853 0156, or e-mail us @ phoenixsquash.com.

- Yoga Classes are currently taking place every Thursday in DIT Mountain Court from 9am to 10am. For further information contact Niamh O'Callaghan in DIT C.B.S. Room 104 from 1 to 2pm.

- Kickboxing classes are being held in DIT under-21 star Damian Reale will hopefully take back a trophy. Contact Herbie McLelland on 087-298 5849. email: tierneyjoe@hotmail.com.

- The Sigerson Cup was eventually won by Sligo IT who beat favourites UCC by 6-6 to 6-5 in a tight finish at Markievicz Park. Sligo IT started strongly, in a game played in awful weather conditions, but could only manage a 0-6 to 0-3 lead by half-time.

With Conrad Murphy in fine form it seemed UCC would punish Sligo IT as they led 0-6 to 0-4 with only 10 minutes to go.

However, Paul Finlay struck back with two frees in the final minutes to secure Sligo IT's first ever Sigerson Cup win.

In the tournament DIT's conquerors NUIG were knocked out of the Sigerson Cup by the first round, on their way to the final also eliminated 2001 champions Jordanstown.

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DIT crowned ICBA champions

By Ronan Holohan

DIT men’s basketball team were crowned college league champions for the first time ever after defeating UCC in the ‘A’ final last Saturday.

DIT led the game from start to finish playing with a high up tempo style on both ends of the floor, in what proved a super all-round team performance.

By the end of the first quarter DIT were in control of the game leading 25 to 9 with big offensive rebounds and great inside play from Dermot Kavanagh, Sean Coughlan, and Rob McNulty. With Danny and Barry Bates controlling the play and excellent outside shooting from Yanik Jayet and Ian Barrett, DIT led by 20 points at the half-time break.

The third quarter saw the Cork side try to redeem themselves but DIT continued were they left off in the first half with intense defence. Fast break scores and dominating inside play.

In the fourth quarter UCC responded back but DIT was not going to let this game slip from their grasp. UCC ended up having to foul to try and stop Barry Bates’s free throws and a Jerome Fouquet fast break sealed an impressive and dominating 18 point victory.

DIT Top scorers: Jerome Fouquet – 32 points John Norris – 18 points.

Semi-final score: DIT ………….70
NU Galway …..50

Karting Club finally receives funding

By Dermot Keyes

The DIT Independent has learned that DIT Karting Club 2001 has received insurance, which permits it to press ahead with a list of events previously restricted by its lack of funding and insurance cover. The DIT Sports Council has a policy whereby all sports are covered, except Mountain biking and Karting as these are considered ‘dangerous’ sports. Despite the policy being in operation for several years, this omission has only recently been discovered.

Recent discussions have seen the club’s financial allocation for 2001 finally been granted to the club by the Sports Council, a decision which delighted its chairman Bob Coggins.

“This is great news for all concerned and we’re looking forward to some good karting now that the insurance has finally been resolved,” said Coggins.

“The DIT Sports Council recently looked to have us insured for the beginning of the year when the problem was discovered,” he said.

“However we are now free to book meetings and we can get back on track in more ways than one,” he said for the small portion of the remaining college year.

DIT’s karting aficionados can expect a little more action than the previous Christmas scenario permitted.

Prior to their good news, DIT Karting Club 2001 began preparations for the All-Ireland Intervarsity Championship, which they are currently co-ordinating.

* This annual event has been won by D.I.T. for the past three years and Bob is confident that they have the talent to pull off the win.

** The event is to be held on the 9th of March, in Killas Karting Club.

At the moment, the club is in the process of organizing karting for the weekend, which usually turns out to be fairly expensive, so any help is appreciated.

The club members wish to thank Brian Simón’s sisters and Ken Gaff Gallagher for the work put in over the year as well as everyone else who has helped out.
unbeatable promotions as always

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