DIT student Union rocked by recent ‘challenges’

By Aisling O’Sullivan

DIT student Union (ITSU) has been rocked by a period of unrest with the Student Union President revealing to DIT News that the organisation has endured ‘challenges’ in recent weeks.

An investigation by DIT News has uncovered that allegations of misconduct were brought up in a recent meeting of Governing Council, who have the responsibility of deciding if an investigation into such claims should go ahead.

The unfounded allegations include claims that the President suggested the resignation of officers, undermined others and made decisions without talking to other staff.

But speaking to DIT News, President Ciarán Nevin came out fighting and denied these claims.

Nevin said he “never once suggested the resignation of any officer” and “I have never undermined any elected officer. As head of the team, I have a duty to students to ensure that they are being best served by the team. As such, I have a duty to oversee the work of the team, as I am the officer who is ultimately responsible for the actions of the team.”

“[I] have always made every effort to consult with CFIT while making a decision. I had never made any decision of significant consequence without this consultation.”

An emergency meeting was called on 21 March 2011, to deal with these accusations against Nevin. Several members of governing council agreed that an investigation should take place but this fell through due to...
It is policy of DIT News to correct any inaccuracies. Any corrections or clarifications will be printed in the following issue. It is also policy of DIT News to offer the right of reply to any person who feels aggrieved by any articles or comments. Please forward any comments to the editor.
Banter Society fined €500 over offensive logo

By Eva Hall

The DIT Banter Society was fined €500 for an offensive logo last November, it has emerged.

The Cultural and Social Committee at DIT deemed the logo a breach of society rules after a member of staff complained. Chairperson of the Banter Society and DIT School of Architecture student Max Fedorov blasted the decision to fine the society as "ridiculous" claiming all its members were unhappy with the decision. Max, who designed the logo himself, initially contested the decision but was eventually forced to remove all traces of the logo from DIT and the Banter Society's Facebook page. Head of Societies at DIT Anita Conway has placed a gagging order on the Banter Society, advising it not to discuss the fine with DIT News.

It is believed the logo was on display at DIT and various other mediums a number of weeks before a complaint was made and the Societies Office became aware of it. A source with knowledge of the meetings held claims the Banter Society and "societies in general" do not want to gain "a bad name".

The Banter Society received a budget of €2,500 last term for start-up costs, which part of it went towards a wine reception held in DIT Aungier Street. The €500 fine was taken from this term's budget, putting an end to a trip to Alton Towers the society had planned.

The Banter Society has been involved in a number of charity and social events in DIT for the last year. These include raising funds for World AIDS Day, organising a Superbowl Sunday Banter event and raising money for Focus Ireland in conjunction with the eDIT FEST.

The Banter Society will continue to "enhance student life through organised events" while bringing societies together according to Max Fedorov. Meanwhile its new logo takes pride of place on the society's Facebook page.

Cullen vows to run for USI after election defeat

By Edel Golden

Current DITSU vice president Clare Cullen is vowing to run for a position in the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) after her defeat in this year's DITSU presidential election.

Cullen has announced that she will put herself forward for Eastern Area Officer for USI. Cullen, who received 1,131 votes in last month's election, said "I want to run for USI because I'm not finished with the Student Union yet. I had always planned to, I'm just doing it a year earlier than I planned."

After finding out she lost out to current president Ciarán Nevin, Cullen took to her Twitter saying "So I didn't win... Hurts pretty bad" and continued to say "However going to run for USI. Onwards and Upwards!"

Speaking about her possible move from local DIT politics to national USI politics, Clare is excited about the prospect of tackling bigger issues. "That's why I ran for President, because the library hours etc in DIT are just the symptoms of a problem that starts in the budget, in the programme for government, in national spending cutbacks. I'm ready to tackle the root of the problem in order to ease the symptoms."

All colleges in the Eastern area will have a chance to cast their vote at the Eastern Area Conference. Cullen is hoping to meet with the sabbaticals and councils from every college in the region to convince them that she is the right person for the job. "I hope to bring my energy, enthusiasm and drive to USI. I have very good working relationships with the current Officerboard, many of whom have been re-elected, and I hope to utilise those good relationships for the best of the students." If elected, Cullen will serve a one year term starting 1 July 2011.
Four optometry students travelled to Mozambique in March as part of an eye care project which seeks to help people in developing nations avoid blindness.

The group travelled with Dr James Loughman and Aoife Phelan, a research optometrist. During their time there, the students performed eye exams on poor school children from the community, met with the Irish Ambassador to Mozambique and the staff and students of Universidade Lurio.

DIT student Fiona Murphy said, “the UniLurio students were bright and enthusiastic and this transferred to us, the experience has really given us an appreciation for our skill and the differences we can make.”

The Mozambique Eyecare Project is an Irish Aid funded initiative which aims to train professional optometrists to provide a sustainable and comprehensive eye-care system as an integral part of the national health system.

The country which lies in the south east of Africa only has 13 ophthalmologists for a population of 21 million. Over the five years of the project, the Mozambican People will benefit from comprehensive eye examinations and the provision of glasses which, until now, are not available to them.

News in brief

Eye on DIT

At the beginning on April, DIT underwent an important institutional review. Taking place every five years, an assessment panel visits the college to focus on quality assurance in DIT.

The report will not be published for some time but President Brian Norton said that the visit went very well “I am happy to say that the initial oral report is very favourable. In particular, the Chair of the Panel described DIT as a very student-centred institution that is open to and influenced by external society; quality-oriented and continually moving forward.”

The review panel expressed their thanks to DIT and complimented colleagues and students for participating in such a “forthcoming manner”.

President Norton concluded by saying “The work carried out throughout DIT since the last EUA Review which took place five years ago is reflected in this positive outcome and really this outcome is a tribute to colleagues, students and student representatives.”

The review was carried out by the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI). In 1998, DIT was granted degree awarding powers by the Irish state, and makes awards at levels 6 to 10. This makes the college subject to review every five years by the NQAI.

The findings of the report will be published at a later date on the NQAI website at www.nqai.ie.

Students brave the Irish weather and bare their bras for Breast Cancer Ireland

Around 50 students walked from DIT Bolton Street to Grafton Street wearing bras outside their clothes to raise awareness and money for Breast Cancer Awareness.
RAG week to go ahead after a few hiccups

DITSU Rag Week will take place this week from the 11 - 14 April after a few minor planning problems.

The annual week-long of events was meant to take place at the beginning of March but was moved due to scheduling conflicts with Mr Hudson, an artist who was lined up to play at the RAG Ball. Mr Hudson will now be one of the acts to play at the first ever DIT Ball, which will be in conjunction with RAG week.

On Wednesday 6 April, the RAG Wednesday Toga party was also cancelled. The Student Union posted to their Facebook saying “Due to unforeseen circumstances, tonight’s RAG Wednesdays: Toga Party with J90 has been regretfully cancelled. Please head to your nearest SU office for a full refund if you bought a ticket. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.”

The events will kick off on Monday with a RAG Rave and UV Party in Andrew’s Lane Theatre, with DIT DJ Society providing the tunes.

“There’ll be a Situation” on Wednesday 13 April as Break For The Border prepares for the Jersey Shore Beach Party and the DIT Ball in Wrights will finish off the week of events.

DITSU Vice President of Services & Trading, Eric Fitzgerald, said, “RAG Week was regrettably postponed back in March, but it’s been a blessing in disguise. This has allowed us to pull together a truly top-class line-up for the DIT Ball, as well as ensuring a great variety of nights across the rest of the week.”

Continued from front page

a lack of support. There needs to be at least 26 signatures, one third of the councillors, for an investigation to happen. But it did not receive enough votes and the investigation didn’t go ahead.

