DIT News, 1st.-31st. of March, 2010

DIT:Students Union

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College services facing even more cuts

A further budget cut of 8 to 9 per cent is expected next year, in addition of the 8 per cent cut imposed this year.

The impact of the original cut was mitigated by the elevation of the student capitation fee from €900 to €1,500.

The extra €600 was routed back to the college to make up, in part, for the loss in budget.

Up-to-date DIT data missing from grade inflation report

Of all the Institutes of Technology in the state, only DIT does not have up-to-date grade data included in the preliminary report on the quality of graduates and grade inflation which was published by the Department of Education and Science (DoES) on March 12th.

Grangegorman inches closer to sign off

Sign-off on Grangegorman moves ever closer with the decision expected from Cabinet on April 22nd.

Grangegorman was first mooted as the site for a consolidated DIT campus in 1998, however by the time the oversight body, the Grangegorman Development Agency, was set up and had started the planning, the economy has started to falter and the project became a candidate for cancellation as part of the Government cutbacks.

Students still waiting for exam results

First-year journalism with a language students have been waiting since February 22nd for the promised exam results.

The Aungier Street exam office timetable said that the results would be available from February 22nd, but results have yet to materialise.

A spokesperson for the department said that all the exam results had been processed and that the department would look into the access issue with some urgency.

"The uncertainty has definitely affected this term," said one student. "I don't know how I've done and how to plan programme in com­URRENTLY.

The Fashion issue!

The edition of DITN is available from the lovely Melinda.Key

Nevin wins Presidency by margin of 17 votes

The student Union elections of 2010 came to an exciting end when Clariin Nevin was elected Student Union President after beating Sean Campbell by a mere 17 votes.

Clarin Nevin, Student Union President, was elected with a 1699 vote margin over Sean Campbell, who received 1682 votes. Other candidates for the role of Student Union President included Shane Linnane, John May and Claudia O'Sullivan. All candidates received votes.

The only woman in the running for a sabbatical position emerged victorious when Clare Collins beat John May for the role of Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs.

In the race for Vice President of Services and Trading, Eric Fitzgerald emerged victorious.

The count was held in Bolton St on February 25th, and owing to the closeness of the Presidential race a recount was held the following day, which confirmed the close result.

Barry Drake failed to reach quota, while John Wade was beaten by sixty eight votes.

The final tally of presidential votes put Clariin ahead with 1699 votes, over Sean's 1682.

There were only 18 votes cast in the DIT Temple Bar campus meaning that the final result was effectively chosen by a small campus, the DIT the photography school.

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All elected sabbatical officers will begin their roles this coming July.

Sport

The latest from the world of DIT Sport

Sean Campbell takes the plunge for DITSU Rag Week, Graham O'Moonaigh

"It is not permitted under our policies and procedures concerning travel and subsis­dences."

A college spokesperson explained that the flight bill of over €900,000 is not unusual.

"The reality is that all higher-education institutions and any organisation in a knowl­edge-based industry would engage in quite a lot of international travel," she said.

"In our case, staff members travel to confer­ences, present papers, arrange student ex­changes, recruit students and so on. We also receive academics from other institutions around the world, so it's a two-way street."

The details emerged in a report carried out by the Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG) investigating foreign travel in state organizations.

However, only limited details of the survey were published and organisations whose staff took first-class flights or who paid for spouse travel were not identified by name.
A word from the Editor...

Spring has arrived and that means your March issue of DIT News is here!

In this issue we talk to the Student Union President elect Ciaran Nevin, we give some details on the Grangegorman situation and examine the topical issue of grade inflation.

In sports the Six Nations is laneneted and Cheltenham reverved, along with an interview with Irish poker Champ Rory Rees Brennan and news from the world of DIT Sports!

We hope you’re finally enjoying the sunshine and that this latest issue adds a little light to your day.

All the best,
Google explain position on Irish grade inflation

Fionnuala Holohan, AST

John Herlihy, general manager of Google Ireland and vice president of global advertising operations, addressed the controversial issue of Irish grade inflation, and of educational standards.

Speaking to reporters, Mr Herlihy criticised the lack of accountability and monitoring within the Irish education sector.

"If you look at it, the college student doesn't hold the university accountable for the quality of their education...nobody is holding the universities accountable for the quality of the teaching and the quality of the degree.

"Currently with universities, the funding is based on inputs. It would appear that to get into a lot of our master's programmes you need a second-class honours grade one degree (2:1) and miraculously the number of 2:1s has gone way up."

That's another funding mechanism...Let's go output-driven rather than input-driven and "you should be able to measure the teachers. In no other business in the world can you not measure the deliverer of the service."

Google as a company are renowned for their stringent recruitment, and are notoriously choosy when hiring.

Currently there are 106 open positions in Dublin advertised on their recruitment home page.

According to Netscape founder, Marc Anderssen, speaking in 2007, Google relies heavily on educational qualifications, where the general impression is that non-PhD's need not apply.

This contrasts strongly with Microsoft, for example, which relies more on the use of aptitude tests in their recruitment policy.

This involves the candidate carrying out logic puzzles, and allegedly a classic interview question was in a Microsoft job interview is "why is a manhole cover round?"

Anderssen explains "for the background part, I like to see what someone has done. Not been involved in, or been part of, or watched happen, or was hanging around when it happened. I look for something you've done, either in a job or (often better yet) outside of a job."

The business you started to which you've made major contributions.

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The business you started to which you've made major contributions.

"Something." Here's what I think those criteria are - Drive, Curiosity and Ethics."

Minister O’Keefe signs off on first phase of Grangegorman

Fionnuala Holohan, AST

continued from page 1

In February 28th this year, Minister Batt O’Keefe solicited his intention to sign-off on the first phase of the project. This final decision is expected on April 1st, 2010.

Student Levy proposed to fund new student centre

Detailed planning of the student services at Grangegorman has revealed that the planned student centre will run at estimated deficit of €300k each year.

The options for meeting this shortfall are to either cut back further on the Student Union, Societies and Clubs budgets or to introduce a student levy of around €30 each year, on top of the capitation fee.

Many other Irish third level institutions have a similar fee for projects like dedicated student centres.

Trinity College Dublin has a levy of approximately €90 for their planned new student centre, their USI contribution and the college newspaper.

University College Cork have a levy set at a hefty €150 for their existing student centre, their theatre and their USI contribution.

The decision will be made via a student referendum, probably next year. At that point, the implementation details of when and how will also be ironed out.

Learning Spaces

Work has already started on what the learning spaces should look like - the labs, the lecture halls, the classrooms and the equipment.

Students will shortly be asked by DITSU to express their preferences and opinions, and the final design should be complete by the end of July.
DIT yet to be investigated by grade inflation report

Fionnuala Holohan, AST

A report carried out by the Department of Education into grade inflation has found that the rate of first-class honours degrees awarded by most Irish universities has increased by more than 100 per cent since 1994.

The inquiry was ordered by Minister for Education Batt O'Keeffe after US multinationals – including Google and Intel – raised concerns about declining standards.

