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DIT: Students Union

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Protocol for dealing with suspect packages posted on DIT website

By Aoife Stokes


The protocol includes a number of characteristics that could identify a suspicious package.

These are features of packages or letters such as excessive postage, handwritten or poorly typed addresses, protruding wires or aluminium foil and oily stains or dirt. Each feature or a combination of features is to be notified to DIT Security.

The protocol is designed to be a rapid and effective response to suspicious packages and letters.

A full text of the protocol is available at the website of the Department of Health and Children at www.irlgov.ie.

In terms of a possible evacuation in the case of any suspicious package, the college has individual safety statements drawn up by the Senior Management in each faculty. Also as a government funded body, DIT would follow any recommended procedures outlined by the government in relation to issues of national safety and protection.

Editorial comment: This is your paper!

It has been suggested that the DIT Independent should be renamed the 'Aungier Street Independent' in the light of our first issue and hearing. Our first issue was not an issue at all but a trial run. This is not to say that it was not a welcome addition to the city of Dublin.

Several phone calls have been made to DITSU's main office by several of the college's students. Why should students who are so concerned by the lack of coverage put forward by the college want to air their grievances, then any letters to the editor will be published forthwith. All contributions to the DIT Independent are welcome.

This paper is for all the students of DIT and it is our collective responsibility to make this publication as representative and informative as possible.
DIT report vital to Government child policies

MINISTER for Children, Mary Hanafin, T.D. recently launched the National Report of the IEA Preparatory Project, entitled Seven Years Old: School Experience in Ireland, in DIT Rathmines.

The percentage increase in income of families of children attending disadvantaged schools, between Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the project was 9 per cent, whereas for families of children attending non-designated disadvantaged schools, it was 32 per cent.

The study's findings directly support those recently reported by the ESRI, in terms of widening relative income gaps.

The project carried out by Neirn Hayes and Margaret Kermans of the CSER also found that boys in designated disadvantaged schools scored lowest on cognitive, language, and academic development.

However, they also noted higher on social and emotional development.

The project was designed to assess the need for, and the utilisation of, early childhood care and education, along with the quality of childhood experiences in these settings.

The project focuses on the development status and the school experiences of a nation-wide sample of children, who have been tracked by the research team since they were 4 years old.

DIT maps the changing face of Dublin

The Department of Geomatics in Dublin Institute of Technology and Skerries Community College has commissioned a joint venture to produce a detailed, visitor-friendly map of Skerries and nearby areas, to be made available to the public.

By using DIT equipment and facilities, and working closely with staff of the Department of Geomatics in the College, from Skerries will develop and use basic cartographic skills necessary for modern map revision. The project proved that local and more major developments have impacted the map of the initial map developed in 1997.

The project is due to be completed and launched within the next two months.

Lecturers complete further training

By Aisling Casey

A NUMBER of DIT lecturers have completed the first post-graduate Certificate in third Level Learning and Teaching.

This Certificate was devised by Sanctuary Business and Training Centre in Upper Mount Street, the first of its type, and was particularly aimed at staff of the third level sector, the training colleges in the Republic of Ireland.

It is aimed at both new and experienced lecturers who would like to develop further learning and teaching methods. The course also allows for specific areas of interest in learning and teaching to be explored.

Available to all lecturers in all institute of technology, the course is not for distance learning, problem based learning, or research in higher education. The course was designed for instruction in teaching techniques.

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Caterers deem salads unprofitable

By Clare Stronge

Students in DIT Mountjoy Square have found cut-backs to the canteen menu to be a problem for a healthy lunch.

The salad bar has been removed from Mountjoy Square after it was decided by caterers to be unprofitable.

The catering company Campbell's (who also operate in DIT Bolton Street) and JARLATH have said that they had to axe the salad bar as there were problems in controlling the size of portions and due to inadequate refrigeration, the company were throwing away salmon at the end of each day.

However, Mountjoy Square students are now only DIT students with no salad option on their canteen menu.

Students in the college are concerned for their health: "It's really not fair, there's nowhere locally to get fresh salad if you don't want stodgy food, other DIT's don't have this problem," one third-year marketing student commented.

A spokesperson for DIT said that it had no direct control over the contents of any of its canteens as the contract is leased to the caterers. However, the catering company does have a policy of meeting consumer health needs; for example there is always a vegetarian option and fresh fruit is available daily.

On the other hand, the company felt it was sufficient first place with the salad bar to have ready-made salad sandwiches from Freshways.

An employee of the company however, did say in the college that the DIT Independent that a "Pay and Weigh" system where portions would be regulated could have saved the bar.

DIT student, Donna O'Malley has won the inaugural Premier DIT Student Award.

Donna, a native of Westport, was presented with the award at a ceremony held in DIT Bolton Street on the 24th October. She achieved first place with the highest grade in her graduating quantity surveying class of 2001.

DIT President, Dr Brendan Goldsmith commended Donna for her achievements and wished her every success in her endeavours in the future.

The award was presented to Donna by Malcolm McDonough & Partners Ltd as part of their 50th jubilee year celebrations. The prize, valued at £3,000, gives each year to the best overall student graduating from DIT's Construction Industry Management Degree course.

Malcoby & McDonough & Partners Ltd also use the winning students to complete surveying charted quantity surveyors, presented the new award to celebrate 30 years of the DIT, its involvement to the surveying profession and construction industry.

The award, which was inaugurated in March, motivates students studying in the field and helps them develop a communication platform with the industry.

DIT President Dr. Brendan Goldsmith said: "I would like to extend my thanks to Mr. Goldsmith for taking this opportunity to grade for us and thank you, Malcolm McDonough & Partners for establishing this award, which gives students an added incentive to excel in their studies.

He added: "It also has the advantage of developing long lasting mutually beneficial relationships between the DIT and the practitioners in the field."
Students must stand up and be heard

DIT’s decision to red light a proposed internal abortion referendum is a correct and logical decision. With the State Referendum on this most divisive issue just months away, it is crucial that the students of DIT have the opportunity to make their opinions known to the rest of the Irish electorate.

By Dormot Keyes

A CD-ROM entitled by DIT students, documenting one family’s fight for survival in the aftermath of the 1986 Chernobyl disaster, has won the top prize at this year’s Institute of Designers in Ireland (IDI) Design Awards.

The CD-ROM entitled ‘Sviatlana’ was produced in part fulfilment of 2nd year IDI student Shakra Nels, Rory Covenny and Melanie McDonagh’s MA in Interactive Media. According to Idil, the project director and recipient of the Glen Dimplex Grand Prix for overall best designer and winner in the Multimedia Category, the concept for ‘Sviatlana’ came from work with Rory Covenny’s Children’s Project.

Referring to the portrayal and personal stories of the Belarusian woman and the difficulties that her family faced in struggling to live with the devastating consequences of the accident, jury co-chairman Andrew Bailey described it as “truly an outstanding piece of design work.”

The CD-ROM has received widespread praise and was chosen as an exhibit in the ‘Black Wind, White Land’ exhibition held at the United Nations headquarters in New York last April to commemorate the 15th anniversary of the accident.

Aungier St President, Karl Bonnar, said, “It was a pleasure to see the enthusiasm of Sviatlana was produced in Rory Covenny and Melanie McDonagh won

DIT students scoop design award

USI seeks e-vote for students

The National Student Vote Registration Week was recently launched in colleges to maximise the student vote at the next general election.