Nevin concluded by saying, “Governing Council was clearly of the opinion that I as President had not acted inappropriately and as a result no investigation was deemed necessary by Council” and “any political organisation will go through periods of unrest, from time to time, particularly over the period of elections. The stakes are always very high for all those involved in elections, whether it is in a Students’ Union, or Nationally. People are putting themselves forward before the public, and this can create tensions.”

Nevin was re-elected as President of DITSU by students at the start of March when he defeated his opponent and current Vice President, Clare Cullen with two thirds of the votes. He will continue to serve as President for another year.

“The challenges that arose over the election period are if nothing else a clear indication of how seriously every officer takes their duty to represent and serve their members as best as possible” he said.

This follows just weeks after the Chairperson of Governing Council stopped a meeting on 9 February from going ahead. In a letter to the council he said he did this due "to the serious undermining" of both himself and "the integrity of Governing Council" by members of DITSU.

The following day governing councillors received an email saying that a move to remove the Chairperson of Governing Council had been made on the grounds that he impeded the DITSU staff from fulfilling their briefs. However, DIT News understands that it was withdrawn shortly afterwards.

When contacted by DIT News, the chairperson, Kieran Murphy responded that he felt it would be “inappropriate” to comment on the incident any further but “stands by” his letter to the governing council. He also reiterated that he is an independent body whose function is to oversee the running of Governing Council.

DIT students romance the crowd at this years fashion show

By Mandy Hegarty

The annual DIT Fashion Show took place on Tuesday 29 March in Vicar Street.

The sold-out event, sponsored by Alfa Romeo, included fashions from some of Dublin’s leading retailers and performances from DIT’s dance and break-dance societies.

The finalists of The Student Design Award also showcased their original creations on the runway. This year’s winner was Umit Kutluk with his design inspired by the Oscar Wilde poem “We are made one with what we touch and see” which is pictured below.

An array of Dublin’s model and socialites also turned up to support the event including Andrea Roche, Sarah McGovern and Lottie Ryan. All proceeds go to the DIT Foundation Student Scholarship Fund.

The theme of the show was “Roméo and Giulietta - A Bad Romance.” This year’s theme allowed for a wide range of creative scope. “It is very much about a romance that is impacted by the DITSU staff from fulfilling their briefs. However, DIT News understands that it was withdrawn shortly afterwards.

When contacted by DIT News, the chairperson, Kieran Murphy responded that he felt it would be “inappropriate” to comment on the incident any further but “stands by” his letter to the governing council. He also reiterated that he is an independent body whose function is to oversee the running of Governing Council.

From its humble beginnings in the Excise Bar in 2003 to its current home in Vicar Street, the DIT fashion show has grown and gained momentum year after year.

When asked about the stressful process of organising such a major show, members of the committee described it as an "invaluable experience.

“It is not an easy process trying to balance the show and college but we have found that every second is worth it,” said Katie Harrington. “We have genuinely been immersed into the work force and have met some inspiring individuals along the way. We have made life-long friends from this process that ordinarily we wouldn’t have met without the fashion show.”

Photographs were taken on the night by Ruth Medjber of Studio63Photography.
By Andrew O'Brien

At the moment there are around four hundred thousand people camped out in gymnasiums and school halls all across Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures. People who are half a world away, but for what it is worth, lived similar lives to us. The Japanese people were mainly concerned with their own economic downturn, and something that sounds familiar, a lethargic government, who's leadership was about to collapse on 11 March 2011.

There is no question the chain of events on that Friday were going to leave an indelible mark on a country, which has over the past seventy years seen their fair share of disasters. The Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War Two, the earthquake in Kobe and the Tokyo subway attacks of 1995 have shown the Japanese people to be calm and orderly, which have worked to their advantage in all of those situations. Unfortunately events at the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear power plant are putting a strain on the national calm.

With radiation contaminating fresh produce and water, the humanitarian effort is becoming more difficult. However aid agencies like ShelterBox and the international Red Cross Have been active across Northern Japan as well as the Japanese Self Defence forces (JSDF). Even Student Organisations in the Peoples Republic of China, a country which has had very cold relations with Japan, have been raising funds for relief.

Tom Henderson's organisation, ShelterBox, initially sent six-hundred shelter boxes to Northern Japan, committing an additional five-thousand if needed. ShelterBox provides large plastic containers, full of life saving emergency supplies to people in disaster struck areas. ShelterBox has previously been active in Haiti during their earthquake last year.

The international Red Cross has been particularly forthcoming in their efforts, even going as far as to team up with Sony in launching an appeal through the PlayStation network, allowing gamers to donate funds from their PSN wallets to the organisation. This has given people to donate independently. They have been providing a free service to individuals trying to locate family members who have been displaced by the tsunami.

According to the NHK World Service (Japanese national television), there is mounting concerns about Medical logistics needed for the relief effort. Medicines and medical supplies that were already in hospitals have been rendered unusable, due to the flooding in hospitals caused by the tsunami. However pharmaceutical and medical supply companies in Japan have pledged to get needed drugs like insulin and supplies to saline drips to the evacuation centers.

Donate

While the toll on human life has unimaginable, it has simply brought out the best in people from across the region and the world, with the Tanaiste and minister for foreign affairs, Eamon Gilmore announcing €1m in aid for Japan. Even though my own contribution was quite small (€5), I am hoping that it goes a long way. I am also hoping that others will follow suit and do something to contribute to the relief efforts. If you wish to contribute, you can contribute to the Irish Red Cross online at: http://www.redcross.ie/help/donate_now.php or donate over the phone 1850 50 70 70. Alternatively you can donate to ShelterBox online at: http://www.shelterbox.org/donate.php

Domo Arigato Goziamasu, Thank You
The Facts

9.0: Magnitude, according to United States Geological Survey
150: Worldwide average annual number of earthquakes over magnitude 6.0
24.4 kilometers: Depth of the quake
1,200: Years since an earthquake of this magnitude has hit the plate boundary of Japan
800 kilometers per hour: Top speed of a tsunami over the open ocean
800 kilometers per hour: Normal cruising speed of a jetliner
eight to 10 minutes: Warning time Sendai residents had before tsunami hit

Topshop close shop during London riots

BY SARA DALTON

The police have charged 149 of the 201 arrested in London on Saturday, 26 March at the protest against government cuts. Home secretary, Theresa May said that the “gang of thugs” who caused mindless violence could be barred from future demonstrations.

Over 250,000 people attended the protest and marched peacefully on Hyde Park in the largest demonstration in London since the march against the Iraq war in 2003. However, their good intentions were overshadowed by a small group of violent protesters who attacked various buildings in the city.

The minority group of self-proclaimed anarchists marched down Oxford Street dressed in black and red. They daubed the windows of Topshop because the owner, Philip Green, avoided a tax bill of nearly £300m (£340m). The vandalism was also targeted at a Ritz hotel, a branch of Starbucks, a Porsche dealership and nearby banks.

Later, the windows of HSBC branch were smashed and the department store Fortnum and Masons was occupied. Neither of these companies needed support during the financial crisis.

Fifty six police officers were injured during the demonstration; 12 of whom needed hospital treatment along with 53 members of the public.

The police are scanning hundreds of CCTV tapes with the hopes of identifying troublesome protesters wearing balaclavas.
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Did video kill the radio star?

BY AISLING O'SULLIVAN

If you've heard the name Rebecca Black - you will know where this article is going. YouTube, is it a good or bad thing for the music industry? On one hand it gives consumers endless hours of free music and continuous entertainment. However, the devil on my shoulder reminds me that it can infringe on copyright laws and could ultimately kill off real musicians who aren't being paid royalties. So I set about exploring the question, did video kill the radio star?