Minister O'Keeffe indicated that some US multinationals were reluctant to accept graduates from some colleges because of a perceived lack of quality due to the inflated grades.

Standards at DIT have not yet been examined by the grade inflation study, while inflated grades have been seen in many other third level institutes across the country.

The study shows an increase of more than 700 per cent in the number of firsts awarded by NUI Maynooth over this period.

Substantial increases were also evident at University College Cork, whose grades were up 174 per cent, Trinity College Dublin, up 126 per cent; NUI Galway up 115 per cent; and University of Limerick which was up 107 per cent.

The report details a 100 per cent increase in the percentage of university graduates getting first-class honours degrees (level 8 programmes) from 8.3 per cent in 1997 to 16.2 per cent in 2008.

In the IoT sector, Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) graduates getting first-class honours at level 8 increased from 1.2 per cent in 1998 to 16.6 per cent in 2008.

However, the rates have stabilised in the years between 1994 and 2004.

Reports into the same issue, compiled by the Network of Irish Education Standards (NIES), and referenced in the DoEIS report, also exclude DIT.

Simon Quinn, co-founder of NIÉS and a lecturer in IT Tralee, said that the state body responsible for compiling the data for all the universities and Institutes of Technology (IoTs), the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC), said they did not have the DIT data in a usable format.

"The IoTs provided the data for the original study up to but refused to co-operate when we requested more recent data," said Mr Quinn.

"We did eventually obtain it after a long process and appeals through the Freedom of Information (FOI) process".

Several colleges, when contacted by NIÉS, questioned the robustness and rigour of the analysis being conducted on the data, especially in the light of negative pronouncements made by NIÉS in the media.

One college, Blanchardstown IT, also openly admitted not having the resources to compile the results for NIÉS.

In their report into IoT grade inflation for 1994 to 2004, NIÉS said that DIT was a special case due to "its unique history and large size, it would not be fair to aggregate its figures with those of the other Institute. It was deemed to merit an entirely separate analysis".

A spokesperson for the DoEIS confirmed that the department also considered DIT a special case, but did not explain why up-to-date data was not available.

"Prioritizing growth over academic standards"

NIÉS said that their research has shown that the main cause for grade inflation is that educational institutions have prioritized growth over academic standards:

"Indeed, one of the most startling findings is that, in this era of ever higher awards at completion, the CAO points required for entrance to the IoT sector have been in steep decline. Thus, weaker and weaker students have been entering the sector, only to receive ever improving grades."

"Moreover, the procedures for examining students and arriving at grades in third level educational institutions have proven to be remarkably susceptible to pressure to degrade standards," added Mr Quinn.

In the DoEIS report, several explanations are proposed for the trend.

Better teaching methods, more flexible assessment methods, more highly motivated learners and, in the last 10 years, a better use of the full 160% range for marking, rather than the narrow 30%-75% range used before, are listed as potential positive causes.

Balanced against these are the negative forces of increased competition for learners here and abroad, relaxing standards and invalid or unreliable assessment procedures.

The report said that grade inflation was an international phenomenon and that data from Britain showed that the proportion of students receiving first-class honours there increased from 8.4 per cent in 1999 to 11.3 per cent in 2008.

However, the figures do show that Irish universities and colleges are awarding more first-class honours than those in Britain.

"There is an absence of objective measures against which the quality of Irish graduates can be benchmarked against international peers" says the report.

The World Economic Forum (WEF) Global Competitiveness Report ranked the quality of Ireland's secondary and tertiary education system, as assessed by the business community, as 8th out of 133 economies.

The report concluded that a deeper and more pervasive implementation of assessment by learning outcomes and the amalgamation of the multiple internal quality assurance and quality assessment agencies into a single body, also empowered to examine the standards applied across all institutions would provide the transparency and oversight needed.

A bill is currently being drafted for the latter.

"Until now, the universities and the ITs have been self-regulating. It is important that this body be independent and have international experts and industry representatives on it," said a spokesman for the education minister.

The more fundamental issue about the relative quality of graduates in terms of meeting the needs of enterprise and wider society will be part of the development of the National Strategy for Higher Education by the Higher Education Strategy (HES) group, said the report.

The HES investigation into the quality of graduates and overall quality of outputs in higher education is expected over the summer.

In Jun 2009, in DIT, the chief executive of the Higher Education Authority, Tom Boland said that "Ireland is falling behind in quality. Our graduates are not always the first choice of employers and our famed flexibility and intellectual nimblness is disappearing."

He said that there was a requirement to transform Irish higher education from "a set of institutions operating in isolation into a cohesive, well co-ordinated system of higher education and research, where quality outcomes are the paramount preoccupation and shrewd use of resources a key factor in success in contributing to national goals."
**April 2010**

**Are we being forced overseas?**

Andrew Purfield, AST

Minister for Finance Brian Lenihan will surely have been rocked by the latest findings of the European Commission.

Ireland will now almost definitely face unprecedented cuts — no matter who is in power after 2012.

Minister Lenihan seeks to slash the budget’s deficit by eight percentage points by 2014. Also, the Irish Central Bank had previously indicated that a return to growth in 2011 was not beyond possibility.

In fact, in the 2009 report it specifically forecasted a possible improve in exports as high as three percent with even lower consumption expected at result of falling wages and potentially prolonged VAT rates.

However, such an increase in exports had correctly warned, was “contingent upon the durability of international recovery as domestic sources of growth were unlikely to emerge in the near term.”

In other words, we are a very open economy hugely reliant upon multinational companies in the private sector for our economic growth.

At least seventy-five percent of private companies in Ireland are here as a result of Foreign Direct Investment.

They will jump ship for lower wages or even a marginally better tax rate as was seen with Dell, with SR technologies, and so many others.

The European commission has put to bed any Irish hopes of growth for the foreseeable future in fact it woefully stated that even with a change of government — full recovery is unlikely until the second half of the decade.

Also if Fianna Fail win the next election and follow the “drawn out recovery” government debt would only stabilise by 2020. But if the older wiser heads really get it, the change of government — full recovery is unlikely until the second half of the decade.

**Mature students call for dedicated SU representation**

Fionnuala Holohan, AST

Mature students who attended the annual Mature Student Interarsity conference hosted by Dundalk IT last month called for dedicated SU representation.

The attendees felt that mature students, and other minority student groups such as part-time students, are severely under-represented in the union and remedial positive action in the form of a dedicated resources was required.

The needs of part-time and mature students also formed part of Ciaran Nevin’s winning campaign for the DIT Student Union presidency.

"quote:"

The European commission has warned the good Minister that emigration is an inevitable hindrance over the next decade to the Irish economy (something Fianna Fail do not necessarily oppose as we all know).

Another worrying factor is set to be high interest rates on government debt, and of course the Bank Guarantee scheme that is NAMA.

It went on to state: “Specific additional risks relate to the Government’s bank Guarantee scheme to support the financial sector, which it called, would lead to increases in (Irish taxpayer) deficit and debt.”

The Government has predicted Irish growth of 3.3 percent next year. However, the European commission has warned against optimistic forecasts on their part and on Irish agency’s part also.

