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DIT : Students' Union

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DIT honours Quinn and Finucane

By Darragh Clifford

THE Dublin Institute of Technology Students' Union (DITSU) has dramatically withdrawn their support from Union of Students in Ireland's (USI) campaign on third level fees after the union staged one of its largest demonstrations yet on Budget Day.

According to the union's president, DITSU President Hugh O'Reilly, the decision was made by DITSU's Executive Council on December 3rd not to support USI until the focus group set up to examine the national campaign had issued its findings. The report is due to be finalised by December 13th.

Paul Malone, President of DIT Aungier Street, stated that "it was an executive decision not to support USI in their protest against fees".

DIT is the latest in a string of Irish third level institutions to withdraw support from the USI's protests. However, Quinn, DIT President Dr Brendan Goldsmith, and Finucane expressed their disappointment with the decision.

Speaking to the DIT Independent, Niall Quinn said that "it is a great honour and I am very proud. It is wonderful to be here. All we can do is negotiate. We did this for two years. We sat down with the Minister (for Education), and he promised us the sun, moon and stars, but after the election he threw it back in our faces. All that is left to do is protest".

Another site president with DIT told the DIT Independent that while DITSU officially wanted to dismiss themselves from the campaign, they would not prevent USI from independently rounding up DIT students to take part in protests.

However, when USI Deputy President Noel Hogan tried to put up posters informing students of the Budget Day protest in Aungier Street, he was asked to take down the posters and leave by members of Aungier Street Students Union.

DITSU's decision not to support USI's campaign comes at a time when almost every other college and university in the country are getting bodies out on the street to protest. Students in Athlone, Galway, Mayo, UCD, UCC, Trinity, Cork, Dlin Laoghaire, Carlow, Letterkenny, Sligo, St Pat's Drumcondra, Maynooth and Limerick have been protesting. But the country's largest third level institution's decision to go it alone will hurt the campaign.

The issue of student fees is very much a national issue now. In the aftermath of the Budget both TV3 and RTÉ's Pat Kenny Show on Radio One felt it necessary to consult USI for their opinions on the Budget. Based in Budget 2003 are documents that shows the Independent Estimates Review Committee proposed a 50% increase in the student registration fee to €1,000 per year.

DIT honours Quinn and Finucane

Niall Quinn and Marian Finucane: honoured by DIT

Quinn, DIT President Dr Brendan Goldsmith recognised the significant and positive ways in which Quinn has used the public support he receives to the benefit of others.

Speaking at the event, Goldsmith stated that "the three individuals we honour today have made an outstanding contribution in their respective disciplines and have each had a significant impact on the lives of others. They reflect three diverse areas, all of which play a huge part in our society today."
18 DEC

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Irish Independent

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By Aisling Casey

IN AN effort to secure the completion of the Aungier St development, the DIT Independent has learned that €274,000 was taken from the student development fund.

The money was used to complete the new student union area in Aungier St. This fund was being used to save money from each student's capitation fee. The money was used to fund services in Grangegorman when building would begin.

DIT'S President Hugh O'Reilly said, "The money was always meant to be for Grangegorman. The money was never intended to be used for the Aungier St development. But (from) the beginning the money was taken. It wasn't supposed to be taken out." The Aungier St development ran into difficulty when money ran out to fund the completion of the building.

According to result from the study, which highlights the growing demand for hospitality services in Grangegorman, Ireland is set to move to a new level of hospitality management. The study examines all undergraduate degree level programmes in hospitality management and hotel and catering management in Ireland.

The study investigates the current state of hospitality services in terms of the 'real world' and how this training is important to get the education right.

According to the study, students and graduates of hospitality management programmes agree that the hospitality management sector is very important. The study identifies the need for students to take the subject seriously and study hard to get the best education possible.

Mary Hanafin has finally launched a major national study of hospitality management education

The DIT study surveyed students, lecturers and industry figures to find what the feeling was like on the ground. Dr Noel O'Connell, Faculty of Tourism and Food at the Institute, who led the study, said, "In addition to the main findings, higher education is facing over the coming decade.

It's accepted that incorporating demographic considerations, the impact of technology on learning, access to research funding and growing competition abroad, the hospitality management area itself is facing its own particular demands which educators must reflect in curricula.

According to result from the study, students and graduates of the hospitality management area are on a whole satisfied with hospitality management curricula. However, the study highlights the growing demand to expand and develop certain areas of programme content. The areas pointed out for development are information technology, international business, creativity and innovation.

Interestingly, people in the hospitality management sector are keen to read the feedback in the hope of attracting more suitably qualified graduated. From the reports first findings, it appears the image of the hospitality industry is the principal motivating factor in a student undertaking hospitality management. The Minister’s decision to launch the DIT study is a major step in developing the sector.

The DIT study is a major step in developing the sector.

By Michael Delaney

IT HAS been a long time coming but Grangegorman is finally open to DIT students.

Those planning to turn up to lectures will have to wait some time yet though, as the site is merely DIT’s new home sports ground.

As part of the Institution’s plans a move to Grangegorman, DIT’s sports team will host Briden’s Gaelic Football team’s pitches, which are situated on site, as their new base.

This move marks the first time DIT’s teams have had their own home ground. In the past, they have had to rent pitches instead of the VEC. Terenure in order to play and train.

The absence of a home ground has affected the teams’ poor performances in major sports. It is hoped that the stability a home pitch will provide will help DIT teams compete on a higher level in third level sports.