Something that people might not realise is that YouTube is a relatively new phenomenon. I know it seems hard to imagine a life where you can't look up videos on how to apply eyeliner the correct way or get a tutorial on how to make an explosive device. However YouTube only came a part of the World Wide Web six years ago in February 2005. The founders of the site came up with the idea after a dinner party where they took some video footage. They wanted to upload it to the internet but they didn't know how. And so, little baby Youtube was created.

The first ever video to go up was a 19 second clip of founder, Jawed Karim, at the Zoo and so ensued millions of hours of useless and insignificant footage being uploaded onto the website. However, internet giants Google didn't consider it useless and, less than a year after the website was officially launched, bought the company for $1.65 billion.

But what effect has YouTube had on the music industry? Nearly everyone who's anyone in the biz has an official 'channel' where viewers can watch exclusive videos by their chosen artist. For example, Lady Gaga launched her channel in 2008 and has racked up an impressive 139 million views since then.

And then there was the success of Susan Boyle, who became an overnight global celebrity after her audition on Britain's Got Talent was uploaded and viewed 80 million times. This couldn't have hurt CD sales and her first album became the best-selling debut ever for a female artist. We think YouTube was probably the best thing that ever happened to Susie, even if her success led to a breakdown.

Indeed, it has even launched the careers of some people who might not have been discovered without the powers of You Tube. Take Justin Bieber for example. He is one of the biggest pop stars of the moment and yes you guessed it, was found on YouTube. His rise to fame came after his mother started posting videos of him in local competitions so his relations could get a chance to see him perform. His current manager, Scooter Braun, seen a clip and flew the 16 year old to Atlanta and the rest they say, is Bieber history.

The downside to the discovery of Bieber, the wunderkind, is Rebecca Black. Well, perhaps that's a bit harsh on the girl, but what I'm talking about is the wannabe stars that put together a shoddy music video, pair it with equally shoddy vocals and make us question the existence of YouTube. Yes, it's cringey and ridiculous but it also has nearly 100 million views. Lady Gaga's new Single Born This Way that made it to number one on iTunes in three hours has less. What does this say about YouTube? What does this say about us?

I could spend all day talking bizarre videos. But the real question is, will YouTube ultimately kill off the music industry? If you look at the figures, it wouldn't appear so. YouTube says that 35 hours of new videos are uploaded to the site every minute, and that around three quarters of the material is music related. YouTube's number one video remains "Charlie bit my finger" - a two minute clip of two English brothers with one-year-old Charlie biting the finger of his brother Harry, aged three. In Time's list of YouTube's 50 greatest viral videos of all time, "Charlie Bit My Finger" was ranked at number one.

When surveying a group of DIT students 90 per cent of them agreed that YouTube is a great website mainly due to the fact that they can get free music from it. We couldn't get a comment from Lady Gaga on the subject but she seems to be doing alright. I don't think Rebecca Black is a threat to her career anyway.

What do YOU think?

"Yeah, I think it's a good thing, you can discover up and coming artists and get free music." - Luke

"Some people on YouTube can really sing whereas others like the Black Eyed Peas can't." - Eve

"It doesn't really make any difference." - Grace

YouTube is making it better for us because it's free" - Dave
Twenty years ago Fergus Finlay worked on Mary Robinson’s presidential election. “That was the only election outcome that ever made me cry... I never was as proud of anyone,” he tells me. He says that she made it impossible for the political establishment to own the presidency. “A presidency that’s in tune with people at the margins can make a profound difference.”

As the children’s charity CEO, Finlay is in tune with those at the margins. He discusses the “funny priorities” of previous years that did not reflect disadvantaged children’s needs. He criticises the plan a new prison at Thomton Hall. “We’re going to start filling it with the kids we’re neglecting now.” Teaching those kids dramatically increases their prospects he assures.

Education is the only investment a government makes in its people that pays off he believes. “It was the government he worked for it. The 1990s that introduced free third level education.” “The mistake we made was we didn’t go far enough. We should be paying people to be in third level education.”

The student fee issue is unresolved as Finlay’s party, Labour have recently entered government. “They have to do it [enter government]. Part of me wishes this chalice would pass.” He thinks the party could have grown in opposition. Although he says, “When canvassing, I never met a single soul that said ‘I hope you’re in opposition.’ So they need to be there.”

However unlike the voices of discontent on the doorsteps, Finlay has not lost faith in politics. “Politics is about changing things.”

“Politics is about changing things.”

“The mistake we made was we didn’t go far enough. We should be paying people to be in third level education.”

He says. He joined party politics the day he left his job as a union official. “I saw the trade union movement as a vehicle for social change, which it really isn’t... trade unionism is essentially reactive and defensive.” Within unions and the party Finlay has been in the Labour movement since he was 21. He speaks of the man who inspired him to enter into that movement. “When I was 16 I read a book called Larkin. I know it sounds daft but after that I never wanted to be anything else other than another Jim Larkin.”

Another influential Labour man and also in competition for Labour’s nomination is Michael D Higgins. Finlay tells me how he always admired Higgins. He describes the competition as for something and not against anyone. He explains how the competition is in the quality of the opponent. “The nomination process is like the Wimbledon semi-final. The semi-final is diminished if your opponent has a broken leg and three strings missing from his racket. If Michael D wins the semi-final, then by Jaysus I hope he goes on and wins the final.” In this case the final is the presidential election itself.

Finlay’s vision for the presidency is through “gentle activism.” His “gentle activism” focuses on making small but significant gestures to those at the margins. He explains what this means. “If I were president of Ireland... it’s an expression I feel uncomfortable using”, he admits. He rephrases, “The president would sit with the people in wheelchairs rather than people in tuxedos.”

Finlay then grins and says “I’ll show you something.” He produces a detailed plan for a national children’s garden. “All of this could fit into one acre of Áras an Uachtaráin.” He is eager for children’s needs not to be marginalised whatever the future brings.

He began working on a voluntary basis for Barnardos when he was asked to become CEO. He did not deliberate much. “I agonised about that for eight and half seconds.” Finlay has great respect for the children’s charity he works for. “If you visit a Barnardos project the quality of their work would blow you away” he urges.

As president Finlay would have to leave the charity. “These people have nothing to fear from me disappearing into the sunset... I just go and tell their story.” However, if his nomination is unsuccessful Finlay wishes to remain with Barnardos. He jokingly adds the clause “If they want me. They might think ‘he’s a loser now.’” However he reassures me that his involvement is secure, “well, they like me.”
For some unlucky students, the college bubble is about to burst. Those who were once considered the cubs of the Celtic Tiger now face the harsh reality of a country crippled by debt and bereft of opportunity. With so few positive prospects on the horizon, it's natural that many soon to be graduates are considering fleeing the country in search of greener grass.

Currently the CSO reports that emigration figures are at their highest since 1989. Approximately 27,700 Irish nationals emigrated in the 12 months between April 2009 and April 2010. With these figures expected to rise, I spoke to several final year students who are contemplating making the move.

Catherine is a final year Arts student from Terenure. She is considering completing a TEFL course and travelling abroad to teach English. Alex is a 4th year commerce student who has just accepted a place in a post-graduate course in London. David is entering his final year in September but following his degree he intends to pursue a job opportunity in New York.

"I do understand the concern that the people leaving this country are those with degrees and trades. Obviously, these are the people that are needed to stay here and reboot the economy. However, at the same time, we cannot afford to wait around for the government to implement strategies to make this possible. At this stage, unfortunately, it is every man for himself."

What was the main factor in influencing your decision to emigrate?

Catherine: Obviously, a lack of jobs here is a major factor. I know I could possibly get a job in a shop or something but I've spent 3 years in college and would rather pursue something that has a vague connection to my degree.

Alex: For me, it was having the security of a place in the post-grad. I don't see the point in waiting around here for opportunity to knock because I just don't think it's going to happen.