The E.C. stated it expected about 2.5 percent to be the optimum realistic economic target for the Irish economy.

What all of this means is that Ireland faces potentially at least another seven years of harsh painful budgets.

Perhaps the elder wiser heads will remember the emigrants from 1987-94 which resulted in possibly the slowest economic recovery in the history of the state.

This era also resulted in mass emigration and unemployment as yet another youthful generation was forced to turn it’s back on Ireland.

We face now is something similar. The only fundamental difference really is that students find it possible to obtain qualifications before leaving this time.

Currently, unemployment has stabilised. Only the government thinks that this is not because emigration has already started. Up to sixty-thousand people emigrated from Ireland last year — with at least two-thirds of them Irish born residents diminishing rumours of immigrants returning home.

Many more are expected to leave this year and every year until the economy finally recovers. One in four men are out of work or on the live register — 292,000 as opposed to circa 147,000 women.

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Features

Ciarán Nevin
our President Elect!

Fionnuala Holohan, AST

Why did you decide to run?
Well, I’ve been involved from the very beginning - I’ve been here 5 years and I’ve been involved in the SU right from first year - I was elected as class rep and year by year I got more and more involved. I was convenor here in Bolton Street in the second year.

Like the idea of the SU but I feel there are an awful lot of ways it can be better. I think it’s an absolutely necessary thing. I know there are a lot of students who don’t think that but that’s because they don’t see the real benefits of it.

Where the union is letting itself down most is communicating what it’s doing in all the different areas. There’s an awful lot of work going on but people don’t get to see that.

Why not?
It’s not that communication is poor, compared to other SU’s we’re probably the best, but we have particular challenges because we’re spread across the city. Also there is a real lack of interaction between the sites at a faculty and academic level which means there isn’t a flow of students between the sites.

There is no silver bullet but the most important thing is building up a grass roots thing - you can have all the structure and stuff but unless you have people on the ground communicating and talking "oh, we did that", it’s not going to be effective.

There are all the technological things to which we are embracing to some extent (facebook etc) but it needs to be a lot better. That’s something I tried to show through the campaign - myself and the team worked very hard to make sure that it’s doing in all the different areas.

Why did you miss classes?
Did I did, I skipped quite a few. It’s probably not advisable but staff were quite facilitating and I had very good friends in class who would take notes for me and so on.

I felt it was important to make sure I could allow myself a good chance of winning rather than miss a certain amount of class and make a mess of everything.

Did you plan for the election?
Yes, it was very difficult to let yourself go on Thursday night, I knew there was a strong possibility of a recount. It’s a strange sort of a come down - everything just stops.

You don’t know what to do with yourself. So the celebration is more like - every so often I realize “Yes, we did it!” - but you have to get back to the college life, no time to stop. The inauguration in April will be the main thing I think.

The election coverage was inventive this year.... People were watching the live tv from Australia, from Kosovo - to think that someone’s watching live what’s happening here for students in Ireland and the hype has helped - turnout increased this year by 20%, have to keep building on that, it’s still at a very low level.

How is the handover from Tracey going to work?
There’s crossover training. There’s a couple of weeks break after college and then the training starts - where you basically shadow the current sabbatical and then you start on the 1 Juy.

Biggest challenges ahead?
Communication is a big one. I was told before I ran that I was stupid to run against an incumbent but what we proved in the election is that if you get a good big team together and working from the very bottom up, you can surmount those challenges,

and it’s the same for communications.

Obviously funding and facilities are major issues, in an academic context and also in terms of sports and facilities. When you look at the facilities in Grangegorman which our sports clubs have to play in - it’s really bad, appalling.

We expect our sports teams to go and compete at a national level, when you look at the facilities in Grangegorman which our sports clubs have to play in - it’s really bad, appalling.

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We expect our sports teams to go and compete at a national level, when you look at the facilities in Grangegorman which our sports clubs have to play in - it’s really bad, appalling.

It’s the ‘broken window’ idea isn’t it, when the little things are not fixed, people see that and take less care and so on and it gets worse and worse.

Things like broken seats etc, when people see that its hard for them to give a damn. We need to develop a pride in the place but in order to do that DIT needs to show some pride in its students and give them the quality they deserve.

When we think of students, we think of the 10,000 full-time undergrads straight from school but that’s only half our population. There are around 10,000 part-time students, and then you have the apprentices, who can’t find the employment to finish their course.

That’s why we can’t just say students are having issues with one particular thing. If the SU can help bring the students together, we can tackle each other’s issues together rather than vying for the best bit.

Would you go into politics full time?
Definitely, would like to. I’ve always had an interest in it. At the moment I don’t think the political system serves the people the best and it’s hard to reform from the outside.

If I could achieve one thing in my time it would be to get a more politicized student body in DIT, that would be a major achievement. We have no political clout at all.

Why will you succeed?
If the campaign is any indicator, we’ve shown we can take on serious challenges when we work as a team. The 9 people at the top of the SU need to work together cohesively. It’s the side of the job I like the most - dealing with people and getting them to work together.

It’s important the SU isn’t just seen as something to put on CVs or jobs for the boys. The students need to see they are getting something for the money they are investing.

Very hypocritical to say DIT are mismanaging their finances if the SU are not offering the best service possible.

I’m looking forward to the year ahead, it will be very challenging. Getting involvement going starts right from induction and in summer an awful lot of work has to be done to prepare for that.

Catch Ciarán’s full interview in audio on the new DIT News Blog at ditnewsblog.wordpress.com
The Fashion Issue

Imelda May on her sexy Rockabilly sound & style

Fashion: we peer through the looking glass of this season's hottest trends

Plus reviews, interviews, features and other goodies!!
Nude can also work in a harder way for a more eclectic look. For this one, we're channelling the Alice Dellal's of the world - well her smudged black eye liner but we might leave her shaved head for the moment!

Smock tops are a fantastic transitional item between winter and spring, Topshop have a beautiful beige top with gorgeous beading details for £45. Combine this with some floral jeggings (Topshop have great selection) and the pink ANNABELLE hiker boots already mentioned.

If you're still not convinced, stick to accessories. Nothing works better for slimming and elongating legs than a pair of simple nude high heels...well apart from the gym. Nude heels it is!

Polish the look off with toned tanned legs and a pair of platform ankle boots - the same website has a wicked pair of ANNABELLE hiker boots (€140) in dusty pink which set off that simplistic look perfectly.

Let Chloe Sevigny and Kate Bosworth inspire you and start building your outfit with a neutral oversized blazer. Zara always has a great blazer selection, but if you really feel like splashing out - Chloe or Stella McCartney are the labels to focus on. Stick to the longer styles that skim the bum - the looser the style the better, it'll make you look miniscule in comparison. Keep it looking clean with a relaxed white tee and loose khaki shorts, asos.com have a pair of beige bloomer-like shorts for €45 that look identical to the pair that Bosworth rocked.