DIT Aungier St’s sports officer Hércules McClelland welcomed the site, said, "On behalf of the sports officers in DIT, it’s great to finally have our own home ground. I’ve waited 22 years for this to come.”

"It’s great to be able to talk to our own groundsman and have our own equipment and changing rooms,” said McClelland.

"The pitches need work and development but it is a fine playing field for students and only a mile away from the Boland Street campus.”

Mr McClelland was grateful for the work done by both the DIT Students’ Union and the hospitality management sector.

"They gave first class help and because of them we’re here now.” It was DIT’s soccer players that had the honour of being the first students to play on the Grangegorman pitch as they played in the medical centre, ending a 28-year wait on Tuesday December 3.

The day was however spoiled by Mikey Whelan’s loan bid 16.
Colleges cash crisis

By Barry J. Whyte

The Council of Directors of Institutes of Technology has warned that a financial crisis is looming for the next academic term.

The Chairman of the Council, Professor Claren O'Connell, said that the level of financial support being provided would be reduced in the coming year.

The financial situation of Institutes of Technology may be forced to borrow heavily to keep going next year. The shortfall is expected to be in the region of €40 million.

At the moment, DIT are redirecting funds which should have been used for Grangegorman to finish the Student Centre in Aungier Street and they have had to apply to the government to get funding to finish the campus.

The Institute is still waiting on a decision from the government on the services next year.

Professor O'Connell also said that the Institute had been committed to certain financial agreements by the Department of Education and the Department of Finance through the Partnership for Prosperity and Fairness (PFV) which means that they are spending the money they did not anticipate having to spend.

This will impact heavily on the amount of money available for provision of the services next year.

This comes at a time when the matter of a reintroduction of fees in order to fund third level education has become a major issue. Student protests at Minister for Education Noel Dempsey's suggestion that full fees might be reintroduced indicated the strength of public feeling about free third level education, which was introduced under the Rainbow Coalition in 1995.

Current Minister for Finance Charlie McCreevy, called the abolition of fees by that government a retrograde step.

Noel Dempsey is currently in talks with the OECD on an alternative means of funding third level education.

The Institutes of Technology, however, are not the only third level institution that will be feeling the pinch next year. Both Trinity College and UCD have won a freeze on new jobs and others are expected to follow.

The president of UCD Dr. Aisling Mc Givney has said that the government can't afford to maintain a university system that is internationally competitive.

International students angered by fees

By Aedín Donnelly

INTERNATIONAL students attending Irish universities have angrily protested about tuition fees.

The non-EU students, some of whom pay up to €6,000 a year, have approached Aisling Mc Givney, Bertie Ahern and Noel Dempsey, asking them to do something about the matter.

Students plan to contact their home governments as well as the government of the State and are planning a national awareness campaign.

They will also be contacting their local and national journalists.

We hope this does not lead to a war of words with the newspapers.

Mr Colm Jordan, said: "We hope this does not lead to a war of words with the newspapers."

New Delhi students set to take DIT Journalism Degree

FROM next year, students from New Delhi will have the chance to take DIT's BA in journalism, a partnership agreement by the Institute and the Institute of Integrated Learning Management (IIM) in India.

DIT's Director of Academic Affairs, Dr. Frank McMahon recently visited IIM, along with other members of the validation panel to endorse the new venture.

Dr McMahon said, "The panel is very pleased to recommend that this programme be validated.

We discussed ways in which the course material needs to be adapted - for example a working knowledge of Hindi will be essential - but otherwise, students in New Delhi will learn and be assessed on the same basis as their counterparts in DIT."

He added, "It's a very exciting development, and we hope there may be further opportunities for synergy with IIM in the future."

Speaking from New Delhi, the Head of the School of Film and Media at IIM, Mr Surya Prakash said, "I look forward to greater collaboration between our two media schools, including media-impact research."

The 3-year degree programme will be delivered in New Delhi by the School of Film and Media at IIM.

Students at the university are looking forward to the new degree
Repercussions for DITSU protest decision

DITSU's decision to refrain from taking part in last week's largest fees demonstration can be looked on in two ways; as a responsible decision by the union in the protection of their students, or as a bad decision which will now cause a rift in student solidarity.

The latter actually seems more appropriate for one simple reason. The fact that if fees are reintroduced, thousands of students will actually be eliminated from third level education, while the latter appears to be the only avenue to go college.

Let not be naive here, students education was in no way being impeded by DUS when they decided to take to the streets and protest on one of the most important days of the government. In fact, what student has gone wrong? The Minister for Education, Noel Dempsey has refused to negotiate over the fees issue recently and he is adamant that the only solution is to reintroduce them. What students need to show is solidarity. Not only that, but we should not forget how quickly Minister Dempsey threw the fees issue at students as soon as he got his place at the government half way. Minster Dempsey has made no attempt to hold his hand out and offer help.

Although DITSU can not take back their decision now, they will have to do all they can to regain the trust of other colleges around the country. Maybe DITSU can interact more with students and the public to find out whether their students actually want to protest for their rights to a free education.

Students full of spirit

The recent budget has imposed an increase of 25c on a single measure of spirits and 35c on "skolpocks", the sugary bottled drinks, which are especially popular with under-age drinkers. A government attempt to curb the youth drinking culture in Ireland, i.e. the fact that we drink while under-age is certainly a step in the right direction. The problem lies in the fact that we do not look after our children when we do. Although commendable, this move is lacking in any imagination. The government itself has students, wake up one morning and decided to drink more than any other social grouping in the country. Like any culture, the youth drinking culture has developed over time. Young people may not have problem drinking with to excess on a regular basis and a 10c price increase on selected drinks will not affect this in the slightest.