Do you feel like you are contributing to the infamous "brain drain"?

David: I do understand the concern that the people leaving this country are those with degrees and trades. Obviously, these are the people that are needed to stay here and reboot the economy. However, at the same time, we cannot afford to wait around for the government to implement strategies to make this possible. At this stage, unfortunately, it is every man for himself.

Catherine: Right now, the most important beneficial thing I can think to do is pursue an opportunity that is relevant to my degree. There are no jobs for teachers in the country at the moment, certainly none that offer any long term security. I hope that by teaching abroad I will gain significant experience and if I return to Ireland in 3 or 4 years, I will complete the HDip and hopefully then have that edge on the hordes of people who will inevitably be applying for the same position as I.

Does your decision to leave Ireland sadden you?

Alex: Yes and no. I am excited to travel and feel the independence of living abroad. At the same time, I will really miss my friends and family.

Catherine: I agree with Alex. I know part of me will be pining for home when I leave but right now I'm really looking forward to experiencing something that's not college and being somewhere sunnier than Ireland!

David: I have family in NY so I think I'll find the transition slightly easier than most but at the same time I will miss my family and of course Lyons tea and my Sunday roast.
Are you failing for Facebook?

REBECCA BERMINGHAM

As exam time looms and students prepare during the weeks prior, will trawling through countless Facebook pages, groups and status updates take priority over study?

It is undeniable that Facebook plays a central and increasing role in many students’ lives. With a staggering 85 per cent of students admitting they are in some way addicted, the repercussions of this emergent social network on exam performance must be considered. A recent survey of over one hundred students posed the question, are you failing for Facebook?

The vast majority of students log on more than once every single day, and with 35 per cent of students stating their main use of Facebook is procrastination, what affect is this having on college work? An interesting finding is that less than 25 per cent of students limit their use around exams with many even increasing their use. This, however, does not appear to have a damaging effect on everyone. Two thirds of students are happy with their grades and so, Facebook may not be as detrimental as perceived. The majority of students do not worry that Facebook affects their grades or see a direct link between using Facebook and poor results.

Almost 90 per cent of students have never cancelled their page coming up to exam time. Many see it as a welcome break and believe it can lead to increased productivity when they return to work. Another advantage students have found is sharing links to online articles and other sources of study with classmates. Some students even think they would not be able to handle the stress of exams without their page. In short, Facebook can have its benefits at exam time as long as use is controlled. Failing for Facebook should not be a problem provided you are not one of the 7 per cent who spend four hours plus a day logged on!
Where does it go from here?

Dylan Haskins is doing his best to adjust from the 19 hour days during the campaign. “You can’t live like that. It’s necessary during a short period of time like the election but if anything, it’s taught me how much you can fit into a day.” He has been fulfilling the roles of both Dylan public and Dylan private quite well all things considering.

One day last week he wrote an article for The Irish Times followed by an essay on obscure landscape painters from the 17th century. Not surprisingly, he tells me he finds it difficult changing gears.

I asked him how many times he is recognised on the street post GE11. “I was walking up Grafton Street and these two girls came up to me and said are you Dylan Haskins? I said yeah I am and one of them said the campaign was really inspiring and that her dad was a politician. Apparently she went home and started having it out with him. So I asked her who her dad was and she said Brian Lenihan, I thought the poor guy, he’s getting it in the media every day, and now when he goes home he’s getting it as well.”

Vincent Browne asked Dylan why he would want to throw away his youth and his life on an election. The more I listened to him the more I realised a general election campaign couldn’t have suited him more: Communicating ideas is what he is all about, and while at times it seems like he is comfortable in the limelight, he doesn’t always like being at the helm. “If you start something, regardless of what you try to do, you will always be seen as a figurehead; other people will project that onto you by doing simple things like asking you something. How do we do this? Or how do we do that?”

He feels the best way around that is to “do it for a year, get it off the ground, then move away. It’s a testament to the project [Exchange] that it’s still going.” Exchange is just one of a growing number of enterprises and organisations Dylan started. Basta Youth Collective, an underage music collective, was the first, set up in 2004 when Dylan was 16.

He talks about empowerment a lot. It’s a common theme that he says runs throughout his projects. He is not doing these things purely for himself; it is always for a community, whether imagined or real. The idea of the social space; how it can be used, how it should be used, forms a large part of his thinking. He is a modern day Prometheus, except instead of stealing fire from the Gods, he is getting planning permissions and grant monies from Dublin City Council.

His ambition at 16 was to create a space for discourse, debate and discussion. A place for music, a place for youth. A venue contrasting dramatically from the rugby discos of Donnybrook and the multiplex cinemas of Dundrum. Somewhere more meaningful for young people. I ask him would he consider returning to Exchange.

“I don’t think so because by the time I had set it up, I haven’t needed what it provides. I have a platform and I probably had one before it started. It’s somewhere to present work. A lot of people can’t even get a space to do that. I know different places and I’ve managed to put on things regardless but I just thought that it was necessary for it to be there.”

His determination is frightening and his ideals are simple: “You can’t say we should have this or we should have that, you just have to do it, you just have to create it and if it’s better than people will go to it. People go to that which gives them more meaning.”

We finish up and he has to dash for another meeting. I’m left with the impression of a man on a mission. He’s the most talked about 23 year old in the country. He’s achieved so much as an unknown. One can only imagine what he will achieve with his new found fame. It starts here.
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Summer in the City

Photographer: Cristian Fusoan
Model: Sharon Love at Assets
Stylist: Stephanie Costello
Make-up artist: Peter Kane
Hair Stylist: Bartosz Kasparyski
Assisted by: Andy Bannister and Sam McKenna
Above:
Leather shorts, €40, River Island
Crochet tank top, €43, Topshop
Jacket, €53.50, River Island
Hat, €23, River Island
Backpack, €69, The Harlequin

Right:
Bandeau, €33, American Apparel
Skirt, €49, American Apparel
Shoes, €29.50, Forever 21
Socks, Stylist's own.

Previous Page:
Bustier €33, Topshop
Bloomers €34, American Apparel
Denim shorts €25, The Harlequin
Boots, €190, Buffalo
Sunglasses, €17.90, River Island
Hairpiece, €2, Penneys
Studded Denim Jacket, €35, Fresh
White collared blouse €42
American Apparel
Hairpiece, €11, American Apparel
Bloomers C34, American Apparel
Suspenders, €39 Agent Provocateur
Shoes, €90, Carvela at Brown Thomas
Dress, €60.50, River Island
Necklace, €9.50, Forever 21
Die videos are garnering million of viewers, while tickets have been selling out for his new stand up show My Violent Torpedo of Truth in less than 30 minutes!

Charlie Sheen recently set a Guinness World record for being the fastest person to reach one million followers on Twitter. He's obviously doing something right! On a final note all I will say is: Winning!

I will launch a new commercial music degree programme from which the likes of the Kooks, Kate Nash and Beth Rowley have graduated.

The new four year course is run by Brighton Institute of Modern Music (BIMM) and will create over 90 full-time and part-time jobs with many of these taken up by an impressive list of musicians. Tutors on the new course include singer-songwriter Cathy Davey, Boss Volenti and Spring Break guitarist Dan O'Connor, JJ72 founder Mark Greaney, and The Frames' drummer Graham Hopkins.

The course due to begin in September, will give students a broad overview of the modern commercial music industry, encompassing promotion, recording, production, staging, session skills, technical development, music business, sight reading, and of course, performance. The Irish course is also expected to include a module in traditional Irish music, but this has yet to be confirmed.

Already, in advance of any major publicity, over 150 applications have been received for approximately 100 initial places. The students will receive a DIT accredited level 8 degree but BIMM, a private institution, will be paid per student by the Department of Education for delivering the course. This partnership model in course delivery was one of the main recommendations in the recently published Hunt Report on higher education.