The fundamental goal of the campaign is the promotion of democracy; according to USI President Richard Hammond. “By ensuring that students are registered we encourage all students to vote, to deliver the biggest turnout of the 18-25 vote ever,” he said.

The USI has a significant impact.

“Lots of politicians ignore student issues because they believe not enough of them vote — we’re going to make sure they can’t ignore it next time,” says USI President Richard Hammond

Recent research indicates that 14 per cent of people aged 18-25 are currently not registered to vote. USI aims is to have 100 per cent of registered students for the upcoming election.

The first phase of the campaign involves stands in college campuses throughout the country. The next phase will involve educating students about what the political parties stand for; Informat leaflets and posters on campus are being considered.

Issues such as on campus ballot boxes, Sunday voting and Internet voting feature among the ways Mr Hammond believes student participation can be increased.

The USI have sent submissions to the Department of the Environment for an electronic Internet voting, which is a long-term goal.

In February 2000, the Government agreed to introduce e-voting in Ireland and referendums are no longer to be considered. It is currently examining the possibility of using electronic voting and counting equipment.

If it is found to work, a new system may be used in the local government elections in 2004. But even if technology voters will still have to travel to use it.

Major concerns about Internet voting are privacy, voter identification and ballot integrity. The possibility of viruses is a very real one, and could render the submission of electronically altered ballots impossible.

Fear of the site going down on voting day and voters losing their PIN numbers are some of the other concerns. Advocates argue that if billions of pounds can be traded safely every year over the Internet to buy shares, it would be possible to maintain the secrecy of the ballot box and the security of the votes.

The concept of online voting for students has already been explored in some German universities for internal elections. Election.com, one of the largest providers of national online elections — a voluntary and unofficial election by US students a week before the Presidential Election Day on November 7th last.

The aim of the project was to encourage students to become future voters and inspire their parents to vote on Election Day.

Union split on referendum

from page 1

Commenting on the possibility of a referendum, Margarette Fitzgerald said, "I support" at the last USI Congress but I was concerned that enough thought had not gone into the decision to hold a referendum. After I came into office, I talked to the executive about the referendum and do a bit of research into it by contacting USI and other colleges.

She added, "The students back then wanted DIT to take a pro or anti stance on the issue. However, in my view an opinion poll would not do any good. It is hard to represent everybody and I am concerned an opinion poll is an opinion poll.

However, not all members of DITSU Council were happy with taking a stance on the issue. In reaction to this, Mog Mok DESTIN Independent that "Abortion is a very sensitive issue and needs to be considered carefully. It is pointless having an abortion referendum if it gets money, doing an opinion poll, I know someone who commented that we were sitting on the fence — again but with a referendum we will never be able to represent everybody.

"We could find out everybody's feelings on different abortion policies but in terms of money, it would make a difference.

Yet, DITSU President, Bolton St, Neal Croomlen believes that a referendum is the only way to find out exactly what DIT students want. He said, "I feel that in order to find out what our students want, we need to have a referendum." Speaking on the issue of a referendum turning into an opinion poll, Neal said, "I wasn't elected by the students to do referendum but I represented 100 per cent of them.

Aungir St President, Karl Bonnar agrees that DITSU should hold a referendum. "There should be a referendum. We are here to represent the students," he said. He also said that if a referendum did take place, the results would not be portrayed as a majority ruling, but that the exact results would be high.

It is the policy of the DIT Independent to correct any inaccuracies as soon as they occur. An corrections or clarifications will be printed in the next edition of the newspaper. It is also the policy of the DIT Independent to offer the right of reply to any person who feels aggrieved by comment or opinion contained within. Please forward any such comments to the Editor. The views expressed do not necessarily reflect the policies of the Student Union.
Portland Row in a row

By Debbie Flood and Aoife Stokes

DIT is carrying out a full report into the condition of the colleges Fine Art building in Portland Row following an inspection of the campus by the Health and Safety Authority (HSA).

The college was served with an improvement notice by the HSA after the authority noted a lack of a safety plan and a lack of maintenance in the Portland Row building.

The building, which is used by Fine Arts students, was closed for three weeks in September after toilets on the first floor of the building were found to be leaking through to the rooms below.

Speaking to the DIT Independent, Anita Groeber, Course Co-ordinator and health and safety representative of Portland Row, said that staff and students had been instructed by their respective unions not to enter the building once this leakage had been discovered.

DIT Co-ordination and Services Officer, Michael Marnane, said that whilst there was a problem with water seeping into the section of the building which DIT leased, this was a problem with one of the other tenants and that the matter had been resolved by the landlord. "Weve made good any damage done", he said.

Ms Groeber said that as health and safety representative in the building, she was not satisfied that the situation was adequate saying that previous problems with leaking sewage had been patched up but there was no guarantee that it wouldn't happen again.

She also described waste pipes and manholes in the building which are exuding a bad smell.

Mr Marnane said that officials from Enterprise Ireland had checked out any sewage problems and that it was now absolutely safe.

Describing the area in which the Portland Row building is situated as "less than desirable", Mr Marnane said that given the nature of the work they do, Fine Arts students need large open spaces to harness their creativity which is why the building was originally selected by DIT some eight years ago.

However Ms Groeber expressed concern that a health and safety report had never been issued on the building.

"Were awaiting action from DIT but we haven't seen anything yet", she said.

Students at Portland Row feel badly effected by the three-week closure of the college last September, experiencing particular pressure in completing their project for their Christmas assessments.

Head of the school of Art and Design and Printing, John O'Connor said, "The report is a cause for grave concern and I am hopeful that the buildings office in consultation with the school is addressing the situation with urgency".

Another major problem facing the students is the notable absence of canteen facilities.

Over a hundred full time students go to Portland Row but their canteen is a small bare room with four tables and only ten chairs.

Up until last year Campbell's Catering supplied fresh sandwiches and pastries to the college but Mr Marnane said the situation had proved uneconomical for the college.

Instead management have installed a confectionery dispenser and drinks machine.

Ms Groeber described this lack of facilities as something that she is not happy with also highlighting inadequacies in relation to fire exits and stairs.

She feels that there are a lot of problems to be resolved that the "staff have put up with it for years for fear of jeopardising staff and students".

One factor that may have bought this issue to the fore is that Portland Rows local building manager, Mr Paul McMurphy, moved to Cathal Brugha Street in September leaving this position vacant in Portland Row.

The position is only now being interviewed for.

The improvement notice issued by the HSA to the buildings office of DIT runs out on December 16th.
Marked improvement for Clubs and Socs training

By Aedin Donnelly

ON THE morning of the 2nd of November, some one hundred students and union officials set off for DIT’s annual Clubs and Societies training weekend.

'The Tin Village' set on the lakefront, and located outside the Co. Louth village of Carlingford, was our destination. In the past, training weekends have taken place in towns as far afield as Westport, Co. Mayo. The decision to travel to Carlingford this year, was the first of many reforms we were to experience over the course of the weekend.

On arrival, everyone was fed and watered, assigned to bedrooms and given training packs for the weekend. As we were all ushered into the conference room after our brief break, it became clear that things were going to be far more organised this time around. A quick glance at our weekend timetables confirmed this, and from that point on, events ran with incredible fluidity.

The afternoon plan was packed solid with different modules on Public Speaking, Negotiation, and Promotion. Oddly, at first it seemed as though this was going to be no different to a normal college day, but then we were introduced to Colin McGivern, facilitator for Friday’s sessions.