If the government wishes to really confront the problem, they must address the youth drinking culture as a product of this country and did not appear overnight. Alcohol is everywhere. Pat Kenny recently gave away free bottles of champagne on the Tony Show, Millo Corcoran, the host of the second television organisation in the country, suggested that prese without Sky Digital should watch the local team at home. When an impressive foreign leader comes to Ireland, Bertie Ahern takes him down the pub for a pint.

DITJ Molloy (non-drinker).

The policy of the DIJ Independent to correct any incorrect or false as they occur. Opinions and clarifications will be printed in the next edition of the newspaper or 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 in writing to DIT Aungier Street, Dublin 2.

By Barry Whyte

THE Department of Education are currently considering a "learn now, pay later" scheme for third level education.

The scheme would work on the premise that a student would have to pay for their first year of tuition fees while in college; but would not have to make any contribution from their own pocket, or after graduation once he or she reaches a certain income threshold.

This system is, the Minister is at pains to point out, just a suggestion. He is currently examining a number of other countries' systems in order to find the best manner of finding third level education.

Other options to fund third level education include: a full return of fees, which were abolished in 1995; the involvement of banks in providing low-cost loans to students and an increase in the annual registration charge. This year, this increase was 7%.

The Independent Estimates Review Committee, a team of former civil servants, recently recommended that a €1,000 registration fee should be charged.

The Committee said that this would not be unreasonable given the cost to the exchequer of tuition fees.

In Australia, where the "learn now, pay later scheme" is in operation, it is believed to be the fairest system available. It has also widened the access to third level education from students from all social and economic backgrounds.

The USI, however, way, however, that the system has lead to a large burden on the state since the fees may take some time to be repaid.

The USI have opposed the "learn now, pay later system" and the re-introduction of full fees, which could be as much as €2,000.

They also protested against the increase in the annual registration fees this year.

The Ministry is in contact with the OECD, (Organisation for Economic Coordination and Development) on the matter of a suitable system of funding for third level education in this country, while at the same time trying not to discriminate students from less wealthy backgrounds or irritate the USI.

What the Budget means to students

By Darragh Clifford

ISSUES surrounding VAT, excise duty, benchmarking and the first-time buyer's grant may have made the headlines with Budget 2003, but a little-known clause in the third level registration fees published with the Budget might have far-reaching effects for students.

Documentation released with the Budget shows the Independent Estimates Review Committee proposed a 50% increase in the student registration fee for third level institutions.

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Take a break

Soothing back massage and yoga are the latest in the free treats on offer in DIT during National Health Awareness Week. Professional holistic therapists were available to work their magic on staff and students during the week. They held a session on Monday 25 November. Staff and students could choose from a range of Indian head massage, back massage, reiki or yoga lessons.

A young second year student Natasia reflects on the head massage and reiki treatment. "The head massage was amazing. I felt like I was walking on air when it finished, now I'm so relaxed. I didn't get too much out of the reiki, after working on my energy she told me the way she uses water to get rid of the toxins from my body which I knew already.

USI Launch Sex- Awareness

In an effort to educate Irish students on sexual health, USI has launched a new campaign which will be distributed to students on college campuses across the State later this month.

The packs, which come in sealed AS envelopes, contain a condom, a lubricant, a leaflet and an information leaflet. USI have launched the campaign because of the growing problem of sexually transmitted infections in this country.

USI President Mr Colm Jordan said: "While this has been important in its own right, there is little emphasis on the risks from sexually transmitted infections. By informing students, we are ensuring they are aware of their responsibilities in their sexual health and well-being."

Minister McCreevy: The 1% increase in VAT will have far-reaching effects for all strands of society, including students.

The 1% increase in VAT will have far-reaching effects for all strands of society, including students. Students, in particular, will be affected by the increase in the cost of, amongst others, education include: a full refund of fees, which were abolished in 1995; the involvement of banks in providing low-cost loans to students and an increase in the annual registration charge. This year, this increase was 7%.

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Letters to the Editor

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With the trial recently postponed until February, Barry J. Whyte looks at the volatile Colombian situation...

The Colombia Three: bring them home?

ON the road from Dublin to Belfast you pass through South Armagh. On the side of the road are a number of signs and posters on which the residents make quite plain their Republican leanings.

The largest sign is one on which lie the images of the three men allegedly found training FARC guerrillas in Colombia: Niall Connolly, James Monaghan and Martin McCauley. Over the images of the three is the slogan, 'Bring them home'.

Those in South Armagh would ask if we can trust Colombia, a country in a state of emergency at the moment, to try these men. There is plenty to support this

They would also be tried under the Peace Talks as a precondition to any political process.

Until February, Harry J. Whyte looks at the volatile Colombian situation...
USIT

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Iranian students fight for freedom

Widespread student demonstrations broke out in Iran following the announcement that history lecturer Hashem Aghajari had been sentenced to death for a blasphemy, speech he gave. By comparison, Irish student politics seems concerned with quite trivial matters, writes Aisling Casey

A CRISIS over the In protest of the conviction, 5,000 demonstrators took the streets chanting: "The execution of Aghajari is the execution of the university." The point is that while Irish students fight over money, there are actually people less fortunate in the world who still remain at the bottom of the ladder, trampling on their last right to a fair hearing. As an example, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Iranian Supreme Leader, recently spoke out against the death penalty.