Industry experts and music educators believe there is a pent-up demand for a commercial music course in Ireland. Until now, students interested in a third-level music education were confined to the Newpark School of Music's jazz programme, UCD's heavily theoretical Bachelor of Music, or DIT's education and classically-focused music degrees. The Ballyfermot College of Further Education also runs a "School of Rock", but not to degree level.

Sarah Clayman, managing director of BIMM, believes that Dublin is the ideal place for the organisation to dip its toe beyond British shores. "There's always an excuse not to set up a business," she says. "We're not frightened off by Ireland's current economic climate, and we have long-term aspirations in Dublin. Ireland has a great music history, and Dublin has lots of live venues. Even the buskers are of a high calibre."

...
Festival Frollocks: Where’s your fave?

Trilbies in the shops and a revival of indie on the radio can only mean one thing; festival season is almost upon us. Before you pack the dry shampoo you’re never going to use; the phone charger that is impossible to use, and the baby wipes you don’t even want to use, let Eva Hall guide you through the top four festivals of 2011. Whether you’re hopping on a Dublin Bus with your cans of Bavaria in tow or flying Ryan Air-style with your tri-colour draped around your shoulders, we’ve got a festival for you.

Oxegen: 8-10 July, Ireland

Keeping it local, Oxegen offers a superb line up, perhaps the best headline acts it has boasted in years. With the tween generation catered for on Friday night with Ireland’s own The Script headlining before international hip hop stars Black Eyed Peas take to the stage there won’t be a hotpant out of sight. Saturday night sees headliners Arctic Monkeys and Foo Fighters bring the rock back to Oxegen, a much missed feature for dedicated supporters. Ending the weekend on the highest of high’s, Sunday night sees The Strokes headline as part of their much-anticipated comeback tour. Cue new young rock fans thinking The Strokes are the best new band ever, and some old folks remembering seeing them first time round at Oxegen ‘04. Also headlining on Sunday night is melody-makers Coldplay, cue some Hollywood wives waiting in the wings.

Glastonbury: 22 June – 26 June, England

The Daddy of all festivals, Glastonbury manages to kick every other festival’s ass every year. Sure it’s as overpriced as the rest, it’s even muddier than the rest, and it takes a hell of a long time to get there if you’re travelling from Ireland. But it’s so worth it. That’s why it sells out in record time each year, beating its own record. Grant it, Oxegen arguably has better headliners this year, but Glastonbury has an entire separate city which it created itself, with weird little Glasto-isms, such as having to be bare foot to enter a particular room; or needing a tattoo to roam some parts of Shangri-La. Awesome. Headlining this year at Glastonbury are U2 on Friday night, Coldplay on Saturday and Beyonce on Sunday night. Glastonbury are really secretive about its line-up right up until Spring 2011, which means tickets are snapped up way before anyone knows who’s playing, confirming the festival’s popularity. Apart from the three main headline acts, there are less than 20 confirmed acts so far.

Benicassim: 16 July & 17 July, Spain

Spain’s infamous festival mixes rock, pop and electro for a well-balanced weekend in the sun, albeit an expensive one. With Arctic Monkeys, The Strokes and Arcade Fire announced as the bill-toppers, flights and accommodation may just be worth it. Irish acts are aplenty in the Spanish village, with And So I Watch You From You Afar, The Coronas and O Emperor added to the line-up. Benicassim is renowned for timetabling bands later in the day than most festivals, so festival-goers can work on their tans until five or six in the afternoon. Camping is available for nine days, unlike any other festival. But remember, temperatures can reach up to 30 degrees, making it hard to sleep. So get there early and find a shaded spot to set up camp.

Electric Picnic: 02 September – 04 September, Ireland

Known as the ‘cleaner’ alternative to Oxegen, Ireland’s second most famous festival is all about the body and soul man, with many claiming it’s this country’s answer to Glastonbury. The child-friendly atmosphere sees Canadian – family-band Arcade Fire headline over the weekend, along with Pulp making their comeback and New York-based Interpol. See a pattern here? Electric Picnic also stays true to its name, providing a suitable amount of electro-techno-synth-dance-house-shed-garden-whatever-else music. Big guns like The Chemical Brothers are among the headliners for the Stradbally festival, as well as Boys Noize and DJ Shadow. Irish acts performing over the weekend include Codes, R.S.A.G., Mundy and O Emperor. All the good one’s then...
Siobhan McGuire talks to the And So I Watch You From Afar and finds out what they're listening to on their iPod, who their idols are and about the near death experience.

When the words 'And So I Watch You From Afar' began to flutter through the pages of some of the world's most famous rock and indie magazines music lovers were taken aback. It was the beginning of something amazing, something "surreal."

A new up and coming band from Belfast exploded onto the music scene in 2005, and the name was a sign of things to come. Asked about their newfound fame, the band's drummer band Chris Wee says "we all grew up reading magazines like Kerrang! and NME, you always said to yourself when you were 12 or 13, in a band, imagine if our band got reviewed in Kerrang!"

When the band's got their first live review it was equally exciting. "It's the most amazing feeling, as time goes by you do get more and more used to seeing stuff written about yourself but every so often you get that feeling, and you're like a kid again where you just can't believe that you're getting mentioned in magazines."

The band's unusual name has stirred curiosity within the music industry, it's a question they constantly get asked. "The bass player Johnny - who brought us together initially for jamming sessions - thought of the name. He heard the words "and so I watch you from afar" in a song and we just thought it would be a really cool name for the band. The band's style has also intrigued and excited music lovers, in that their songs have no lyrics.

"Initially when we started jamming the music we were playing didn't strike us as music that should have vocals. It was never really a conscious decision to not have vocals we just thought that if a song sounds good without lyrics then that was just the way the music sounded best," Chris explains. The band has been compared to instrumental band Mogwai although it has featured guest vocalist in the past as well as vocal elements in some songs too. "We'd never rule out having lyrics in the future, it's just whatever way the song sounds best," Chris says.

Since forming in 2005, the guys have supported the band "Them Crooked Vultures" on a global tour. "It was pretty much the most insane four, five days of our lives," Chris reminisces, his smile revealing how much it meant to them.

"The guys all have idols in the band. I started drumming because I love Dave Grohl and 'Tony started playing guitar because he loved Kurt Cobain," his favourite moment from the tour was in Holland, "one night after a gig in Amsterdam, we were just packing up after the gig when Josh Homme said to us 'I'm just gonna head down to the bar lads,' and invited us for a drink. Chris laughs as he recalls the moment "we weren't quite sure if he was being serious or not!" After packing up the guys headed down to the bar and there he was, "it was crazy, we were just hanging out with him drinking pints."

Growing up the band had various influences "The four of us listened to bands like the Clash, Minor Threat and Deftones, influences were drawn from everywhere, there's such a broad range of music that we all listen to."

But like most musicians he does have people who inspire him in a particular way. Asked what he is currently listening to on his iPod, he thinks for a moment and replies "At the moment I'm listening to Swedish tech metal band Meshuggah, their drummer is the most technical guy around at the minute, he's amazing."

His enthusiasm carries over into his own gig experiences, his face still lights up at the thought of the concert that outlines all others. "The best gig I've ever been to was the Smashing Pumpkins in the Kings Hall in Belfast, I'm a huge fan. It was one of the most amazing experiences in my life; it was definitely one of the best gigs I've ever seen." He also recalls seeing the band Converge in Dublin last year, "it was one of the most intense gigs I've ever been to, I got the shit kicked out of me, it was amazing!" When asked what the best gig he's ever played was, he thinks about it and again comes back to that night in Amsterdam, "when we were supporting Them Crooked Vultures, we played to over 7000 people. There are always highlights whether you're playing to 40000 people or just 14. We played in someone's living room in Canvas in America once, the energy in that room was amazing even though there was only 14 people there."