Having listened to Colin for only a few minutes, it began to dawn on me that the afternoon, the whole weekend, in fact, might just turn out to be interesting, even enjoyable.

Colin was professional, confident, and, most importantly, funny. Under his guidance, the afternoon flew by.

As part of the excellent facilities available in the holiday village, the complex bar was handed over to the group for the evening. And before we knew it, it was dinnertime.

After dinner we settled ourselves back into the conference room for another hour or so of group sessions. While we sat back and digested our food, a group of twelve or so brave volunteers who fancied themselves as public speakers took to the floor. Each person was asked to spend a couple of minutes giving an ad-lib speech to the audience.

Topics ranged from the devastation of drugs, delivered by funnymen and DIT Bolton St site president Neil Cronion, to 'Shakespeare' and 'Holiday Camps'.

Following an entertaining hour or so of Public speaking, John McKenna, Cathal Brugha St site president and vice president spoke to us about the Chernobyl Children and their time in Belarus.

Both spoke movingly about the children they had tended to, and the coloured cards they had experienced during their visit to the site of the 1986 nuclear disaster. For me, this hour was the least entertaining of the weekend, but probably the most valuable and memorable.

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By Aidan Casey

DIT should stop its obsession with becoming another university and concentrate on developing its own strengths, according to former president of the Dublin City University (DCU) Dr Danny O’Hare.

Speaking about the issue, Dr O’Hare said many people in institutes of technology were obsessed with getting university status.

He said, "There is no reason why, given the right conditions, universities and institutes of technology should not be recognised as centres of excellence".

He added that ITs and universities should not be competing with each other but rather offering distinguished services in their own distinct areas.

However, President of DIT, Dr Brendan Goldsmith, refers to this as precisely the same argument Dr O’Hare used when seeking university designation for the then National Institute of Higher Education in Dublin (NIHE).

He added, "It is also interesting to note that NIHE raised only very minor amounts of money from private donations whereas DCU has been the recipient of generous benefaction. Further evidence, if any is needed, of the importance in an Irish context of the name university."

In 1998, DIT applied for university status but was rejected by the Higher Education Authority. However, it has been told that DIT could be established as a university if and only if the full provisions of the University Act 1996 be applied to DIT and if that happened what would be the logic of denying DIT the title university?" he said.

Speaking on the future of DIT, Dr O’Hare said, "I do not believe that their best future would be in becoming another university in the Dublin area. Rather I see their future as being the leader of a new and rejuvenated national network of institutes of technology."

"It is not the best course for the institutes themselves, nor for the people who work in them, nor for the people they immediately serve, nor for the wider national community that the IT sector itself serves," he added.

Dr Brendan Goldsmith said that he would agree with Dr O’Hare on one point. * DIT and universities could be equal but different if the correct level of autonomy were allowed. This brings us to the very important question of how to make this work in practice while maintaining the high standards which we have established as a university and the high standards which we have established as a university and the high standards which we have established as an institute of technology."

"DIT must end University 'Obsession'"
A UNIVERSITY in Singapore is pioneering an initiative which sends students their exam results via text messages to mobile phones - removing the need for crowd control at exam notice boards.

With as many as 50 per cent of Temasek College's 13,000 full-time students having mobile phones, the new system is expected to work out cheaper and more efficient than traditional post. The system has cost $10,000 ($15,000 to install and was tested over three months, using 500 students. The college refused to comment on the margin of error, or how many students were sent the wrong grades, when contacted by the Strait Times newspaper.

Students will have to register online at the polytechnic's website to receive the service. Those who do not register will receive their results via more conventional post, or by logging on to the college website. The Nanyang Technological University introduced a mobile phone results service earlier this year, but it employed wireless application protocol (WAP) technology and not the system currently being tested.

For the first time in Ireland, DCU pioneered exam results on-line via web-enabled (WAP) mobile phones this year. WAP technology allows new users access to information on a variety of handheld wireless devices. (The primary test made by the DCU Computer Services Department for this initiative is the Siemens S535, Students were able to log into the DCU website at http://wap.dcu.ie and then select "Exam Results". They then had to key in their student ID number and password to view their results on screen.

Commentators believe that student access to exam information on various technologies is likely to develop rapidly in the next few years.

Further Ireland-France research encouraged

"Ulysses", the Ireland-France Research Visits Scheme, was recently re-launched to promote further collaboration between Irish and French researchers.

Since 1997, the scheme has supported over 100 projects, made possible by €1.5 million from the French government, and €1.6 million from the Irish government. Over 60 per cent of the schemes were academic, and 40 per cent were educational. There was no clear mechanism for the evaluation or assessment of their value.

The recent survey, carried out by the AIT, NUS and the UK's National Postgraduate Council, showed that post-graduate students feel undervalued and exploited as employees with a majority working twice as hard as they are paid for.

"In the months to come, Trinity College University Dublin will organise a number of meetings to outline a new postgraduate employer rights charter, and encourage the formation of postgraduate societies to promote these rights," NUS-USI Student Movement co-ordinator, Brian Slavin said. Student leaders hope to lobby for an increase in the number and value of postgraduate awards and are calling for a specific review of financial support for this section of the student community.

Representatives from the National Postgraduate Committees in Great Britain and Ireland will be in attendance, together with the Council of the University Association of University Teachers.

Postgrad Students getting unfair deal - report

THE NUS-USI has issued an attack on Ireland's universities, accusing them of being "indifferent" to the needs of postgraduate students by "failing to promote their employment rights".

This comes on the back of a survey of postgraduate student employment practices, which revealed that 82 per cent of postgraduate students had received no e-mail an TVN TOUCH CNR. News for the past three years. Over 60 per cent of students felt that there was no clear mechanism for the evaluation or assessment of their value.

The survey's interactive conversational facilities, gives Leaving Certificate students the opportunity to talk to third level medical students - to get an insight into the work involved in pursuing a medical career. International students consider furthering their medical education here can avail of the site's travel timetables and
event guides, as well as viewing a webinar of Dublin - to make their trip to Ireland less daunting.

The running of the site is undertaken by 12 students representing all 3 Dublin medical colleges who regularly meet with staff of the medical faculty.

Medical lecturers in the faculties have strongly endorsed the website as a tool for students who are thinking of studying medicine and those students currently studying medicine.

The project plans to extend the network to include the medical colleges in Cork and Galway.

Only 'medically fit' can go to college - China

UNIVERSITIES in China are set to introduce stringent medical examinations to test applicants' medical suitability and physical fitness, in an attempt to "engineer" a stronger, healthier population. The proposals will weed out applicants of a medical fitness category.

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Pakistan Diary

By Carl O’Brien

Islamabad. September 18th

So where’s all the action? There are no street protests, no sign of violence. Bar some bored looking soldiers, all is a picture of serenity.

A look at the map shows Islamabad is around four hours drive from the border. Not that the news anchors from CNN, BBC or NBC broadcasting form the rooftop of the plush Marriott Hotel.

On TV it may look like they’re within striking distance of the border, but the main priority seem to be staying within reaching distance of room service. The hotel has been transformed into a three ringed media circus, as hacks yak loudly into mobile phones and technicians cram their hotels rooms full of satellite gear, and news anchors battle for space on the roof.

President Musharraf appears on TV in his combat gear and tells the nation he is throwing his support behind the US and calls for the nation to unite. Everyone gulps in fear, expecting that civil war could erupt within days.

Who built this place? The city is divided into a crazy grid system, intersected by long Stalinist avenues which lead up to the parliament. It’s a strange, sterile, vacuous kind of place. It’s definitely time to move on.