In protest of the conviction, 5,000 demonstrators took the streets chanting: "The execution of Aghajari is the execution of the university." The point is that while Irish students fight over money, there are actually people less fortunate in the world who still remain at the bottom of the ladder, trampling on their last right to a fair hearing. As an example, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Iranian Supreme Leader, recently spoke out against the death penalty.

The violence started after riot police sealed off an area and parked buses around the Tehran University. Student protests in Iran have now ground to a halt following the government's decision to ban demonstrations. However, Aghajari will not be acquitted.

The Islamic Republic's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, ordered the judiciary to review the verdict. However, the chief prosecutor in the case said it is up to the lecturer himself to lodge an appeal. How many Irish students activists would put their lives on the line for the sake of freedom of expression? While Iranians continue to fight for freedom, Irish students will continue to fight for money.

It really does make Irish student politics quite petty.
By Ian Mannix, DIT Cathal Brugha St

By why would you want to go to Croatia? Isn’t that where the war was?” Eyebrows were certainly raised when I announced this year’s travel plans – three weeks back-packing around Croatia with my girlfriend. I admit that when the first suggested it, I was a little sceptical. I knew very little of Croatia except of the conflict that raged there in the last decade. However, when chanting to a few people and reading the Lonely Planet guide we decided to take a chance. It looked great, had been a big tourist destination in the 90s, and most importantly it was cheap (my girlfriend and I are both students). We bought the tickets, packed our bags and our tent, and headed for the Balkans.

We left in late August, which is probably the best time of year to go. The weather is still hot and the crowds aren’t too bad. Our plans were simple: fly into Zagreb, the capital, and then tour the coast, enjoying some of Croatia’s 1685 islands or 1800km of beautiful beaches, which line the Adriatic Sea.

After landing in Zagreb, we headed straight for the coast. There isn’t much to keep you in the city, especially when it’s hot, and anyone with any sense has left for the coast as well.

Our first stop was Pilitvice Lakes National Park, halfway between Zagreb and the coast. The park is 20 hectares of wooded hills, which hold 16 turquoise lakes, linked by a series of waterfalls. It’s a beautiful place, and also a world heritage site. There’s a good campsite nearby, so it’s well worth spending a day there.

From Pilitvice, we headed directly to the sea, as the inland weather was getting too hot. From the coastal city of Split, we caught a ferry over to Hvar Island, where we camped. The island boasts 2724 hours of sunshine per year and local hotels even give you a free night if you ever see snow there! We took advantage of the fine weather, pitched our tent a few metres from the beach, and chilled out. We also had to avoid the aging German nudists, who roam around many of the country’s beaches and coves!

After a few days had passed, we caught another ferry to Korcula, a neighbouring island. When we got here we were lucky enough to find another great campsite again beside the beach, with its own pool and other amenities. At this stage, it was still early September, and we were able to get good value from the low season rates, which costal into effect in many places at the end of August. Again, we enjoyed the beaches and cheap restaurants at night. That’s one of the many great things about Croatia; eating out is actually affordable, not like in Ireland. In road good Croatian restaurants, a big pizza and a pint will only set you back around 10 Euros.

After a few days in Korcula, we headed back to the Croatian mainland to Dubrovnik, which we were both keen to see. This beautiful old city had been heavily shelled during the 1991 – 1992 conflict. Up to 2000 shells severely damaged many of the cities historic buildings, palaces and old tiled roofs, for which the city is famous. I remembered seeing this on the news at the time, and was interested to see how the city had recovered.

When we arrived there we were amazed. The locals have gone to huge lengths to repair the terrible damage caused and have recreated the splendour of the city. For a place that was so badly damaged only ten years ago, there is very little evidence of the damage remaining. The city is really nice, and we spent five days there, taking daily trips, getting scuba diving and generally just enjoying the place. It’s the nicest city I have ever been to and I could happily have spent much longer there.

Dubrovnik has loads of accommodation and restaurants and it’s one place you really shouldn’t miss. One of my most memorable days was when I escaped from my girlfriend for the day and went exploring the city on my own.

I ended up snooping around an old hotel or the centre of the city that had been shelled and then deserted after the war. It was a surreal experience, walking around some of the 400 empty bedrooms and seeing the crater holes in the outside swimming pool.

After Dubrovnik, the holiday ended and we went home. I would like to have stayed in Croatia and would happily return. There is little evidence of the war that only ended in 1995. It’s a very safe country and, unlike neighbouring Bosnia-Herzegovina, you don’t have to worry about landmines.

Look, beyond Croatia’s past troubles, and take the plunge. Your friends will think you’re mad, but don’t mind them. The country has so much to offer, especially to backpackers. The transport system is good so you don’t need a car, and the weather and beaches are great. Most importantly, for students, it’s great value for money.

Forty euros per day would cover everything you need, from accommodation to food, drinks and activities. Give Croatia a try, as you won’t regret it. Just watch out for those scary nudists lurking around the beaches, they will chill your blood!

Features

Croatia: something different

NADINE Coyle missed out on Six, the Popstars band because she was too young. The rules stated that she was too old to be in the band, and so she was drummed out in tears.

The old adage, “if you’re good enough, you’re old enough” obviously was not something that had occurred to Louis “Music’s Very Own Hitler” Walsh. Youth is a barrier to talent, surely a man who claims to have an eye for talent should know this.