Given that he's picked a gig outside Ireland as his favourite, it's only fair to ask does he prefer to playing at home in Ireland or abroad, "When you're playing to home crowds you feel at home, you don't get that feeling anywhere else in the world," he answers.

As to the weirdest thing that has ever happened to the band so far, "we were driving through Germany, we drove past a lorry that was on fire, it just exploded as we drove by, it was kind of a near death experience. I guess in hindsight it's pretty cool but at the time we were like 'f**k.'"

So what's next? "We're releasing our second album on 2 May. It's very different to the first one so hopefully a lot of people won't be like "what the f**k!" The guys are going to tour the album in Ireland and the UK. "We want to build the band even more; hopefully we'll get new fans and broaden the fan base. We love touring and we want our music to take us around the world, we hope to go to Japan and back to America."

The band haven't been confirmed to play any Irish festivals yet but fans may not have long to wait, "hopefully we'll get to play at some of the Irish festivals, it'd be great craic, Electric Picnic last year was great and Oxegen the year before was amazing too so fingers crossed!"
Stephanie Fennell sits down with The Minutes and realises that they are more than just gig thirst tour monsters

As I sat waiting for the two men I was about to interview, my nerves began to eat at me. With a Destiny’s Child tune blaring out of the speakers, I thought to myself: “Maybe this place wasn’t ideal to conduct an interview.” You may find the best coffee in Ireland at Bewley’s Café on Grafton Street, but would somebody from a rock band want a hand roasted cup of coffee or should I have suggested we meet at the pub?

Expecting the rock stars to arrive fashionably late, I sipped my tea while revising the questions for the interview. Surprisingly, the two lads walked in the door five minutes early. They sat down opposite me at the table. My first question to them was “How are you?” “Cold” was the answer I got. At that they ordered their hot drinks, Shane, a latte and Mark asked for a coffee. Not exactly the rock ‘n’ roll personas I had been expecting to meet that morning, but I was just relieved they drank something other than beer. I explained how it was the first time I’d heard them play only two weeks before at Tinie Tempah’s gig in Dublin. “It’s not really our crowd” said Mark. “People there wouldn’t really know our stuff, but it was great and it was packed and with girls screaming, that was good too!” Shane laughed.

Being cousins, that’s how the band started out. Shane continued “We’ve been playing together for something like fourteen years but we started a proper band after about three or four years”. Mark told the story of how they found Tom to join the band. He joked; “We found him bloody awful! I was in college, actually first I worked in a guitar shop and sold him an amp. I started doing sound engineering in college like two weeks later, I didn’t know anybody but I saw him and said ‘Alright I sold you an amp there two weeks ago!’ and he was like ‘Oh yeah!’ so I gave him a lift home, and that was like ten years ago, so we all know each other a long time.”

I asked the lads how they came up with the name ‘The Minutes’. Mark turned to Shane “That was in your bag wasn’t it?” Shane continued “At the start we had a longer name, but trying to tell someone the name of your band in a pub or something you’re repeating yourself loads of times. There’s this band called The Hours which I liked the sound of so I thought, ‘The Minutes, that’d be a good one!’”

I wondered how they are still strong after such a long time. There must have been a time when they felt they were doing it all for nothing. The lads explained how this made them stronger as a group. “It’s natural to think that way at some point! Two or three months before we found the actual rock and roll music that we do now we nearly gave it up...we had a horrible experience, everything was shit, it was f**king dark and cold...but we kept going. I think it’s because we’ve been together for so long...you get comfortable with each other...” Mark looked next to him and Shane continued “That’s the difference with us, loads of bands have split up because they’re trying so hard but it’s just not working, but we got over the hump and just stuck it out...it paid off because we got stronger that way.”

Their debut album is due to be released in Ireland on May 13th 2011. The live recorded album Marcata, named after Marcata Recordings in Upstate New York, took only three days to record. “We recorded our album in New York, near Woodstock...like in the middle of nowhere, in a barn basically, it was freezing, around Halloween time...It cost us a fraction of what it would have to do it here in Dublin, even though we flew over, lived there and did the record” said Mark. “Plus it’s cooler doing it in New York.” added Shane.

The Minutes have been described as ‘gig-thirsty tour monsters’ – a description the lads definitely fit as they agreed that “The best thing about being in a band is playing live.” Mark told me a friend of his describes them as “Musical pirates...Robbin’ the drink, playing in, robbin’ all the women, and then going off to the next gig in the van again!”

Thin Lizzy, Jack White, The Doors and The Strokes, are amongst those who inspired The Minutes. Shane described John Sykes (Thin Lizzy) as “Unbelievable. The ultimate rock star, an amazing singer and an amazing songwriter and he had the sex appeal, everything you’d want to become successful...As a drummer, Brian Downey has a major influence over me.” Mark concluded “It’s all the obvious ones.” Then he remembered The Beatles, which triggered a memory between the two of them. They had a laugh describing memories of Shane’s father’s old The Beatles records, Mark said “When we were younger, like really young, when you didn’t even know what music really was...” I heard Shane in the background “Scratching them and all!” Mark agrees jokingly “Yeah!” and he imitates Shane’s dad’s voice, “You’re not allowed to scratch that!...his Da would be going nuts!” Mark added “And Bob Dylan...You could probably just listen to Bob Dylan your whole life and you wouldn’t have to go to school or anything...and you’d be alright you know...he’s like an encyclopedia of music.”

Some of the band’s favourite venues to play are Crane Lane in Co. Cork, The Set Theatre in Kilkenny and Mandela Hall in Belfast. The 02 Shepherds Bush Empire in London is also a favourite for the lads, “If you can sell them out, they’re the best ones...the old theatre buildings.” There’s one venue Shane fancies a shot of though, “The Olympia would probably be one of my favourite venues as a punter going to gigs the amount of gigs that you saw there, it’s got history, so I would like to play there.”
Bored To Death

Forget the Spice Girls, if you want girl power go see Sucker Punch! Zack Snyder's action-packed film has been dubbed 'Alice in Wonderland with machine guns', and this description could not be more apt.

Sucker Punch is a film set in the 1950's about the young girl 'Babydoll', played by the demure Emily Browning, who is sent to a mental asylum for a lobotomy by her evil stepfather. Her operation will not happen for 5 days, in which time Babydoll retreats into a fantasy world inside her head to avoid her harsh reality.

In this hospital slash brothel, Babydoll’s existence is like that of Annie the orphan except infinitely darker. Determined to escape the institution and the scary mobster Blue, she enlists the help of her friends Sweet Pea, Amber, Rocket and Blondie to gain the items they need to win their freedom.

These girls are warriors, as they enter a fantastical alternative reality and brave samurai, dragons, and soldiers, always with the most impressive of weaponry and the guidance of the Wise Man (Scott Glenn). While the action scenes are theatrically impressive, the plot tends to drag in places and Babydoll is a girl of very few words, making her a less interesting character then many.

Between a Rock and A Hard Place

It was 2.41 p.m., April 26, 2003. A Saturday afternoon. Aron Ralston was negotiating a narrow slot in Blue John Canyon, Utah. A chockstone he attempted to clear became dislodged and crashed down, trapping his right arm between the sizable boulder and the canyon wall. Here, Aron would be trapped, alone, for five and a half excruciating days of mental and physical exertion until he eventually freed himself by amputating his lower right arm. Between a Rock and a Hard Place is his story.