Rawalpindi. September 19th

I find a driver and a translator and we head for the sprawling city of Rawalpindi. I go native for dinner and chat with the locals. A dead cockroach in one of the chicken dishes doesn’t put us off, but I manage to prevent myself throwing up spectacularly over the food. This is a different place altogether. The walking of masses drifts across the city can be heard from every street corner. Hordes of people and spluttering motorcycle taxis compete for space on the rancid streets.

Some imposing looking Islamic fundamentalists are on the march. They tell me they plan to call to a nation-wide strike the next day in opposition to Pakistan’s alliance with the US.

Not everyone feels the same way. Over a cup of green tea some carpet sellers say they have had enough of war. All they want is a peaceful solution. The Catholic owner of a shoeshop is so frightened of reprisal attacks he brings me to a backroom so I won’t be seen and says he wants to get out of the country as tensions begin to mount.

Peshawar. September 20th

The border is a dangerous, turbulent, unpredictable place. A bit like South Kerry, in a lot of ways. The closest city to the border is Peshawar and after a three hour journey I arrive into a maelstrom of street protests and police roadblocks.

An angry crowd of around 15,000 fundamentalists surge through the narrow city streets, like a raging river of anger. They stop to listen to one of the religious leaders, “Hijab is our way”, “Bush will die” and “Death to Americans!” shout the crowd. One of the more vocal protesters roars at the top of his voice, but accidentally steps on a US journalist’s foot. “Sentry misted, sorry misted!” he says to the reporter. I don’t step on their toes.

In reality the protesters are a minority. The middle classes and shopkeepers watch the protests with a jaundiced eye and say they have been hijacked by opportunistic political parties.

Peshawar. September 22nd

That dodgy curry with the cockroach comes back to haunt me. Voltaire once wrote about the world falling out of his bottom. Now I know what it’s like to have the bottom fall out of your world. This is a severe dose of the backdoor trots. The newsdesk at the Irish Examiner don’t have much sympathy, however. When I tell them the most violent thing I’ve come across is the smell from the jacks they are not amused.

North Western Frontier. September 25th

The Taliban don’t like me much. So when they try to get me to do an interview with Sufi Mohammed, the chief of the Pakistan Taliban in the lawless north west province, he doesn’t say yes. I have a plan, however.

A Pakistan friend rings up and tells his aide that I am from Ireland the country which is fighting Britain for independence and is sympathetic to the plight of the Taliban militia. Incredibly, he agrees to do the interview. High up in the white dusty mountains we meet. The firebrand leader says he had an army of potentially thousands who are willing to cross over the border. Most have already gone that’s why the madrassas, or religious schools, are empty.

The countdown to war is looming.

Peshawar. September 29th

The police don’t like reporters going to the border. It means the conditions refugees are forced to endure is highlighted. Still, there are ways and means of getting to the border. My guide tells me I’ll have to dress up in traditional Muslim gear so I won’t be spotted by the security forces as we try to cross the checkpoints.

The bouncy trousers and prayer cap fit well, but I can’t get the rope to fasten my trousers together, so I put on a belt discreetly. This all goes very well for a few minutes until I passer by helpfully points out that my trousers have dropped to my ankles.

In order to try and bypass the checkpoints we drive off the main road, through fields and dry river beds. Once off the highway the border area is controlled by tribal militias. Fortunately my guide is known among the tribe we come across.

After a few judicious bribes, some Kalashnikov wielding soldiers hop into a truck and give us an armed escort to the border. The landscape is almost inhospitable with white boulders and vast dusty plains.

Drove the jagged ravines and steep gorges. The soldiers are trickling through, carrying all their worldly possessions on the backs of a horse, a donkey, a rickshaw.

They know borders are sealed and this is their only hope to avoid the impending war. One man says he has left six sons at home to guard the house. But here they have nothing here for his five young children with them. Here, in the first year of the 21st century, a man and his family escape the midday sun behind a mothball wall with no food or water.

Peshawar October 4th

Sending copy back to the newspaper is tough enough at the best of times. It gets easier when I discover a basement Internet facility run by some young Pakistanis.

Dressed in traditional dress and prayers caps, they press their faces close to their screens. As I pass, I notice they are all looking at porn. Cover up your women in public, but we can look at them in private, seems to be the message.

The homepage on the computer is set at xxxhotgirls.com but no notice they are all looking at porn. Cover up your women in public, but we can look at them in private, seems to be the message.

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Running away with the Cirque

Last week when the DIT stairs became a little too exhaustive and the guilt feeling that comes from extending lunch breaks into the wee small hours, one DIT student, who shall remain nameless, decided to pack it all in and run away with the circus. Apparently it used to be quite common.

Dublin's finest pub lunches

There was a time when a pub lunch in Ireland consisted of an East Single between two slices of bread and a packet of Tayto crisps. That particular gourmet experience has been replaced by an explosion of pâtisseries, ciabattas and various liquid fruit concoctions, although there are still a few more traditional lunches to be had. We decided to try some of the capitals finest (and not so fine) pub lunches.

The cafe-bar experience

The Modern Green Bar, Wexford Street. 7/10

This is one of the many trendy bars to have sprung up in this area in recent times, and lunch here is extremely popular. The menu is a mix of salads, pastas and stir-frys, as well as the ubiquitous pub dishes. Old favourites such as the BLT and the cheeseburger also make an appearance. The food is generally good and reasonably priced.

The divine experience

Fallons, The Coombe 10/10

This is one of the most popular lunch venues in the city centre, and most days has a huge queue of people along the carvery counter. As well as the usual hot food, there also is a salad and sandwich counter. I find it very difficult to get excited about self-service carvery, so in the interest of objectivity, I brought along a fan of this particular style of dining. He had lamb with an assortment of vegetables which he declared to be bloody good. I had chicken of some description, which was fine if unexceptional. If carvery lunches are your thing, then this appears to be the place for it.

The cafe-bar experience

The Secret, Grafton Street. 4/10

I have to make a mistake about this it is without doubt the best lunch in Dublin. The secret here is simplicity, because the menu consists of soup and toasted sandwiches. Not very exciting. I hear you say, but thers that yours worse. Fallons was so good the first time that we went back for more, just to be sure it wasn't a fluke. The soup is better than Granny used to make. The sandwiches have a number of qualities which set them apart from the average toastie made onbatch bread, grilled rather than put in one of those useless machines, actually hot and crispy, properly melted cheese, and supplied with mustard and mayonnaise. And the coffee and tea come with an After Eight. Best of all, soup a toasted special (ham, cheese, tomato and onion) and tea or coffee will set you back around a fiver, if not less, in one of the cosiest pubs in Dublin.

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A car pulls up near an abandoned storefront house. A young man opens the car door, dismounts a day which has not gone well. Only it hasn’t been just that day. Months and years of personal problems which have blinded both the life and that of his family. Gambling has become the sole focus of Jim’s life and there appears to be only one solution. *(name changed)*

"I tried to commit suicide," says Jim, sipping his mug of tea. "I had a bucket and a lead for a tape recorder and I saw a tree nearby. I felt that I could end the pain; I wasn’t thinking of anything. I kicked the bucket from under myself. In that instant the pain disappeared but for some reason God was looking after me. I was actually on the tips of my toes and stayed that way for about 10 or 15 minutes. It was like an eternity but I eventually got down, got into my car and went off home. Life is now looking after me." Jim’s bon­e­t­ty is of comfort to him; it’s the return to a complete stranger seems to have been honed from the hundreds of Anonymous (GA) meetings and sessions at the Table Lodge for assessment, which made up the word gambling. "I thought the system wasn’t going to be a problem. I ended up spending a thousand pounds that day alone trying to get the other two letters. I thought the system couldn’t beat me. Inevitably, it did and as Jim’s addiction intensified, so too did the problems that accompany such an illness, one Jim himself described as "the silent illness."