No one is saying that these people are not talented. They all have fine singing voices, they all get unthwarting good looks that went to all sorts of the mark and they’ve all got very, very nice personalities.

And therein lies the problem. Although they’re talented, they’re not creative. And creativity sometimes hinders an unready streak which cannot be tamed or packaged or sold to pretentious with any fear of being corrupted. Not that I’m claiming Nadine Coyle is a prima donna, we were just done by in the Popstars paradigm. She was just 16, over the age of the next Diana the next Anthea Franklin. She was just like the rest of the young hopefuls who auditioned, except she was a year younger. It is the whole point of the Popstars ilk of Louis Walsh has set up that you’re not hopefully. If he’d been even slightly flexible on the rules and admitted Nadine then he may very well have saved Six from the fate that they’ve stumbled to.

Louis Walsh clearly failed to see what centuries of history should have taught him. Talent and creativity should be nurtured, not subjected to silly rules and regrettably, he was 17 when The Beatles first went to Germany. He was only 20 when he was too young to play the seedy venues they frequented. Police and army had to allow them to play in the World Cup 1966, the same day it was banned by the heavy streets of Whitside in 1962; Alexander the Great was only 20 by the time he had conquered most of the known world, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was nine when he composed and performed his first symphony.

However, we’re not saying that Nadine should have been given a chance. My point is that Louis Walsh’s system, which he is holy copying from the British themselves had copied it from the Ameicans, does not allow real talent to grow and creativity to shine. The fact that it places such strict rules or the ages of the performers when history has proven time and time again that youth is usually more conducive to talent and creativity than those who are old and set in their ways is just one example.

Get them prima donnas, call them arrogant, call them weirdo, but but creative amusements. We have not put up with the same rules that we have to live by.

Nor should they have. Talent and creativity makes this dull world a better place to be. In this country, creativity is needed to nurture real creativity and talent. We should be singing praises of the Popstars, Popstars the Rivals and the rest of them so that we will get what we deserve – a world filled with Westlifes, Sixes and Nadine Coyle’s hybrids.

Independent Thought

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However, we’re not saying that Nadine should have been given a chance. My point is that Louis Walsh’s system, which he is holy copying from the British themselves had copied it from the Ameicans, does not allow real talent to grow and creativity to shine. The fact that it places such strict rules or the ages of the performers when history has proven time and time again that youth is usually more conducive to talent and creativity than those who are old and set in their ways is just one example.

Get them prima donnas, call them arrogant, call them weirdo, but but creative amusements. We have not put up with the same rules that we have to live by.

Nor should they have. Talent and creativity makes this dull world a better place to be. In this country, creativity is needed to nurture real creativity and talent. We should be singing praises of the Popstars, Popstars the Rivals and the rest of them so that we will get what we deserve – a world filled with Westlifes, Sixes and Nadine Coyle’s hybrids.
1. MICHAEL COLLINS

Such was the bitterness of the Civil War and the crossing gulf between the two sides that the Big Fellow’s achievements and influence are sometimes overlooked.

Born in Woodfield, Co. Louth in 1891, he was a man who devoted his entire life to bettering a nation.

He challenged the culture of Irish Republicanism, refusing to accept the ideal that to die for Ireland was the only acceptable outcome.

Why not live for Ireland and make our oppressors die for it, he asked.

He rallied the masses, that declared that Irishmen and women should emerge from the static warfare which British forces could not overcome.

His ruthless intelligence network paralysed the British spy system.

From Belfast to Cork, British agents could not operate.

It was so effective that some of his operatives in Dublin Castle revealed British Secret Service pensions.

Under the Treaty, which Collins despised, the British conceded that Irish people had a right to self-rule.

He knew that, while the country wanted a republic immediately, they conceded this principle, they would concede a republic in the future.

2. SEAN LEMASS

It was Lema’s fate to spend almost his entire political life under the considerable shadow of the Long Fellow, Eamon de Valera, but this cannot hide a life dedicated to bettering this country and the achievements of a remarkable man.

Born in Ballybrack, Co. Dublin, he fought in the Rising at 16 years of age.

He spent his holidays with his grandparents in Sligo until 1880.

He played as vital a role as Donal Griffin in the Civil War and was educated in Cambridge University.

If any group of people did well out of British occupation, it was the landowning Protestants.

But then the Treaty, which dealt with a republic immediately, they conceded this principle, they would concede a republic in the future.

3. CHARLES STUART PARNELL

Parnell was different from Collins and Dev. They were Gaelic Catholics and products of British oppression. Parnell was a Protestant and was educated in Cambridge University.

If any group of people did well out of British occupation, it was the landowning Protestants.

But then the Treaty, which dealt with a republic immediately, they conceded this principle, they would concede a republic in the future.

4. EAMON DE VALERA

Dev was living on borrowed time and he knew it. Sentenced to death for his prominent role in the Rising, he cheated the firing squad through his American citizenship.

This escape gave him the determinations to act, and to govern, as he wished.

Born with a magnetism which commanded respect and utter devotion, Dev was always going to be a leader. Once he achieved power with Fianna Fail, he was about doing what the country wanted: the complete removal of the British government.

Such was his success in this area that by the time a republic was declared in 1949, it almost didn’t matter. It is his achievement that the 1938 Constitution is a more significant historical date than the 1949 declaration.

De Valera was flawed. He made mistakes. His life is littered with examples of unbridled arrogance but a man doesn’t live for 92 years without making mistakes.