Ralston's 2004 autobiography, a searing account, further popularised by Danny Boyle’s recent adaption, 127 Hours, is cleverly titled to summarise the story in both the literal and metaphorical sense. The structure of the book alternates between Aron’s past and his current situation of entrapment with each chapter opening on a thought-provoking quote from mountaineers to movie characters. Aron’s past is brilliantly written, funny, honest and allows the reader to relate with his adventures. These chapters prove surprisingly relevant as initially, I presumed they might act as filler to the story which is limited in its time frame. His infectious character and charm teamed with the inclusion of actual photos of the accident build a strong personal connection.

Aron’s life as a radical outdoorsman and flirtations with disaster meant he lived his life in a sort of Deep Play (whereby what [one] stands to win from a gamble can never equal the enormity of what [one] will lose). As the book progresses this perception of Aron as reckless is forgotten and the emotional core becomes an existential human story. What is wonderful is that the book does not isolate readers with no knowledge of the outdoors. At times, even with a glossary of terminology, it can still be slightly difficult to read, but when you look beyond the actual words on the page, Aron’s message of empowerment, determination, and companionship mirror into everyday life. This inspiring and provocative book is sure to be unlike any other on your shelf and will stay with you long after you close the cover.

EVA HALL

ELEANORE HUTCH

REBECCA BERMINGHAM
**DIIT celebrate first win in 15 years**

Continued from back page

College of Further Education, Carlow IT and Athlone IT to reach their first final. Great credit must go out to the team and their manager Gavin Fleming for a great effort to make the finals.

The Breaffy House Hotel hosted the awards banquet where the trophy and medals were presented. DIIT’s captain Sean Fitzgerald was presented with the trophy where he also picked up the man of the match award.

DIIT had not won this trophy since 1996 when the college soccer was site based and DIIT Bolton Street lifted the cup. The club have been unlucky in recent years reaching two All-Ireland Finals in 2010. They last won silverware in 2008 when DIIT’s Fresher Team lifted the Umbro B Cup in Saltnhill Devon in Galway under the management of DIIT’s Joe O’Brien.

**Karting Club finish off successful year with memorial race**

On 11 March 2011, the club held their annual Memorial Cup in memory or John Hanrahan, one of the original founding members of the Karting scene within DIIT. Racing took place at the Pallas Karting track in Galway.

A bus of eager racers left Bolton Street early on the Friday morning, and even though the weather did not look favourable, spirits were sky high in anticipation of a great day’s racing.

After an incredibly wet day’s racing, club chairman Graham Higginbotham showed his driving ability and came away the winner for the second year running. From the track the group headed on to a small pub in the nearby village of Killimore, where they were greeted by the Hanrahan family. Stories were swapped between the new and older members that had come back to join us for this very special event, before the Hanrahan’s presented the Cup and trophies to the top three drivers of the day. From here it was on to Galway City and into a local hostel, but only for long enough for everybody to prepare themselves for the night ahead.

The DIIT Karting Club have had a very eventful year, kicking off with a further eight trips were held between then and now. That doesn’t even come close to the full extent of the clubs achievements, throughout the year the club successfully competed in four rounds of the CUSAI Irish Championship, and even hosted their very own round at the Formula Karting track in Newry. This round was exceptionally good for DIIT with them clinching top points and putting them on top of the leader boards.

The club recently launched their own website and can be seen at www.ditkarting.com.

**Represent your county in 7-a-side**

On Wednesday 13 April a GAA 7-a-side event will take place at the sports grounds in Grangegormon to raise money for charity.

Members of the Sigerson football team are organising and taking part in this worthwhile competition alongside the DIIT hurlers and members of the ladies football team. The event will commence at 1.30 pm and the male Gaelic footballers will form ten teams made up of DIIT players from around the country. There will be seven county teams and five amalgamations. Meath A, Meath B, Dublin A, Dublin North, Dublin South, Wicklow and Mayo will compete as singular outfits while Longford/Westmeath, Laois/Offaly, Wexford/Kildare, Connacht, Cavan/Monaghan A and Cavan/Monaghan B will merge as dual forces.

All DIIT students will get a chance to represent their county at the competition. In addition there will be a team made up of DIIT staff and the rest of Ireland. Games are to be played on a league basis with division I and division 2. The DIIT hurlers will compete in a group of four with Wexford, Dublin, Kilkenny and Laois/Carlow forming teams. The ladies will consist of players representing four of the DIIT campuses Bolton St, Aungier St, Kevin St, Cathal Brugha St. The event will be sponsored by Club Energize and there will be cash prizes for the triumphant teams. The cost of participating is €10 per person or €70 per team. For any queries contact charity event organisers Cathal McHugh (0878118049) or Peter Domican (0864066575).
Exploring the mystical underworld of Ireland

Our sports editor, Colin Higgins, delves deep into the unknown with DIT Caving Club. Here, he tells us all about the exhilaration, excitement and fun that people have diving off canyons, abseiling into a cave and making their way through crooks and crannies.

At the end of March, DIT Caving Club returned from Mallorca with a new Irish record descent of the Gorg Blau canyon.

Speaking about the trip, first timer Bernie said “Canyoning was amazing. Simple as that. While I have abseiled, climbed, hiked, swam and explored before, this was my first time doing them all in the stunning surrounds of an actual canyon.”

The DIT Caving Club was founded in 1992. Originally known as the Kevin St. Caving Club it later expanded to incorporate the whole of DIT and its members were involved in the setting up of both UCD Caving Potholing Club and DCU Caving Club.

Almost twenty years later and their still here, dragging people into cold, wet dark holes. But don’t let that put you off.

Caving is the exploration of caves for recreational purposes. Most of the members of the club cove for the sheer fun of crawling through tight squeezing, abseiling down pitches, negotiating caves and just enjoying the fact that they are in places that very few people have been.

It is a physical activity but you don’t have to be super fit. A trip in a cave will rarely go over three hours and won’t wear you out too much.

The current training times for the club are 7:30 to 9 on a Thursday night. In these sessions they will train you to become competent on rope systems for accessing vertical caves and train you in other useful tricks to make caving safer for you.

Caving isn’t huge in Ireland - there’s only about 500 or so active cavers - but they’re a tight knit group. The upside of this is that the caves are relatively unspoiled.

Few caves in Ireland will see more than 100 people go through them over the course of a year and many will see a mere handful of cavers. It can be a real privilege sometimes to witness the wonders of the cave world.

Most of the caves the club explores are in two areas, Clare and Fermanagh. The caves in Clare are largely on the horizontal and so contain many great beginner trips.

A popular caving trip to Clare involves entering the Doonin river cave at the top of the system, exiting at the bottom, then a quick pint in McGanns pub and back into the cave to do the other half.

The caves in Fermanagh and Cavan are of a more vertical nature and require knowledge of rope techniques to access the caves. For this reason the club normally do trips to Fermanagh later in the year when people have the necessary “skills” to avoid injuring themselves. Usually they stay in the Scout Hut not far from the Marble Arch cave and can walk to many of the caves.

They head off on a Friday and stay in either a scout hut, parish hall, hostel, holiday cottage or occasionally a campsite. Caving begins on Saturday and continues into Sunday and they fit in a few visits to the pub in between.

And for the most important part which is the cost. Generally you would expect to contribute 30 or 40 euro towards the trip. This will cover your equipment, accommodation, most of the food and the travel expenses.

You can pay for beer or other alcoholic drinks and maybe a few meals on the road to and from the caving areas. Generally you’d expect to pay 50 or 60 euro for a weekend of caving which is damn fine value for the fun you’ll have.

The caving club also like to expand our minds, broaden their horizons, and see and explore the world around us. They often make their way to sunnier climes to partake in the fine sport of canyoning.

Last summer the more dedicated members of the DIT caving club went canyoning in the Sierra de Guara region in the Pyrenees. This was part of the “Free form Irish Jazz Funk Canyoning Odyssey”, organised in conjunction with UCD.