Now we know what you're thinking - "I can't wear nude" and as a rule we would normally agree that the Irish complexion does not mingle successfully with pale tones but this season has brought such an amazing array of flattering hues that THIS IS THE SEASON to try nude. Our fashion editor Siobhan Lane gives you the low down on the latest fashion trend.

**The Romantic Look**

Spring's nude shades lend themselves perfectly to a romantic look; think subdued shades of pink and beige combined perfectly with ruffles and lace. Almost Famous (£185) and is available in beautiful beige; the subtle soft layers lend themselves effortlessly to that fairy –like lightness that this guise requires. Wear it with pale grey tank and metallic sandals for a casual look.

For something slightly dressier but just as dreamy, look to the ever reliable Spotlight range from Warehouse, where they have a deliciously delicate pale pink layered dress for €97 (left) - ideal for those inevitable summer weddings!

Let Alber Elbaz staying true to his signature look this season, combining his immaculate draping with the new spring trend – nude shades. His Lanvin collection brought a multitude of flattering neutral colours together from light beige to blush pink such as this stunning Grecian dress as seen below. But it wasn't just Lanvin that keep their colour base neutral, everyone from Fendi to Chloe focused their collections on the lighter shade of the colour spectrum.

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**The Simple Look**

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**The Eclectic Rocker Look**

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Who is your favourite style icon and why?
"Sienna Miller. She has such effortless style and has really transformed through the years."

Jess wears: Cardigan - Penneys, Top - Paris, Jeans & Ugg boots - Australia
Define your look: "Girlie, contemporary and fun!"
What 'look' do you hate?
"Pyjamas tucked into Ugg boots."

Sara Abuzenien, 21
Sara wears: Boots - River Island, Shirt - Topshop & Skirt - Penneys
Define your look: "I have an eclectic look I think."
Who is your favourite style icon and why?
"Nicole Richie - I love how she puts her clothes together, she has a 'mix-match' kind of look - like me! I'm a little disappointed that she has a stylist though."
Favourite Store and Designer?
"Topshop is great - it has lots of boho and indie style clothes. And I like Miss Selfridge."
What 'look' do you hate?
"I hate sleeveless bubble jackets and I think that jeans tucked into socks looks terrible."

Laura Carroll, 22
Define your look: "A mixture of girly and nerd chic. I sometimes wear glasses."
Who is your favourite style icon and why?
"Alexa Chung - she always looks fantastic and edgy. I like Lady Gaga too. She is really really different; she is how all popstars should aspire to look like!"
Favourite Store and Designer?
"I love SeSi in Temple Bar and Alexander McQueen - he was amazing."
What 'look' do you hate?
"Pyjamas tucked into Ugg boots."

Jess Lowther, 24
Jess wears: Cardigan - Penneys, Top - Paris, Jeans & Ugg boots - Australia
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"Sienna Miller. She has such effortless style and has really transformed through the years."
Favourite Store and Designer?
"FCUK is great. Its high, fast fashion but the clothes really last. And I love the bright colours they use. I love Marc Jacobs - his range has such a bold and distinctive edge."
What 'look' do you hate?
"White bras under black tops!"
Curiouser and curiouser...

The cutest trends from Spring/Summer showcased by our own Alice.

Read the directions and directly you will be directed in the right fashion direction.

FASHION BY: Siobhan Lam
PHOTOGRAPHS BY: Ray Brolin
MODEL: Sharon Mcrina
HAIR & MAKE-UP: Evelyn Lam

Maxi dress by Emma boutique €65
Pearl necklace by Topshop €27
Hairband by Penneys €3.50

Pink vest by Topshop €18
Lace Cardigan by Topshop €43
Floral Print shorts by River Island €33
Cameo brooch by Topshop €14
Cream sailor skirt by Topshop £53,
Crochet detail sweater by Topshop £58,
Hairband by Penneys £1.50

Green ruffle top by Topshop £49,
Pink ruffle dress by River Island £53,
Hairband by Accessorize,
Cameo brooch by Topshop £14

Floral Lippy top by Topshop £49,
Tulle Skirt by Emma Boutigue £185,
Pearl Necklace by Topshop £27

Pink vest by Topshop £18,
Lace Cardigan by Topshop £43,
Floral Print shorts by River Island £53, Cameo brooch (as above)
Lace Dress (worn as top) by Awear €60
Polka dot skirt by Awear €28,
Clock/Necklace by Topshop €30,
Tights by Penneys €2

Navy lace dress by Awear €60,
Lace slip skirt (worn as apron) by River Island €30,
Hairband by Penneys €1.50,
Tights by Penneys €2

Floral dress by Emma Boutique €150,
Blue Corsage by Emma Boutique €65
Dublin's rockabilly darling details the sexy side to her sultry songs

By Niamh Hassell

Sitting patiently in the opulence of The Westbury is not a bad way to spend a Tuesday evening. It gets even better when Imelda May shimmies up the spiral stairs in her kitten heels armed with a bodhrán - fresh out of a secret gig - to have a chat about Rockabilly.

May cut her teeth in the basement of Bruxelles club in Dublin singing the blues. Not bad for a girl of 15, who was sometimes barred for being too young to sing her own billings. She learned quickly, getting as many tips and learning from anyone around her.

So, did she always know that she wanted to be a singer?

"I was already doing it before I realised that I wanted to do it - which is kind of backwards.

My family brought me down to Bruxelles and I started to sing down there. It was a great introduction to music, and I learned from a lot of people.

We would go down to JJ Smyths as well, and there was a good underground blues scene. Blues is a great base for learning music, because a lot of music is based around the same kind of rhythms, so it was very good for me to learn all that.

I was already in the clubs singing it before I really started to do it. I thought - ooh I could actually do this for a living. It just kind of dawned on me one day after I was gigging."

Imelda attributes her love of Rockabilly to her brother, Fintan Clabby and a thief he was sometimes a little bit like Liz Taylor singing

like Elvis.

I was inspired by her, so to be asked to sing with her - I cannot wait! I've always wanted to meet her, so this is even better! Someone played her Love Tattoo and she apparently said that she loved it."

Imelda's eyes light up when she talks about the fashion of Rockabilly. She clearly embodies the rebellious spirit that accompanies the music. This particular evening, she effortlessly manages to pull off a bright red dress with kitten heels and a short leather jacket. Her hair is scooped up into a high ponytail and her trademark blonde curl sweeps underneath her forehead, not one strand out of place.

"I love the Rockabilly style. I love the 50's style. It's very flattering to women and the guys look really cool.

There's something great about all the leather and the denim, the bikes and the cars and the roaring of the engine. There's just something magical about that.

I love the bad girl side rather than the swing style and the booby side. I love the leather jackets and the leopard print and the peep toe mules and the tight jeans. Put a scarf around your neck and you're away!"

It's not just the fashion that Imelda is passionate about. When I ask her what is about the music that she loves so much, she drifts off like she is talking about an old lover.

"People think back to the 50's or before that people were innocent then. Of course that's a lot of rubbish.

A lot of the songs when you look deeper into are rebellious. You get all sorts of mad songs.

I love the rebelliousness of it, I personally think it was the punk rock of its day. It was just very exciting and sexy.