He balanced these mistakes with moments of absolute greatness and this is why he deserves his place in this list.

5. WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Years was born in Dublin in 1865 but lived in London until 1880.

He spent his holidays with his grandparents in Sligo until 1880.

He played as vital a role as Donal Griffin in the Civil War and was educated in Cambridge University.

If any group of people did well out of British occupation, it was the landowning Protestants.

But then the Treaty, which dealt with a republic immediately, they conceded this principle, they would concede a republic in the future.

6. BOB Geldof

Bob Geldof was born in Dublin in 1951. A highly intelligent man, he did poorly in his Leaving Certificate and left the country.

He was the behind the ‘Do They Know It’s Christmas?’ single and the 80 million dollars raised went towards the plight of the Ethiopian people, who were suffering from a famine, drought and civil war.

He organised the Live Aid concerts in London and Philadelphia which raised another 10 million dollars for the people of Ethiopia.

The futility of this money in the face of an enormous debt led him to spearhead the Jubilee 2000 campaign.

7. BONO

With the recent ‘Great Britons’ causing a million pub arguments, Donal Griffin attempts to start a million more with his list of the Ten Greatest Irishmen and Irishwomen.

Irish Geldof’s humanitarian efforts show a man of conscience and conviction

8. JAMES JOYCE

Joyce’s magnum opus, Ulysses, which is regarded as the greatest work of fiction ever created, really should be enough reason to be in this list. The fact that he continued to write while the most challenging and this is why he deserves his place in this list.

His life is littered with examples of unbridled arrogance but a man doesn’t live for 92 years without making mistakes.

He balanced these mistakes with moments of absolute greatness and this is why he deserves his place in this list.

9. MARY ROBINSON

It is often overlooked that Mary Robinson was facing an electoral defeat until a series of Fianna Fail cock-ups. But one would be foolish to regard her as just another attractive TV presenter.

In 2001, she showed the world what the hands of the Northern Alliance. She exposed the presidency for what it was a position of potential, not a politician’s retirement home. She came to synthesise the role of a president.

She was the first to exercise her rights to the utmost, she earns her place.

10. GEORGE BEST

It’s accepted that the three most naturally talented footballers were Pelé, Diego Maradona and a Belfast boy, son of a Harland and Wolff shipyard worker.

Born in 1946, George Best was only 17 when he made his debut for Man Utd.

He was only 19 when he destroyed the legendary Brazil team, scoring twice in a 1-5 victory. It was the match which made him a star.

His looks, charisma, talent and staggering talent knocked the game of football on its head.

He was the first sexy footballer, replacement for the Bobby Charlton types in the world’s imagination of what a footballer should be.

In the end, he was consumed by the swing of football, dropping from grace but every time you see a footballer driving a flash car or wearing an Armani suit, remember that Georgie started it all.
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A myth at Christmas

Coca-Cola invented Santa Claus. Right? Christmas is therefore a corporate event, far removed from the feelings of love for your fellow man and Christian charity. Right? Coca-Cola, being a large multi-national corporation, have high-jacked a religious festival and made money more important than the birth of Christ. Right? Therefore, as the cynics would have us believe, Christmas is not worth celebrating at all because of its crass commercialism? Right? Wrong. The belief that Coca-Cola invented Christmas is entirely erroneous and based on a tissue of lies which the DIT Independent will now expose a large hole through.

Santa has always been an essential part of the Christmas celebration, but the modern image of Santa didn't develop until well into the 19th century. He was an evolutionary creation. In 1820, Washington Irving became a member of the Society & the annual St Nicholas Day dinner festivities included a woodcut of the traditional Nicholas figure (tall, with long robes) accompanied by a Dutch rhyme about "Sance Claus".

On Christmas Eve of 1822, another New Yorker, Clement Clarke Moore, wrote down and read to his children a series of verses, his poem was published a year later as "An Account of a Visit from St. Nicholas" (more commonly known today by its opening line, "Twas the night before Christmas...").

Moore gave St Nick eight reindeer (and named them all), and he devised the now-familiar entrance by chimney. Moore's Nicholas was still a representation of the infant Jesus (the Christ child, or "Christkindlein"). The modern Santa Claus derived from these two images: St Nicholas and the gift-giver described by Moore, and a friendlier "Kris Kringle", from Christkindlein. In 1863, a New Yorker named Thomas Nast began developing his own image of Santa. Nast gave his figure a "flowing set of whiskers" and dressed him "all in fur, from his head to his foot." Nast's 1866 montage entitled "Santa Claus and His Works" established Santa as a maker of toys; an 1889 book of the same name collected new Nast drawings with a poem by George P. Webb that identified the North Pole as Santa's home.

Although Nast never settled on one size for his Santa figures (they ranged from elf-like to man-sized), his 1881 "Merry Old Santa Claus" drawing is quite close to the modern-day image.

The Santa Claus figure, although not yet standardized, was ubiquitous by the late 19th century. As early as 1869, Santa figures (they ranged from elf-like to man-sized), and he dressed in furs or cloth suits of red, blue, green, or purple.

Meanwhile, in part of Europe such as Germany, Nicholas the gift-giver had been superseded by a representation of the infant Jesus (the Christ child, or "Christkindlein").

A Boston printer named Louis Prang introduced the Christmas card to America, and in 1885 he issued a card featuring a red-suited Santa. The chubby Santa with a red suit (like an "overweight superhero") began to replace the frost-dressed, multicolored Santas.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the burgeoning Coca-Cola company used their first Santa character in their advertising campaign. Coca-Cola certainly helped make Santa Claus one of the most popular men in America, but they didn't invent him.