Canyoning shares many techniques with caving except its warm, easier, really fun and done in the daylight. Most of the canyons they visit are narrow slots cutting through mountains but some, like Mascun Superiore, are massive.

Canyoning involves turning off high rocks into water, some simple rope work, a bit of siphon diving and lots of swimming. Getting to the canyons usually means hiking across very impressive landscapes, with snow capped peaks in the distance. Well worth it for the experience.

Whether it be caving or canyoning, DIT Caving Club is one of the most exciting, inclusive and well organised clubs in the college. It’s a great way to keep fit and for anybody who loves to explore, this club is made for you.

Athletics Club host Intervarsities

On 12 March 2011, DIT Athletics Club in conjunction with a host of Irish schools put on a sporting show that would rival any other national competition.

This year DIT had the honour and the headache of hosting the Inter-varsity and All Ireland Schools Cross Country. Planning for the event commenced as far back as September when the executive of the Athletics Club met with the Sports Office on regular occasions and events were drawn up.

The competition was held at an unusual venue, the National Aquatic Centre in Abbotstown, the fields surrounding the centre were utilised during the event. The course was fast and flat and played host to nearly one thousand athletes. The running of the event was surprisingly smooth, considering so many people participated. Despite anticipating problems with the large turnout this was not the case which is a testament to the work put in by Herbie McClelland and Chris Kelly.

DIT Athletics Club fielded a team of nine cross country runners consisting of three women and six men. The ladies were Niamh Denny who finished 9th, Sinead Denny who placed 16th and Aine Crimn who finished 31st. The male contingent were Daire Berrington who came 20th, Mark Conway who finished just behind in 32nd place, Colin Hill who came 48th, Christopher “El Capitan” Kelly who finished 53rd, Neil Bolger who placed 65th and Billy Croche who came 81st. DIT as a team placed 7th overall which was a stellar group effort.

After the event, DIT hosted a banquet where 300 athletes who participated arrived at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Santry and a great night was had by all. The Athletics Club would like to extend sincere thanks to all who helped out and made the event so successful, in particular Chris Kelly who was the driving force behind the competition and was ably assisted by Herbie McClelland, Sinead McNulty and the Sports Office.
Equestrian Club are all round winners

DIT Equestrian club were crowned winners at this year's National Equestrian Intervarsities Championships in Kilkenny at the end of February.

The tournament ran over the weekend of 19-20 February and it was the second year in a row DIT had achieved first place in the prestigious competition.

Waterford IT were the hosts for the championships, which included students from all over the country plus students from France, Great Britain, Belgium, Luxembourg and Canada.

The competitors comprised of over 130 showjumpers, 80 dressage riders and 70 novice riders descended on Rahen Na Gun Stud, Kilkenny for what was set to be an enthralling competition.

In the showjumping section the two riders progressing to the final where Liz Dore from NUIM and DIT's own Shane Mulligan, it was sure to be an exciting final.

Shane was first to ride on Yolanda Murphy's mare Blue and going clear put the pressure on Dore who was to follow Shane on Sarah Lang's mare Hazel. After getting a pep talk from NUIM captain Michael Hutchinson, Dore was determined to go clear, and that she did.

After the two riders first round they now had to switch horses and jump again. Shane was first up again on Hazel and a pole on the ground left it open for Dore to take first place.

Dore entered the arena and powered around the course going clear which made her national champion, ahead of a disappointed Shane Mulligan.

Never the less it was still a strong performance and one the DIT man should be proud of.

Although DIT did not achieve first place, there were two more Irish winners in the big events. In the dressage competition Alison Roundtree took first place for UCD, while in the novice class, Nicole Chaney of WIT took first place.

On the Sunday night it was announced that DIT won the overall college title for a second year in a row, and deserving winners they were.

There was more success for DIT as the 2010 awards were announced at the Gala dinner. The IURCA awarded their title for International Rider of the Year for the 2010 season to Sara Glynn.

Sara is the reigning National Intervarsity Dressage Champion for 2010, as well as overall individual bronze medalist at the SRNC in Belgium and Dressage individual silver medalist at the SRNC in Canada.

It capped off a great year for Sara who also won an individual silver medal in dressage, as well as an overall individual silver medal, and a gold medal for the overall team event at the World University Equestrian Championships in Korea.

Sport in brief

Golf Club secures second place

The DIT Golf Club came in second place at the Fr. Carbery Cup at Carlow Golf Club on 25 March 2011.

The team, which was lead by their captain Shaun Dunne, narrowly missed out by one shot to Athlone IT. Robert Huton had a particularly great performance with a round of 68, a mere two points under par.

The club are currently in third place in the intervarsity league with one match still to be played.
DIT student heads for 100th cap

BY AOFIE CONNAUGHTON

Twenty-two year old Shirley McCay will represent Ireland for the 100th time on 25 of April 2011. She will reach this milestone when she lines out against France at the hockey stadium in UCD.

The Masters in Journalism student who made her international debut against Canada in South Africa in January 2007 was a late bloomer in terms of her hockey career. "I started playing hockey at 13 when my P.E teacher switched me from soccer, which was probably a good thing" she quipped. Shirley faces some tough tests ahead if her team are to qualify for the Olympics in London next year. "The European championships which will be held in Munchengladbach, Germany in August will pretty much determine our fate for London 2012" she says.

In April, Shirley and her cohorts will line out against Great Britain in what will be another chance for an Irish team to get one over on the established enemy. This will be an exceptional experience for Shirley in particular considering she is a native of Omagh and she is doing her utmost to be in peak physical condition for the tough tests that lie ahead. Her weekly training routine is rigorous to say the least the talented Tyrone woman's fitness schedule involves some form of exertion every day except Friday. She makes up for this day of downtime by training twice on Wednesday and Thursday arising at 6am and 7am respectively on both days with pitch sessions in the evenings.

Shirley's dedication not only dictates the physical and social aspects of her life but due to cuts in funding she and her teammates also have to pay a player's levy just to be able to play. This is ludicrous and highlights exactly why the profile of this minority sport must be raised and the devotion of these determined athletes be made known to a wider audience.

Aside from Shirley's packed physical programme she manages to find time to train the hockey teams at Alexandra College. It is there she moulds and mentors the future stars of her beloved sport. Through her guidance and expertise these girls will be well aware of the old adage that there is no pain without gain. They will undoubtedly have to endure huge hardship if they are to ever emulate Shirley's supreme success with her sterling hockey stick.

ALL OF YOUR DIT SPORTS COVERAGE FROM PAGE 25-28

SUCCESS: DIT Equestrian club were crowned winners at this year's National Equestrian Intervarsities Championships in Kilkenny.

INSIDE: Go underground and learn all about the DIT Caving Club.

The DIT Soccer Club have captured the All-Ireland College’s Cup for 2011 with a 1-0 victory over GMIT Galway in Milebush Park, Castlebar on 10 March 2011. This was the first time in 15 years that DIT won this trophy.

DIT dominated the first half with a string of chances which they failed to convert. On the stroke of half-time Toheeb Adigun blasted the ball to the roof of the net from 10 yards. GMIT Galway came alive in the second half but were denied by a number of excellent saves from Craig Hyland in the DIT goal.

DIT kept their composure and held on to win the coveted trophy. The finals were held over two days in four different venues around Castlebar with three cup and a plate final at stake. DIT beat Letterkenny IT 1-0 in the semi final with a wonder strike from team captain Sean Fitzgerald. The Dublin college had beaten Inchicore College, Cork IT and Colaiste Stiofan Naofa to reach the finals. DIT's C Team also competed at the A11-Ireland finals for the first time but were defeated in the Bob Cup Final 5-2 by IT Tallaght. The DIT C Team beat Dun Laoghaire