I love the madness of the music. I love the fact that you can rip on it, and really enjoy yourself. If you listen to Jean Vincent or the Blue Caps they would be just screaming. They would be recording live and they would just be screaming their heads off in the background, absolutely loving it and flying high."

So what is next for the all the ebullient Ms May? The next few months are quite important in her calendar as she is touring around the States, supporting Jamie Callum, including a few of her own dates to boot.

Cracking the market in America is always seen as the holy grail of the music business this side of the pond, but something tells me that this lady will be doing her own thing - hopefully breaking a few moulds along the way.

"I was already doing music before I realised I wanted to do it - which is kind of backwards."
Speaker's Square every Sunday from 4pm - Meeting House Square, Temple Bar.
Featuring some of the finest minds, utter mentalists and blatantly confused the country has to offer, Speaker's Square is the best ten minutes of free entertainment you're likely to find on a Sunday evening. Everything from the works of Katie Price to Hugo Chavez "being the last great revolutionary" is discussed here. I would say not for the easily offended or religious but you'd only be missing out.

Ukiyo Bar and Karaoke rooms - Exchequer St., D2. Ukiyobar.com

This isn't particularly 'alternative', but Ukiyo offers all the pleasure of murdering Billy Joel's 1973 hit 'Piano Man' with none of the unabashed feelings of shame one tends to incur the following morning. Clearly the Japanese don't believe in bothering fellow punters with out of tune, out of sync drivel anymore so they decided to stick the singers in a separate room. Another BYOB affair, Ukiyo offers a night of chuckles accompanied by an unusually healthy looking bank account.

The Lighthouse Cinema - Smithfield Market Square, D8. lighthousecinema.ie

The Lighthouse cinema is for the connoisseurs of film. Frequently The Lighthouse will show an appreciation for the types of films that the regressive philistines who run the chain picture houses refuse to. Regularly running events in the ilk of "Stanley Kubrick Week". The Lighthouse offers real comfort: compelling entertainment (usually) and a far more palatable atmosphere than some of the humungousiatheater sheed that pass for film theatres.

The Little Room - Space 54 (beside Smithfield Luas stop).

The Little Room claims to be a record store, cafe and restaurant all in one. However, they also claim it's "anything you want it to be". Rather bold statements for a small, quaint space buried down a side-road off Smithfield. Although it's still in its infancy, the all encompassing wonder-venue is seeing its clientele grow week by week. This prosperity will undoubtedly continue given the apparent popularity of the all-night BYOB (bring your own bottle) parties. The Little Room hosts some of Dublin's best known DJs.

Swop Shop - Crow St. Bazaar, 7 Crow St., Temple Bar. swopshop.ie

What had been commonly known as 'hand-me-downs' or sneered at as "second-hand" have become 'vintage' or "retro". Both nouns are highly respected buzzwords of the fashionable vocabulary. This and the big 'R' are why clothes trades are enjoying an immense surge of popularity throughout the country. Swop Shop is one such enterprise where one may browse, bargain and trade in the confidence that a new wardrobe reveals at a fraction of the price the likes of Top Shop et al. tend to charge.

Dublin Flea Market - The Co-op, 12 Newmarket Sq., D8. dublinflea.ie

Dublin Flea Market runs on the last Sunday of every month and is without doubt the finest opportunity one will have to fill their house up with useless, unusual and discussion making tat. Live bands and DJs do their best to enthral the large congregation but stem opposition is usually served up in the form of odd looking carved furniture and glorious local and organic food stalls. My finest buys include a brown leather belt and three Ramones DVDs at a combined total of €246.

Spin Roller disco- Longmile Road and Blanchardstown. spinrollerdisco.ie

This is located more than a little outside town BUT the attraction of re-creating Travolta's iconic Saturday Night Fever routine is too much to bare. Nights usually start at 7.30, drink isn't the greatest idea for obvious reasons and groups are accommodated for some pre-night out calorie burning. Picture it: now friends you and a friend in loving embrace spinning blissfully to Boston's 'More Than a Feeling'.

Secoma Spraoi-10 Belfeord Court, D1. secomaspraoi.com

Secoma Spraoi is an autonomous social centre in Dublin's city centre, run by a non-hierarchical anti-capitalist collective on a not-for-profit basis- pretentious as all may sound Secoma Spraoi is what Dublin sorely needs. BYOB nights, Spanish classes, bicycle repairpentre and a vegan cafe are only a smattering of Secoma Spraoi's offerings. At this stage it may be Dublin's worst kept secret but if you fancy some political pontification over a plate of wreckless food then check your own can of Dutch gold this tip of positive resistance is a more than disgraceful candidate for your business.
By Celia Sanchez.

Enigmatic graffitist Banksy, celebrated worldwide for his subversive wit, brings his sardonic talent to the big screen. Banksy's unpredictable documentary satire is maliciously engaging. Thierry Guetta, a quixotic French expat, successful vintaga clothes dealer in LA turned compulsive videographer embarks on a journey through the world of 'street art'. His extravaganza and sheer dedication grant him privileged access to the scene's most camera-reticent artists - all assuming he's preparing an exclusive film on the counterculture movement. Guetta becomes a devoted accomplice, capturing unique insider footage of renowned artists as they bomb walls in the shadow. He eventually befriends the most clandestine of all, Banksy himself.

"I travelled a thousand kilometers for good music"

Stage and he asked us to come over, he brought the whole big band over to play accidental trump and the documentary shifts when Banksy turns the camera on his fanatic stalker. Guetta soon becomes Mr. Brainwash: an unknown who reaches accidental triumph with his very own street-kind-of-art exhibition.

What we end up with is the unbelievable story of a larger than life character who becomes a 'street art' sensation overnight, while his mentor looks on with a hybrid feeling of joy and guilt. But is the joke on us? Whether we might be stumbling into another Banksy hoax or not, Exit Through The Gift Shop is a one-of-a-kind documentary spout on the rise of 'street art', its consequent commercialization and overwhelming hype.

Raising questions on the authenticity of art creation and its profitable exploitation, Banksy sets the record straight. What we finish with is a sharp and witty reflection on inventiveness, ambition and prejudiced notoriety.

Born to scratch

Dublin based DJ Kormac O'Halloran speaks exclusively to DJ News about the launch of his new album, Wordplay.

It's often said that men can't multitask but Irish DJ Kormac O'Halloran is testament to the plural capacity of this stereotyped oversight. It's a Wednesday evening and Kormac sits at home with one hand straddling over his DJ tools, the other wrapped around his mobile and his mouth enunciating in conversation. He conducts the interview while simultaneously fine tuning his latest swingsthetic floor filler admiring "literally as we speak, I'm finishing my album."

One look at Kormac's MySpace page reinforces this man's immense energy and drive. Three E.P releases already sit proudly under his belt. Scratch, Markert, Gooey and Scratchon Brand spanding new tracks are also on the way under the preliminary title, Wordplay, set for release in March.