Jim’s secret addiction was finally revealed when the local branch bank manager contacted his mother in relation to a number of forged cheques which had been issued in her name. At first Jim denied it, but he eventually admitted his guilt, claiming he had tried to beat the system. Earlier that day, he had placed a substantial bet on a horse and when his distraught mother had left him sitting in the car, he switched on the teletext to see if he had won.

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From the bookies came in the wake of a car crash, which left Jim on his back for several months. Jim describes it as "an eighteen month blur." His relatively sunny disposition is little for the first time during our chat as he began to discuss the worst period of his life.

"The gambling took over completely," he said. "I used to bring a change of clothes with me in the car so I wouldn’t be caught out at home. I bought bottles of freebee and kept them in the car too. I was totally focused on how to get money. Making money was never an objective for Jim; it was merely what he required to feed his habit.

"I never bought anything for myself out of winnings. I just needed to continue my gambling."

After his failed suicide attempt, Jim attended his local hospital’s addiction unit. "I found who I am as a person down there," admits Jim. "I discovered it’s alright to be human and it helped me understand more about my illness. It introduced me back to the (GA) meetings, I came away from meetings feeling so good; it’s a great life, it’s like you’re going to a psychoanalyst. People just go to as many meetings as you need."

Still attending Table Lodge once a week, Jim feels the sessions have given him back the life that gam­bling had taken from him. "I’ve found home, it’s a fel­lowship. People put their hands out to you and you’ve got friends around, there’s a wonderful closeness and it’s understood by everyone," Gambling, in his view, is a cancer and GA is "my chemo and it keeps it at bay. I’ll always be a compulsive gambler."

Jim was supported by his family throughout the worst of times and he has since returned to third level educa­tion. And now he feels he owes it to other gamblers to give his bit back to those who helped him through his illness. "Someone was there for me and now I have to be there for someone else. I hate what (gambling) does to me. Hopefully in 20 years time I’ll be still in the rooms."

To those who have a prob­lem but have yet to tell anyone, Jim has a simple message. "Get in contact with people. If you go to on most church councils or doctors they will know how to get in touch with people. If you go to any centres or GA. Jim came close to giving up on life, but has seen the light thanks to his family, GA and the vari­ous support services designed to help those who need it.

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Gambling: the silent illness

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by Darragh Clifford  
IF BY now you do not know who Harry Potter is, you have probably spent the last six weeks hiding in a cave in Afghanistan. For the rest of us, the name Harry Potter brings to mind some of the most prominent merchandising around at the moment. The 12 year old boy with the John Lennon-style glasses and a flying broom (a Nimbus 2000 to be exact) has already conquered the world's hearts with four children's novels.

On November 16, Harry Potter could enter cinematic history as being one of the most successful movies of all time.

Harry Potter was born in a small Edinburgh café five years ago to the then unknown author JK Rowling. Stories of how Rowling would sit over one cup of coffee for hours on end because she couldn't afford a second cup are now legend. Over 100 million copies in 46 languages later, Rowling is the second richest woman in the United Kingdom behind Madonna.

To date, she has written five Potter books. The Philosopher's Stone, The Chamber of Secrets, The Prisoner of Azkaban and The Goblet of Fire, The Road Dahl style of writing Rowling uses to tell the tale of young wizard Harry Potter and his sidekicks Ron and Hermione has captivated young and old readers alike. (Prince Charles is a known fan)

Quite simply, the Harry Potter stories mirror the fantasy world of tales like The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe and Alice in Wonderland. The result is a global phenomenon that is about to get much bigger. Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone tells the story of Harry, whose parents were murdered by the evil Voldemort when he was a baby. Forced to live with the awful Dursleys who keep him locked up under the stairs, The Dursleys are Muggles. This is what wizards call normal adults. Harry has no knowledge that he is a wizard until his 12th birthday, when he receives a letter from Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Once at Hogwarts, Harry is involved in many adventures including coming face to face with the evil Voldemort and playing the skillful and fast sport of Quidditch. Along the way he encounters many memorable characters such as Nearly Headless Nick, the ghost, played by John Cleese in the film) and the positively lovely Professor McGonagall.

November 16 is the date that Potter fanatics around the world will finally see their favorite wizard come to life on the big screen. So far, movie critics are united in saying that the movie is sheer magic. Director Chris Columbus has put together a very impressive cast. While Alan Rickman (Professor Snape) and Richard Harris (Dumbledore) head the cast, the key roles are filled by Steven Spielberg in a director's chair and cast Haley Joel Osmond as Harry Potter and Amanda Bynes in the role of Hermione. Although Daniel Radcliffe, who played Harry Potter in the Harry Potter book series, was initially booked for the film, he had to drop out due to scheduling conflicts.

Professor McGonagall, Alan Rickman (Professor Snape) and Richard Harris (Dumbledore) head the cast, the cast that was almost complete. Almost all of the characters from the book, including Hermione and Ron, were represented in the film. However, Daniel Radcliffe, who played Harry Potter in the book series, was initially booked for the film, but was later replaced by a different actor.

By Karen Creed  
FRENCH maids, cowgirls, gangsters, drag queens and many other costumed students gathered in Shooters bar on Halloween night for the fancy dress "Stab Party." Organised by the Student's Union, the venue was filled by 1400 students from Cathal Brugha St, Mountjoy Square, Kevin St and Aungier St.

Queues formed outside the bar as early as seven o'clock and the absence of bouncers allowed many students to enter for free.

The president of Aungier St, Karl Bonar, blamed this on a breakdown of communication between Shooters bar and the Students Union. "Shooters bar never informed us that the bouncers would not arrive until ten o'clock. If we had known this we would have been more prepared."

However a staff member of Shooters bar explained that it was not only their responsibility to organise the security for such an event. It is a student event and the Students Union should have been more involved and aware. Once the bouncers arrived they tried to get everyone out of the bar and to queue again, this time paying the entrance fee of £3. This caused many complaints from the students already waiting to be let in. By ten o'clock there were 600 people in the queue. Soon after the security refused to let any more people in. There were cries of anger and despiration from those outside whom had spent so much time getting ready. Karl Bonar's reaction to this was that "in future students should come to the event as early as possible to avoid being refused."

He admitted that similar problems occurred at the Fresher's Ball in the Beacon nightclub a few weeks ago.

"Over 200 students couldn't get tickets for the event," Despite the disruption at the start of the night, the Halloween party received good reviews from the students. According to Aungier Street's Clubs and Societies officer, Connor McDermott, "many students were so drunk they don't even remember the night."

The bar was chaotic with everyone trying to avoid the cheap vodka and red bull. It wasn't long before the thirsty students had cleaned the bar dry of vodka. The lack of cheap alcohol later on in the night didn't seem to bother most students as everyone was in great form.

Almost everyone made an effort to get dressed up. Some students even brought a friend to join in. The costume party ended at around 4am with many students still out on the streets.