Contrary to popular knowledge, Coca-Cola did not invent Santa Claus. Against the backdrop of the Christmas season, the promise of a commercial celebration has always been a hallmark of Coca-Cola's advertising efforts. The image of Santa Claus in the public consciousness has been shaped and reinforced through Coca-Cola's marketing campaigns, making him an iconic figure in American culture.

The early 20th century saw Coca-Cola's first foray into holiday advertising, with images of Santa Claus first appearing in their ads in the early 1920s. This was part of a broader trend in American society, as Christmas began to be associated with consumerism and commercialism.

As the years went on, Coca-Cola continued to feature Santa Claus in its ads, helping to solidify his image as a symbol of the season. This trend continued through the years, with Coca-Cola's Santa Claus becoming an enduring icon of the holiday season.
**Wyclef over the edge at Ambassador**

"I REMEMBER... when we used to sit in a government yard in DUBLIN!!! And so the crowd went wild. Wyclef Jean started off on a great note and didn’t let the standard drop once throughout this three-and-a-half hour gig. Stevie G, a Cork DJ, had warmed the crowd up and Creative Control played a fired-up support slot. But it was Mr. Fugee who walked on stage, the Ambassador Theatre crowd went wild!!!

Wyclef’s choice of cover versions was very clever. After ‘No Woman No Cry’, he launched straight into House of Pain’s ‘Jump Around’ and every single person in the place got up from their seat and... jumped around. We didn’t sit down once after that. It’s impossible to do justice in writing to the energy that Wyclef poured into this gig.

This may, however, have been due to the pint of Guinness he was pouring into himself throughout (or ‘Black Velvet’ as he called it - apparently Bono had recommended it to him) but his enthusiasm was unbelievably infectious. Stevie G clearly spotted The Edge in the crowd giving it loads to Bob Marley. The audience clearly spotted Wyclef obviously spotted him too as he played an instrumental version of ‘Sunday Bloody Sunday’ and the crowd learned to stare up at the 12.3 man.

The highlight of the night was definitely when The Edge was invited on stage and accompanied Mr. Jean in a fifteen-minute version of ‘With or Without You’.

It could have easily come off as a cringy, record-company-organised affair but it certainly didn’t seem like it. Wyclef appeared to be genuinely in awe of The Edge and it did, at the time, feel like a special moment, even to someone like myself who’s not a huge U2 fan.

Crowd interaction plays a major role in Wyclef’s live shows. He got up on stage throughout the gig to ‘grind’ with his two lady dancers from New York (who wore brilliant dresses but threw them off if they weren’t any good. Before ‘911’, he invited Bigman graciously onto the stage and accompanied him with his two lady dancers from World Class Dance. The Edge then went on to perform an excellent medley which included ‘Ready or Not’ and ‘Fugee-La.’

However, it was irrelevant to the night because it was more like a huge nightclub atmosphere and a serious gig. Nor could a Fugees fan be genuinely in awe of The Edge and, at the time, it wasn’t really an issue. If I was a die-hard Wyclef fan, I probably would have had a problem with the fact that the last honer was basically just Wyclef dancing around on stage to songs being played by his DJ (Aha’s ‘Take on Me’), and Cyndi Lauper’s ‘Girls Just Wanna Have Fun’ amongst others.

However, this was irrelevant on stage because it was more like a huge nightclub atmosphere and a serious gig. Nor could a Fugees fan be genuinely in awe of The Edge and, at the time, it wasn’t really an issue. If I was a die-hard Wyclef fan, I probably would have had a problem with the fact that the last honer was basically just Wyclef dancing around on stage to songs being played by his DJ (Aha’s ‘Take on Me’), and Cyndi Lauper’s ‘Girls Just Wanna Have Fun’ amongst others.

I have a dream that Wyclef had to provide everyone with a great night out. He knows as much as we do that it’s brilliant fun dancing around to familiar songs rather than sitting on the edges. I’m sure there are many who would question this approach but in terms of entertainment value, it’s unbeatable. His own songs, like ‘Ti Don’t Matter’ and ‘Gone Til November’ stood impressively beside old disco classics that were bouncing from the decks too. It was this perception on his part that caused this to be an amazingly energetic gig, without a dull moment.

After a blistering three-and-a-half hours, The Edge appeared on stage again and they finished with a very ‘lighters in the air’ version of ‘Knockin’ on Heaven’s Door. We finally left the Ambassador at 1am, completely and utterly overwhelmed by the entertainment value, it’s unbeatable. His own songs, like ‘Ti Don’t Matter’ and ‘Gone Til November’ stood impressively beside old disco classics that were bouncing from the decks too. It was this perception on his part that caused this to be an amazingly energetic gig, without a dull moment.

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It certainly seems that the future is bright for this year-old band with little hopes that they would ever see the light of the charts. They are producing their own singles and albums, ensuring that they can be their own bosses (no fear of Marnie Carey syndrome here).

The band comprised of Chris Bmorley, his brother Ger and Phil nudiman. They have a huge following in the USA with a diehard crowd who’s not a huge U2 fan. The Edge appeared on stage again and they finished with a very ‘lighters in the air’ version of ‘Knockin’ on Heaven’s Door. We finally left the Ambassador at 1am, completely and utterly overwhelmed by the entertainment value, it’s unbeatable. His own songs, like ‘Ti Don’t Matter’ and ‘Gone Til November’ stood impressively beside old disco classics that were bouncing from the decks too. It was this perception on his part that caused this to be an amazingly energetic gig, without a dull moment.