An impressive array of gigs swallows up Kormac's time. On tour he's been en route to countries such as Switzerland, the Ukraine, Bulgaria and other destinations, and has been involved with a myriad of merchandising endeavors even stretch to camera banking where the site claims to offer punters five car and weekend stays at the very top clubs nights in the Twisted Pepper venue.

"Exit through the Giftshop - a bargains ride to street art's backstage"

By Celia Sanchez.

The skillmasters' tournament is an annual event. Breakdancing. Producing some of the most iconic moments in the sport. The event, which is organised by the DIT Breakdancing Society, and almost single-handedly by their chairperson Lukasz Luniewski, attracts some of the best breakdancers from around the world.

In the past the skillmasters event has played host to some big hightes in the dance world, such as 'Prince Ken Swift' from the legendary Rock Steady Crew. So you can only imagine what this year's edition will be like.

Last year's star attraction was boyoo Zuli Grmekin who featured on the hit UK show 'Dancing with the Stars'. "I'm really looking forward to this year's tournament," he said. "I'm really looking forward to the competition."

Skillmasters kicks off on the 17th of April and tickets can be purchased at the societies office in DIT.

"To go with the album there will be videos and there's a whole art work thing going on at the minute."

By Aine Gilligan.

The skillmasters' tournament is an annual event. Breakdancing. Producing some of the most iconic moments in the sport. The event, which is organised by the DIT Breakdancing Society, and almost single-handedly by their chairperson Lukasz Luniewski, attracts some of the best breakdancers from around the world.

A word from DJ Kormac O'Halloran: "I've been working on this album for a while now. It's been a long process but I think it's finally ready for release. The album is called 'Wordplay' and it's a collection of tracks that I've been working on for the past few months. They're really diverse and I think they'll appeal to a wide range of listeners. I hope people will enjoy it as much as I've enjoyed making it."

"I travelled a thousand kilometers for good music"
DIT BREAKDANCE SOCIETY PRESENTS:
SKILL MASTERS 4TH EDITION
BIGGEST IRISH BBOY BATTLE

17.04.2010
Start: 1pm-9pm

DJ'S:
TIMBER
MESIA
+THE BOOMBA BROTHERS

MC:
TRIX (UK)

POPPING SHOWCASE BY:
LIPSKEE - NBDS/PL

JUDGES:
POE ONE-STYLE ELEMENTS/USA
BARTAZZ-KOW/PL
P-BTC/IRELAND

GREAT 10:
CYCU ROCK - Funky Mason, Ass Kickers/PL
YAMSKEEONE - Originally Hated/PL
ROYAL ONE - Rugged Solutions/NL
LADYBOI - Floor Riderz/UK
RZEMYK - Crazy Squad/PL
THOMAS - Rockafellaz/PL
ARMSTRONG - LLCB/PL
ISMAEL - Footzbeul/FR
ABD-I - Vagabond/FR
RAW-B - BTC/IRE

Design By: yamskeeone@gmail.com

Tickets:
Pre sale: 10e Students & Kids, 20e Adults
On day of the event:
15 Students & Kids, 25 Adults
Embracing our Irishness!

Andrew Purfield, AST

Last week, we celebrated our national holiday – the day the whole world is Irish, or wants to be. You could argue that Ireland has never been correctly governed. For the majority of our political history we were-and I stress were as an institutionally corrupt church. Irish people starved to death for the sake of their religion (as a symbol of nationality) and in the 1840's the whole world is Irish, or wants to be. We have always had great export-something that the World has to thank us for and that is literally ourselves.

The greatest gift we gave the world was ourselves. Yes, we have obstreperous politicians who cannot say sorry, and whose idea of apologising often results in politically correct jargon. The Flora Women's Mini Marathon is the biggest all women's event in the world. You could argue that Ireland has never been truly proud of that heritage as does the Basque country as well as Andorra. Ireland, in light of St. Paddy's day, was rejoking. Now we are back to our normal dependant routine.

However let us not forget it was the Irish who built the White House and designed it, it was the Irish who designed the great cross African railway line in the 1800's, it was the Irish who set the fact for what America claims is the ‘free world’ by being the only nation-over hundred of years-ever to so vehemently defy tyranny. While other nations did not protest at being in a barbaric union that falsely preached civility but because of cultural differences and a great for World domination, our little island broke up arguably the most powerful and one of the most obsolete empires the world ever knew.

Ireland in the twentieth century was a benchmark for peace and, though we have been politically corrupt, our democracy has never been dwindled-merely those who passed it’s legislation and those who failed to enforce it. So if we Irish are forced to emigrate, and we do not at first the welcome we anticipate, remember this never has a people of a nation so small had such a global influence historically. It has not been through our political policies, or our economic failures alone that we have done this-rather it has been by the Irish people the country’s number one export.

Everyone from John Lennon, JFK and Barack Obama has some claim to Irish heritage. Maybe it is time we were as proud of that heritage as other nations are as evasive of it.

DIY News March 2010

DIY Foundation

DIY Foundation is inviting staff, students and graduates to join us at this year’s Flora Women’s Mini-Marathon on the June Bank Holiday Weekend.

Run, walk or jog with us whilst raising funds to tackle educational disadvantage in Dublin through DIY Community Links.

Get fit, have some fun and raise much needed sponsorship for Community Links programmes including:

The Flora Women’s Mini Marathon is the biggest all women’s event of its kind in the world. To help you prepare, all DIY entrants will receive regular training trips and advice from the DIT Sports Office.

We have everything organised including t-shirts and sponsorship cards. For details on how to enter email Donal.omalley@dit.ie for details. Deadline Friday 12th April.

To see how DIY Foundation is supporting educational programmes in Dublin visit www.ditfoundation.ie

24 March 2010

DIY Fashion Show

WIN! A trip to MILAN

Win a weekend trip for 2 to Milan, Fashion Capital of the world, use of a New Alfa MiTo for your weekend stay in one of the hundred hotels frequented by top supermodels with €500 spending money.

To be in with a chance to win simply fill your details in at www.ditfashionshow.ie (T&Cs & Conditions apply). You must be a registered DIT student or have a DIT Staff number.

ENTER NOW AT www.ditfashionshow.ie

Features 7
Heartbreak as UCD dash CUFL dreams

Paul McNulty, AST

DIT 1
UCD 2

DIT were left heartbroken in their quest for CUFL glory after a last gasp winner from UCD in the CUFL final.

DIT manager Tony O’Connor started with O’ Sullivan up front on his own, with Roche dotting into midfield, to stifle the much-heralded UCD midfield.

After a cagey opening, with both sides playing cat-and-mouse with each other, the game burst into life after 15 minutes.

UCD hit the post with a curling free-kick, after a dubious decision from the referee. Mc Mahon lined the ball up for UCD, and DIT goalkeeper Hyland was relieved to see the ball strike the upright.

DIT responded in kind when centre-back Niall Flynn rattled the crossbar with a volley from a corner.

Up the jumper...

Conor Ward, AST

"Parting is such sweet sorrow..."

The sentiments of Juliet as she bid young Romeo a good night. Fortunately for her at the time, Juliet was to see Romeo again.