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Mogwai field a younger team

By Laurence Macklin

EARLIER this year Mogwai played what was the gig of the year and one of the most phenomenal shows I've ever seen in the Red Box.

The band themselves were heard to claim it was their best gig ever, and on the evidence of the two hour set, I would definitely agree. So when I heard that they were going to play a second gig in the Olympia, I was more than happy to hand out a few tickets for the privilege.

However the gig in the Olympia was a different animal altogether and was a tale of the unexpected. The band that took the stage on Wednesday 9th was not the polished eight piece with string section that, together with Dave Friedmann, carved their way through a set list that wouldn't be much different from four years ago. Only one song from Come on Die Young, and three from Rock Action, made this a nostalgic Mogwai trip down the musical memory lane.

There were no strings on stage and the band was all about guitars.

The sound was initially poor, and the high end frequencies in the drum samples at the beginning of the set were almost painful, but this improved as the night progressed, becoming more intense and exciting with each song.

One of Mogwai's trademarks is they way they slip from near-silence to an all-out wall of noise on a heartbeat, and this night was no exception.

Highlights on the night were the omnipotent Helicon I, the almost-pop Two Wrongs make a Right, and the mammoth, 20 minute encore, My Father, My King, which is now available on vinyl.

Mogwai once again surpassed themselves in the volume stakes, putting out the loudest gig I have ever heard, but at times it was uncontrolled and raw.

Whilst this worked spectacularly for the aforementioned tracks, the rhythm section was drowned out by the lead guitar, which at points was out of time and out of tune.

The energy displayed on stage was nothing short of olympic and guitarist Stuart Braithwaite broke all six strings on his guitar during one song.

This was not Mogwai at their finest, but it was one of the rawest and most intense live performances you are likely to see. Even when they are not at their best they still leave most bands far behind on the live stage. If only I could get the damn ringing to stop in my ears.
American Pie 2, the much-awaited sequel to the much-loved comedy of a young mans quest for sex (even with baked goods). It was rumoured that the cast were so afraid of falling into the trap set by previously badly made movies that they didn't want to make it but Universal know a gold mine when they see it and contracts were signed or

The trailer also appeared on the big screen in Star Wars Episode II Attack of the Clones has well and truly begun.

The half-minute long teaser trailer entitled 'Breathing' is silent except for the iron lungs of the soon-to-be Darth Vader, which is the latest offer­ing from Toy Story creators Pixar. Star Wars creator George Lucas, who was in London recently to put together some of the final touches to the latest episode of the six-movie series, confirmed that the second trailer (two minutes long) would be attached to what looks like being the biggest film of the year.

"In about two weeks when Harry Potter comes out there'll be a bigger trailer," he told reporters at the premiere of Samuel L. Jackson's latest offering 'The 51st State.' "Not

The trailer is silent except for the iron lungs of the soon-to-be Darth Vader and VI and counting the days to what

The emotional undertones are set with Kevin struggling to 'just be friends' with his ex-girlfriend Vicky, who has returned with a new jock boyfriend.

The movie picks up where the last one left, with the main character Jim (Jason Biggs) searching for sex and trying to rid himself of the bad name gained in the last movie.

Of course there is a laundry list of embarrassing situations for Jim to get into which, believe it or not, are hilarious.

The gang of five, Kevin, Oz, Stifler, Jim and of course the always entertaining Stiffler, return home after a year in college and find out that home is too boring.

They decide to do what any self respecting college student does and move to the beach, painting houses for a crust. The beach is filled with gorgeous women and with the imminent return of Nadia (Shannon Elizabeth) things quickly heat up.

The movie is greatly clichéd and at times drips sentimentality but is also great fun.

The return of Michelle (Alyson Hannigan), the flauting tobbin dork, is great and takes Jim to more three stooges like encounters. As sequels go this a good one and well worth the £3.25 you will pay as a student in UGC.

Making money. The draw of one of the Wayne brothers, Shorty, is supposed to take our minds off it but the movie is so bad that it is impossible.

What really annoys is that they attempt to parody one really good movie, The Exorcist. While it is fine to do a skit of a movie like Scream a la the first Scary Movie you need to be very sharp to take off a classic like The Exorcist and sharp they were not.

In the second movie they took the mock out of the Nike ad instead of the Budweiser ad. And for the latter half of the film they went after The Haunting.

Unfortunately I have seen that too and honestly I thought it was funnier than Scary Movie 2.

In the battle of the comedy sequels American Pie 2 leaves Scary Movie 2 in the Hollywood dumpster right next to Jerry Farley Jr. T2.

While American Pie 2 was a success, Scary Movie 2 flopped. Here we have a movie that has regularised all the gags of the original movie in the hope of

Star Wars trailer hits the web

The most famous sord in cinematic history has made its return to screens big and pixelated as the countdown to Star Wars: Episode II Attack of the Clones has well and truly begun.

There's no escaping the growing Star Wars fever in the DIT Independent editor's office (he’d love to have one!) as the Episode II teaser trailer hits the web.

Dermot Keyes gives the lowdown on 30 seconds of manna from George Lucas and the real one - that'll come out in April," he added.

So what does trailer number two for 'AOTC' hold in store? It's a bigger teaser trailer," said Lucas. "It's full length in that it's two minutes rather than 30 seconds. The other one got music and sound effects just like in a normal trailer, and dialogue - the whole thing."

If the first trailer is anything to go by, Lucas and co. have taken a big step back to the type of dark brooding mood of 'The Empire Strikes Back', the most critically acclaimed Episode to date. For such a short trailer, there is so much to see and get excited about including:

- A computer generated Yoda looking scowful and together with Mace Windu (Samuel L. Jackson) once more
- The Jedi sidekicks of Obi Wan (Ewan McGregor) and Anakin (Hayden Christensen) with lightsabers at the ready.
- The back pack thrusters
- Ireland. The last Star Wars Episode II Attack of the Clones has well and truly begun.

On the release of a sequel to a particularly good film. Many people will still never get over the pain of having to sit through Cruel Intentions 2, or even Urban Legends 2.

Of course there are exceptions and this month we saw the release of some of them.

American Pie 2, the much-awaited sequel to the much-loved comedy of a young mans quest for sex (even with baked goods). It was rumoured that the cast were so afraid of falling into the trap set by previously badly made movies that they didn't want to make it but Universal know a gold mine when they see it and contracts were signed or

The review's

The trailer also appeared on the big screen in The Godfather

The Godfather got raves that has never truly been settled is whether the first Godfather movie is better than the sec­ond. While I am unable to solve this great old debate I am delighted to see them return to our shelves in yet another digitally re-mastered work of art. The box set, which includes a bonus disk again containing extra footage and deleted scenes, is a must for any household with DVD capabilities. Al and the family are guaran­teed to keep you glued to your sets for the whole 11 hours, some mean few min­utes indeed.

The classiest of gangster movies are re-mastered and re-honed into better than ever condition at £44.99 for all four disks a great stockking filler for that uncle you owe a favour to.

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Making money. The draw of one of the Wayne brothers, Shorty, is supposed to take our minds off it but the movie is so bad that it is impossible.

What really annoys is that they attempt to parody one really good movie, The Exorcist. While it is fine to do a skit of a movie like Scream a la the first Scary Movie you need to be very sharp to take off a classic like The Exorcist and sharp they were not.

In the second movie they took the mock out of the Nike ad instead of the Budweiser ad. And for the latter half of the film they went after The Haunting.

Unfortunately I have seen that too and honestly I thought it was funnier than Scary Movie 2.

In the battle of the comedy sequels American Pie 2 leaves Scary Movie 2 in the Hollywood dumpster right next to Jerry Farley Jr. T2.

While American Pie 2 was a success, Scary Movie 2 flopped. Here we have a movie that has regularised all the gags of the original movie in the hope of

Star Wars trailer hits the web

The most famous sord in cinematic history has made its return to screens big and pixelated as the countdown to Star Wars: Episode II Attack of the Clones has well and truly begun.

There's no escaping the growing Star Wars fever in the DIT Independent editor's office (he'd love to have one!) as the Episode II teaser trailer hits the web.

Dermot Keyes gives the lowdown on 30 seconds of manna from George Lucas and the real one - that'll come out in April," he added.

So what does trailer number two for 'AOTC' hold in store? It's a bigger teaser trailer," said Lucas. "It's full length in that it's two minutes rather than 30 seconds. The other one got music and sound effects just like in a normal trailer, and dialogue - the whole thing."

If the first trailer is anything to go by, Lucas and co. have taken a big step back to the type of dark brooding mood of 'The Empire Strikes Back', the most critically acclaimed Episode to date. For such a short trailer, there is so much to see and get excited about including:

- A computer generated Yoda looking scowful and together with Mace Windu (Samuel L. Jackson) once more
- The Jedi sidekicks of Obi Wan (Ewan McGregor) and Anakin (Hayden Christensen) with lightsabers at the ready.
- The back pack thrusters
- Ireland. The last Star Wars Episode II Attack of the Clones has well and truly begun.

On the release of a sequel to a particularly good film. Many people will still never get over the pain of having to sit through Cruel Intentions 2, or even Urban Legends 2.

Of course there are exceptions and this month we saw the release of some of them.

American Pie 2, the much-awaited sequel to the much-loved comedy of a young mans quest for sex (even with baked goods). It was rumoured that the cast were so afraid of falling into the trap set by previously badly made movies that they didn't want to make it but Universal know a gold mine when they see it and contracts were signed or

The review's

The trailer also appeared on the big screen in The Godfather

The Godfather got raves that has never truly been settled is whether the first Godfather movie is better than the sec­ond. While I am unable to solve this great old debate I am delighted to see them return to our shelves in yet another digitally re-mastered work of art. The box set, which includes a bonus disk again containing extra footage and deleted scenes, is a must for any household with DVD capabilities. Al and the family are guaran­teed to keep you glued to your sets for the whole 11 hours, some mean few min­utes indeed.

The classiest of gangster movies are re-mastered and re-honed into better than ever condition at £44.99 for all four disks a great stockking filler for that uncle you owe a favour to.
By Laurence Mackin

THINGS are not as entertaining as they used to be. Every month I weigh up the odds, look at the weather, consult my tarot cards and try and decide what is worth going to see and do this month. But it's getting harder and harder each month. So instead of going out to a band that like your mate hasn't seen but he saw the cover of the album in his brothers room and it like looks really cool, just stop and have a think about what your doing.

Don't immediately go running off to the bar with your money to burn, don't run up to the over priced posy night club with the huge window at the front so that they can see you coming. Just look at what's around you and appreciate it. Make yourself a nice meal. Seriously, if you can't cook then learn. It's really easy and it always impresses the girls. Cooking is simply the application of heat to food, what could be simpler than that.

Go and buy a decent cook-book, something by Nigel Slater for example. Instead of getting messy drunk and trying to push a crane into the Liffey, go out for dinner, and have a nice bottle of wine and some really nice food. It will probably cost you less money, go to a really nice restaurant and have a bottle or two of wine, then it will be getting drunk in a city bar. And always bring a friend, Trust me, you will be entertained.

And if food is not your thing, then call around to a mates house and just chill out. Better still, get all your mates into the one house. Not only will you save money, but you will have a better time. I mean it.

That is not to say that everything is rubbish, because it's not. There are some genuinely entertaining events and shows out there, but they are a dying breed. Take monkeys, for example. Monkeys are without doubt one of the most entertaining creatures it has ever been my pleasure to witness. Monkeys make me laugh, hell, they make everyone laugh. Monkeys in people clothes, are even more hilarious.

And as for monkeys, in peoples clothes playing musical instruments, well that's just the piece de resistance. Monkeys. In people's clothes playing musical instruments. Hilarious.

ByFiachraRocco-Goveny

Dublin is not as cosmopolitan as it would like to believe. Despite the pretensions it has to being a city of culture, I do some times wonder if we're civilised at all.

One of the biggest offenders in this category has got to be the service (or unservice) industry. Pretending to be French and acting with an air of arrogance does not give you sophistication or class, and most of the waiters in Dublin would do well to heed my advice. Some of us are born with, and some aren't.

The other night I was going to meet my VBF Nadia in what considers itself one of the more high-class eateries in Dublin.

So I get there and firstly, the table is all wrong. It is in the corner, in what could easily be a dungeon-like corner.

At times like these you really do have to be cruel to be kind, so I dismissed her with a wave of my hand and remarked that "I would have an attitude problem if I was only earning £2 an hour as well!"

At this stage I'd had enough and my appetite had been completely eroded by incompetence and the time delay, so I just ordered a salad.

It was instantly forgettable, which is more than I could say for the selfishness of the restaurant. I mean, how difficult can it be to swap tables?

Your just carrying plates, I'm sure you could teach a monkey to do it.

Anyway, enough work, the stress is playing hell with my skin. Until next week, au revoir.

FRG
Sports clubs news

DIT GAA FOOTBALL CLUB
The team is up and running for the new sea- son and training regularly. The seniors have played one challenge match, losing to Maynooth in Brugha Stadium. However, morale in the team is good and the players are looking for- ward to competing in the Sigerson Cup after Christmas. For information on the team con- tact Des O'Donell at 0872245508.

DIT GAA HURLING CLUB
A mixed month for the hurling club, as their good work in getting to the final of the under- 21 Cup was undone by a disappointing perfor- mance. After defeating Lucan Sarsfields by 2 points in a close semi-final on Sunday 27th October, they met UCD in the final at O'Toole Park a week later. However the team was unfortunately well beaten by 2-18 to 0-3 by the more experienced Belfield side. Nevertheless the side remain in great spirit and are eagerly antic- ipating the remaining matches in the Fitzgibbon Cup and Higher Education College League.

DIT LADIES GAA FOOTBALL
Like the men the ladies are looking forward to the start of the new season and are training every Tuesday night in Belvedere Gym. With a regular attendance of 15 players, although while all new players are welcome. The team is due to play in the 7-a-side blitz in Galway on the weekend of November 5th and 6th and it is also scheduled to compete in the Harley Cup. The league season begins on the 5th November and the forthcoming fixtures are:

Thursday 15th November: home V Carlow IT
Thursday 22nd November: away V Eire Og
Thursday 29th November: home V Athlone IT

DIT KARTING CLUB
Preparations for the new season are under- way and the club is currently organising future competitions. Two days of karting have taken place with each DIT team and some promis- ing new drivers have been discovered. Training has gone well and the team is confi- dent of retaining their All-Ireland title. The DIT Championship is due to take place in the next few weeks although no date has been set. Meanwhile the club would like to thank of his tremendous work on behalf of its members.

DIT SOCCER
The Mountjoy Square men's first team played two fixtures in the Colleges Football Association last month. After a 4-0 defeat to Sligo IT on Wednesday 31st October they redeemed themselves with an impressive 4-1 draw against the National College of Ireland last Wednesday. The second team meanwhile started their season well, defeating Grifith College 2-1.