That was before events took a turn for the worse. The tension of the affair was affecting the quality of the play, and the first attempting to the dismal second period came with just five minutes remaining.

DIT’s break came after 30 minutes, when Roche, harrying the UCD right-back into a mistake. The ball broke to Sean Fitzgerald on the edge of the box, who caught the ball on the half volley and rifled it into the roof of the net.

The effervescent Roche was booked just before half-time for a rash tackle on the tormentated UCD right-back O’Connor.

The second half began with with UCD on the front foot. Two corners were dealt with by the DIT defence, but the UCD pressure was the dominant theme of the second half.

The conditions were not lending themselves to a flowing game, and the second half was a niggle, scrappy affair, with few clear cut chances for either side.

The tension of the affair was affecting the quality of the play, and the first attempt of the dismal second period came with just five minutes...
Cheltenham round-up and Grand National preview
Jim Sheridan, AST

As the Cheltenham festival fades to memory for another year there was absolutely no doubt who were the biggest winners over the four days.

With no fewer than 22 of the 26 favourites getting turned over and three of the big four bookies; Dangui, Master Minded and Kauto Star coming unstuck, it was the bookmakers who went home smiling.

So with the layers taking the spoils off the track who had a good or bad festival on it...

It was a good week for...

A.P. McCoy: There is simply no jockey like him. An hour after taking a horrible fall off Jered in the opening race on the Thursday, McCoy, sporting a plaster on his face from where Jered kicked him and lumping badly was back in the winners enclosure after giving Albertas Run a powerful ride to see off Ruby Walsh and Poquelin in the Ryanse Chase.

Two races later and McCoy was being helped into the ambulance again after another shocking fall that would have put most other jockeys on the easy list. Not McCoy. He was back the next day to give Demman a power packed ride in defeat in the Gold Cup. Two winners including a Champion Hurdle was the best way to answer any critics out there.

Katie Walsh: Ruby’s younger sister had the week of her life riding two winners. For many her battle up the hill with fellow Irish amateur Nina Carberry in the National Hunt chase was the highlight of the festival.

Her second win was all the more remarkable as it came against the professionals in one of the most competitive races of the year, the County Hurdle.

Favourite for the race early in the season he never seemed to find form all year until a scintillating school over 5 hurdles two weeks before the race convinced connections he was in fact ready to run. An inspired move.

It was a bad week for...

Paul Nicholls: Despite coming away with two points in quick succession from play by Cork’s Fintan Kelly. They were then given two points in quick succession from wing-back DIT’s David Treacy and this went over rather than under as WIT were let off the hook.

DIT levelled with a sublime Harry Kehoe point three of which came from Hamersley, and two fine points from play by Cork’s Finian O’Leary.

DIT then stormed into life, and rattled off five points in succession to go into the lead for the first time. Dublin’s Peter Kelly scored two of these with two more coming from Killkenny All-Ireland winner Willie O’Dwyer.

The stridency of the nature of the game continued with WIT firing over four unanswered points, three of which came from Hamersley, to go in at half-time three points up.

DIT started the second half with another point from the excellent Kelly. They were then given a tremendous opportunity to take the lead when referee Michael Wadding awarded them a penalty.

Paul Ryan, who had been in superb form all season, stepped up to take the penalty but his strike went way over as WIT were let off the hook.

Big bucks winning a second consecutive world hurdle would have given him some satisfaction but seeing Master Minded and Kauto Star relinquishing their crowns would have been a big blow for him.

His other banker for the week Poquelin also got turned over in the Ryanse chase to top off a difficult few days for Nicolls.

GO NATIVE: Noel Meade’s charge went off a highly backed 3-1 favourite for the Albertas Run hurdle but could only beat two horses home in tenth place.

It was all the more disappointing for his owners, trainer, jockey and groom who would have shared a one million pound bonus if he managed to win the race.

They will all live to fight another day but an opportunity like that is once in a lifetime in jump racing.

BRIAN O’CONNELL: Riding the most talked about horse in the build-up to the festival would be a pressure job for any jockey.

For a jockey in his first year as a professional it has to be even more difficult. O’Connell’s ride aboard the 4-5 favourite was criticised by some who felt he would have won it ridden by a more experienced jockey, most notably live on Channel 4 by John McCririck.

It would have been a tough few days for O’Connell but he can only gain from the experience and will definitely be back.

LONG RUN: Nicky Henderson’s French bred gelding came into the RSA Chase with a massive reputation based on his performances in France and is a grade one win at Kempton over Christmas.

His trainer said he was hopeful he would produce something special at the festival but instead he struggled up the hill to finish a well beaten third to Weapons Amnesty.

Grand National

Now that Cheltenham is out of the way thoughts begin to turn to Aintree and the Grand National.

As usual it is just about the most open race of the year with the Paul Nicholls trained Big Fella Thanks at the head of the betting at 8-1 with Paddy Power. His stable companion Tricky Trickster is next in the betting with last year’s winner Mon Mome.

My selection for the race is the Gordon Elliot trained Backstage who has been campaigned this season with this race specifically in mind.

He will hopefully get the good ground he likes and will relish the marathon trip having won over three miles two furlongs earlier this year.

From a stable that knows how to win a grand national and running off a nice weight of eleven stone he could be the one to bring the prize back to Ireland for the first time since 2007.

BACKSTAGE - €25 Each Way, Aintree Grand National 16-1 with Paddy Power

DIT hopes dead after quarter final failure
Paul McNulty, AST

Waterford IT 0-14
Dublin IT 0-12

DIT’s hopes of Fingalibbon glory were dashed at the quarter-final stage after an absorbing quarter-final at Ballygawler in Waterford.

It was a tight and absorbing match and DIT put it up to the eight time champions Waterford IT before eventually being narrowly edged out.

DIT’s weakness all year had been their poor starts, and this same failing came back to haunt them in this game.

WIT raced to an early four-point lead courtesy of two tries from Timmy Hamersley and two fine points from play by Cork’s Finian O’Leary.

DIT then stormed into life, and rattled off five points in succession to go into the lead for the first time. Dublin’s Peter Kelly scored two of these with two more coming from Killkenny All-Ireland winner Willie O’Dwyer.

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WIT - A Power; B Kenny, S Fives, N Connor, W Hutchinson, E Barrett, FJ Rowe, M Molloy(0-1), W O’Dwyer, F O’Leary(2), K Reade(0-1), R Goode; T Hamersley (0-7), 0-55, K Grehan(0-1), R Mcloughhey(0-1).

DIT levelled with a sublime Harry Kehoe point and then opened up a two-point lead thanks to points in quick succession from wing-back Paul Lynch and full-forward Declan O’Dwyer.

As the game edged towards the final quarter Hamersley and DIT’s David Treacy traded points. WIT’s Westford midfielder Mark Molloy began to exert a major influence on the game as it entered the final minutes.

A free apiece from Hamersley and Ray McLaughley brought WIT back level before man-of-the-match Molloy put the home side ahead with a great point from distance.