There is no good news from the Aungier Street team for October as they were defeated twice. In the first game they were heavily beat- en away to Carlow IT by 7 goals to 2. In a second time at home to the Garda Training Street team meanwhile started their season well, defeating Griffith College by 5 goals to 1. In a heavier game at home to the Garda Training Street which ended in a 3-3 draw.

Meanwhile the Mountjoy Square men's first team played two fixtures in the Colleges Football Association last month. After a 4-0 defeat to Sligo IT on Wednesday 31st October they redeemed themselves with an impressive 4-1 draw against the National College of Ireland last Wednesday. The second team meanwhile started their season well, defeating Griffith College 2-1. In their most recent fixture against the Swordsman, they were unfortunate- ly knocked out of the competition as they could only manage a draw against Athlone. Meanwhile on the 5th December the Irish Colleges Hockey Association men's and ladies' teams are due to play on the Governing Council. It is expected that the senior will contain a number of DIT students.

DIT HOCKEY
A great month for the Aungier Street Hockey team as they qualified for the second round of the Irish Colleges Hockey Association Mixed Hockey League. They defeated Inchicore 2-0 and followed this up with a 0-0 draw against Carlow. The month was completed with a convincing 9-0 win over Maynooth in which Lynne Bennett starred. Special mention also must go to new goalkeeper Jordan Feeney who has yet to concede a goal in competitive games. The club, which now has 32 members, also played a challenge match against Kevin Street which ended in a 3-2 draw.

Mountjoy Square have been enjoying their 10 games in total.

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**Spectators - who needs em**

By Brian Healy

A true sports fan will always tell you that to really appreciate a sporting event you have to be there in the flesh, to see the sights, to hear the sounds and to smell the smells.

We have all heard the stories of the length people went to go to the World Cup to see Ireland play, some going so far as re-mortgaging their houses. No doubt the same type of loyalty is evident in most sports.

But what is so good about being a spectator?

Look at what a spectator has to endure.

He or she has to fork out for the tickets, travel miles only to get a parking spot that's in a different city-town to the actual event, put up with all types of weather; and just when it can't get any worse an abnormaly tall man in the way anything exciting happens.

Meanwhile I'm sitting at home, with my can of beer and my 12-inch Hawaiian pizza, watching it all on the television. I don't have to endure the same hassle as the spectators.

Saturday arrived abruptly, when we were all told to get our "asses out of bed" at 6am. But it didn't matter because two hours later we were on the way to the underground, to the world beneath our feet.

Thankfully, Mr. Rain decided to stay away, so there was nothing left to worry about except getting to the cave, getting in and then getting back out safely. Getting to our cave, Poll Dubh, was a challenge to say the least. It was fun wrestling with the ground in an attempt to keep our wetsuits on our feet and trying to defy gravity and stay vertical was lots of fun too!

Once we got into the cave, we were fine. It was a remarkable cave, which required a bit of crawling, climbing, and crouching, but it was visually striking, with lots of formations adorning the ceiling, sides and floor of the cave. The other group went into Poll Dubh, and from the feedback we got from the novices, they really enjoyed it.

The appeared to have been quite impressed with the whole 'cave thing'.

They enjoyed having the opportunity to see the beautiful formations that exist down there, like stalactites, stalagmites, helictites, heliculites and curtains. They also liked the feel of the cold, wet mud on their bodies (so they said anyway).

After returning to the house for lunch, we had the opportunity to go caving again, and all DIT caves were more than willing to do it. This was a good sign, they'd been bitten and had caught the bug (followed by exaggerated eeeevil laugh).

The caves on the list this time around were Cullaun 2 and Pollanagollum. I have never heard so much grunting, moaning, whining and panting as I heard in Cullaun 2 that evening. We decided to take a route not often taken through, we knew why that was. It was very physical, due to the extremely narrow, low and long passages, one of those aptly called 'Year Passage'.

This didn't dispirit us though, it only made the trip more challenging and exciting. The Pollanagollum group again thoroughly enjoyed themselves, but to be honest, we were so tired after returning from Cullaun 2, I forgot to ask them what they thought.

The remainder of the night was spent washing ourselves, eating and of course, drinking!! Merry beer!! We definitely achieved our aims. We made it to Clare, we spent a whole day underground, we had lots of fun on Saturday night and we made it back safely on Sunday!!

Weekend was a success and hopefully the first of many. There are a lot of people who helped a lot to get the first trip off the ground and you all know who you are, so thanks! If you would like to go away on a weekend like this, then why not send us a mail to dit_caving_club@yahoo.com, to find out information on our November trips.

**Calling all sportsfans!**

It is fair to say that the sports department in DIT towers is in need of a little redressing. DIT is a college rich with sporting talent and after a collective knocking of heads (it hurt!) we've decided to relaunch the sports section starting from next month and we aim to make it as comprehensive and representative as possible. Be it hurling, soccer, badminton, we aim to get it covered as well as we can.

Getting around to matches and the like has so far been impossible but we hope that this is all about to change. And it is in that respect that we hope we can look outside our Ivory towers in Aungier Street and get our feet dirty? That's where you the sports lover come into play, if you so wish.

If you want to contribute to the sports pages of the DIT Independent, please leave a message at the Aungier Street Newsroom at 4023070 or by email to dildocate@hotmail.com. We want to provide as extensive a service as possible and with the co-operation of DIT's sports clubs, we aim to make our pages as informative for the remainder of the year.

So if you would like to:
* travel with a team on a day trip
* compile a match report
* take photos of the big action
* offer your views on DIS sport
* write about the sport you love,
we would love to hear from you.

Our sports department is the smallest within the newspaper and we need as much help as we can get. If we are staff and you as the sports loving DIT public can work together, then we can make a great success of our sports pages. We would also like to establish a results service each month to chart the progress of all our teams and individuals and to achieve this we need your help. So let's get the ball (or sliotar) rolling and make the December issue a bright new start for sports coverage in the DIT Independent.

Yours in sport, Dermot Keyes and Miguel Delaney.

**Reports on sports events needed - contact the DIT Independent through your students union**

**Spectators - who needs em**

By Bernardette Connins

Oh yeah baby! I am speakin' the truth! The DIT Caving Club has been revived. Its' limp, frail shell has been filled with lively young bodiess who break out in a cold sweat at the mention of getting deep down and dirty!!!! Mmm deep down! Mmm dirty!

On the 19th of October last, the club embarked on its first weekend trip of the year to Doolin, Co. Clare, to do some quality caving, have some fun and sample the local pub culture at the same time (all of which were done to the tune of about €15 per head). All were invited to have been invited to travel down on the bus with University College Dublin Caving and Pot-holing Club (UCDCPC), and stay in the house with them also, which was mighty craic! Thanks UCDCPC! We love you!

We left UCD that Friday evening to begin the torturous six-hour journey to our destination. If you can survive that, you are guaranteed to trudging through a cave for three hours will be a piece of cake!

We made our usual 'tasty and tempting' food stop in Ballinasloe on the way, the visit to the off-license was to ensure that the rest of the journey would be less painful and we eventually reached Doolin near midnight.

There was a respectable rush to grab a bed for the night, the unlucky ones were pushed onto the floor, point ed at and laughed at respectively.

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the best student venue
now has the best student discounts ever

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planet murphy & the palace nightclub, camden st.