Kieran Grehan then scored his first point of the game to open up a two-point lead for the Waterford side. A free from Willie O’Dwyer briefly raised DIT hopes of forcing extra-time but the game was wrapped up in injury-time when substitute Richie McCarthy fired over for WIT.

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As the game edged towards the final quarter Hamersley and DIT’s David Treacy traded points. WIT’s Westford midfielder Mark Molloy began to exert a major influence on the game as it entered the final minutes.

A free apiece from Hamersley and Ray McLaughley brought WIT back level before man-of-the-match Molloy put the home side ahead with a great point from distance.

Kieran Grehan then scored his first point of the game to open up a two-point lead for the Waterford side. A free from Willie O’Dwyer briefly raised DIT hopes of forcing extra-time but the game was wrapped up in injury-time when substitute Richie McCarthy fired over for WIT.

WIT - A Power; B Kenny, S Fives, N Connor, W Hutchinson, E Barrett, FJ Rowe, M Molloy(0-1), W O’Dwyer, F O’Leary(2), K Reade(0-1), R Goode; T Hamersley (0-7), 0-55, K Grehan(0-1), R Mcloughhey(0-1).
The table I was at was easily recognizable as the group of confident, ambitious, young guys in their twenties from Dublin. Other than that some men wandered around in large groups laughing loudly, speaking in thick country accents.

Some other resembled old homeless men and were shabbily dressed, usually sitting alone. "Do you see that guy there?" one of the players at the table asked me, I turned around and saw a balding man sipping a pint reading the newspaper "he just got out of jail!" I asked for what, but he just shrugged and I guessed from the tone of his voice, it was not for petty crime.

Once it was time for Rees Brennan to go to the set to start playing, I got up to follow but the others stopping me saying "it won't get started for ages you can come up with us soon."

Something which really struck me was the sense of community and camaraderie between all the players. People constantly stopped at the table and greeted each person by name, having a chat and friendly banter.

In a later interview with Rees Brennan he said, "Yeah when we go to Vegas there is a group of about thirty Irish who are friendly and hang around, with the Americans and Scandinavians etc., they don't that I guess is just the Irish way."

Eventually the others go to the set. I began to think that the real event at these tournaments was in the bar. The set is small and it's boiling hot, you can see the players sweating and shifting in their seats.

A few have already been knocked out but Rees Brennan still remain. A guy in his mid thirties comes and sits beside one of the guys from the bar and asks "How much is Rees playing for?" "€12,000" he answers and they both snort with laughter.

"I suppose it's not about the money, this kind thing."

"The older man guffaws. When he leaves, the guy from the bar turns to me and says "That guy I was just talking to, he is a professional too, the guy I was just talking to, he is a professional too, he's the big time though. This is nothing for him. He gets paid for every step he takes."

I began to think that I'm the only person in this room who thinks that €12,000 euro for sitting in a studio for a few hours is huge money.

I start to wonder whether these young guys in their twenties have previous jobs. They are clearly making good money and enjoying themselves, but this kind inconsistent style can only go on for so long.

I asked Rees Brennan about this later and he answered "I definitely see myself getting burnt out in ten years time, I'll play less and hopefully have a small business on the side.

This doesn't sound bad at all, make thousands in your twenties, then basically retire and work on the side in a business venture.

While this plan is not beyond the realms of possibility for Rees Brennan who is obviously a smart guy, I can't help but think about how risky this game is and with a bad streak, he could end up with nothing. I ask him if he worries about him, "I'm doing much better than I would be in any other job, so it's not really a hard decision for me. Everyone worries about their jobs and the future."

As I watch him play, he does seem cool and collected having the odd laugh with the player beside him.

He comes close to getting wiped out a few times but doesn't give away anything except a slightly nervous smile.

He and his friends are young, well educated and good looking guys. I can see why they are suited beside him.

If we make fun of him for not going all the way.

The person who wins the tournament turns out to be an amateur, a professional boxer. I suppose there's no denying that luck does play a large part in this game and if you don't have it, skill is not much good. As for Rees Brennan he says he's just like the rest of us living his life and seeing how it goes.

As far as I can see for now, it's going pretty good.

Rees Brennan is knocked out and comes third in the tournament. He goes home with €8,000. He seems pleased, but not ecstatic. His friends playfully make fun of for not going all the way.

The group trawls back to the bar. I congratulate Rees Brennan who shrugs almost embarrassed as he thanks me for coming and then leaves. It is fascinating to think that a circle of friends, who seem close, obviously become each other's competition eventually.

The last question I ask Rees Brennan is does he want to go to the bar he will enjoy the game? I guessed he didn't. It's quite a different thing to playing cards with friends over pots, to the prospect of losing thousands. "You can't enjoy playing when you're winning" he said with a coy smile.

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The day and the life of professional gambler

Genevieve Brennan, AST

In a recession a ‘professional poker player’ is a career that dreams are made of, or nightmares depending on how lucky or how good you actually are.

Rory Rees Brennan is a twenty four year old college graduate with a degree in Commerce and masters in Business. Anyone would presume a young man of his education would start up in a bank or in accounting firm and so did he.

However these kinds of jobs have become extremely difficult to get and much less lucrative since the economic bubble burst. In the last few years, he’s landed a sponsorship with Boyle sports, secured himself the World Series of Poker’s Las Vegas and won the title of The Irish Poker Champion 2009 with prize money of €160,000.

He did have a 24 year old who otherwise would be making close to minimum wage if he was even lucky enough to get job. He also travels to places like The Bahamas and Morocco to play in poker tournaments. To see what a day in the life of a professional gambler is like, I attended the ‘Celebrity Poker Final’ where Rees Brennan had won a seat.

Arrive down to City West Hotel passing two shiny range rovers with “ALL IN” printed on their number plates. A white hummer pulls up and the players begin to filter out name by name, some were professional players and others were ‘celeb’ amateurs.

Once they were finished shooting I followed Rees Brennan to the bar where he led me to a table of young, loud guys. He sat down pulling out a chair for me.

“Don’t start for a while so we’re going to have a few drinks” he says. Not all the men at the table were of drinking age but had come to watch or were staying the night waiting for the “Winterfest Celebrity Poker Final” where Rees Brennan had won a seat.

Immaculate by a point. Joanne Hoary, the DIT captain, hit a hat-trick of goals as DIT came from behind to win it in injury time.

An elated team celebrate their victory with champagne and a trophy

DIT also picked up four College All Stars following the tournament - Karen Mullins (DIT) corner back, Sarah Ryan (DIT) wing back, Ali leen O’Loughlin (DIT) Midfield; Jane Dolan (DIT) Midfield.

Stephen Hoary, manager of the team said, “I couldn’t have asked for anything from the squad, and it means the world to us”.

This seminal win is further evidence of the development of both codes of hurling in DIT in recent years.

“It’s a huge boost to us. This victory has put camogie on the map. Five years ago we had no camogie. Now we are the Purcell Cup winners. Stephen did a fabulous job as manager and the girls were just superb,” DIT’s GAA Development Officer Darragh Biddlecombe said afterwards.

DIT are now on the scent of the double. They’ll play the Division 2 League final in April.