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**Has anything really changed for the country people?**

**Kieran Dineen has a dream...**

**The fact is that the culchie is not seen as equal...**

**Exiled Culchies must have justice...**

**Good Days ahead for Doris**

By Eoin Murphy.

In the midst of Dublin’s eclectic music scene lies a band on the verge of success. Doris, a three piece band, are backing up the band in tour dates and songs, with other small groups who failed to do justice in writing to the energy that Wyclef poured into this gig.

In fact some worthy
crowd were unimpressed by the Commitments and Doris, they had a unique sound that has been absent from the music scene since the early Picture House and Staring albums were released. They have a huge following in the USA with a diehard crowd who’s not a huge U2 fan. The Edge appeared on stage again and they finished with a very ‘lighters in the air’ version of ‘Knockin’ on Heaven’s Door. We finally left the Ambassador at 1am, completely and utterly overwhelmed by the entertainment value, it’s unbeatable. His own songs, like ‘Ti Don’t Matter’ and ‘Gone Til November’ stood impressively beside old disco classics that were bouncing from the decks too. It was this perception on his part that caused this to be an amazingly energetic gig, without a dull moment.

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**Thirty years on, a great civil rights activist; in whose face a sympathetic shadow. A writer today, delivered on the steps at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. that he had a dream speech’**

This momentous decade came as a great beacon of light to thousands of culchies in Dublin who had been starved in the flames of withering prejudices and mockery. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of inferiority. But, thirty years on, we must face the fact that the culchie is not seen as equal. Thirty years later, the manacles of segregation and oppression, a bitterly cried lip, the culchie is still being spotted in the corners of Dublin society and finds himself an outcast in his adopted city. Today, we demand justice. When architects of the Republic wrote the Proclamation, they dreamt of a society where jackenists and culchies lived side by side. It
Shortt stretches Vicar St stint

By Nicky Griffin

Pat Shortt extended his run in Vicar Street, adding an extra night due to the popular demand for his unique style of comedy.

Pat was in fine form on the night and went down well with his bold head, cheeky grin and flamboyant costumes.

Many of his well-known characters from the O'Unbelievables set featured and some new ones were thrown in for good measure.

Black Magic in the Olympia

By Eoin Murphy

LAST time the Violent Femmes came to Dublin they were on a mission to promote a long awaited album release. This time they took over the newly renovated Vicar Street to give a homage for their fans.

They sold out arena was waiting with baited and slightly breath for a perfect show and what a show they received.

For the Femmes conosco, it had it all from the moment they opened the show with the familiar banging of flitter in the sun.

They provided a healthy mix of both old and nearly new to whipt the crowd into a frenzy. It seems that even to today's popular and rivals market there is still room for the old reliables.

One of the more impressive aspects of the concert was the international appeal that was created by this eclectic band. Aside from two crazy Italian women, twirling beer and moshing at the fore of the crowd, there were notable contingents of Australians, New Zealanders, English and a hearty collection of Americans.

It is clear that time has not afflicting these aging rockers as they belted out their classic hits for nearly two hours in front of a grateful capacity crowd.

The band that started off as buskers and rose to fame with a string of catchy hits in the 80's still have their finger on the musical pulse as their unorthodox semi acoustic style wows audiences.

This was an incredibly intimate gig with the crowd practically up on the stage and if they ever decide to come back this reporter will be front row centre.

Creme de la Femme

By Clara Connane

A strange sight greets us as we walk into the Olympia tonight. Instead of the usual bright lights and empty stage while the venue fills, darkness rules as a DJ spins mellow dance and rock grooves on a smoke machine and amp embellished with lights. Lead guitarist, the hugely adored Ronan, told me afterwards that there is also a bassist and drummer, but they could not afford to fly from Philadelphia.

Nevertheless, the two men apply fill the stage with their adroit guitar licks and rhythms. Similar to BRMC, they alternate lead vocals and guitar parts and to an equally great effect. An EP is planned for these show soon.

After 'Ty Cobb', the DJ reappears to lead us into the main act. BRMC arrive to an electric reaction.

Controversially, they open with new song, '6 Barrel Shotgun', but it is well received. The set is a superb blend of crowd pleasers from the aptly called BRMC, to an extraordinary and inspiring show.

The show provides welcome financial income for Shortt since it is uncertain whether he will work again with Jon Kenny of the D'Unbelievables. Kenny took ill this year with a rare form of cancer and is still in recovery period.

Even without his partner in crime, Pat Shortt gave a sterling performance and looked solid throughout.

He is by far one of the finest comics in the country and brings something a little different to the stage. For the Femmes conosco, it had it all from the moment they opened the show with the familiar banging of flitter in the sun.

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Anarchy from the UK

The Alabama 3 are eternal underdogs and enjoy that status. They have often been heralded as Britain’s most unseemly band, but one can’t help feeling that the self-styled power of Britney is not really on their agenda.

On November 25th, the eclectic collective played that beacon for the alternative and wonderful that is Viceroy Street (although, it is rumoured that our very own ‘Ska’ are to grace the stage around Christmas time – get your credit cards ready now!).

Defining the Alabama 3 is a trick which any writer would relish. It would not be impossible to write an entire thesis on this trio, although their non-pulsing temperament would not welcome it. Let me throw in my own suggestion: their nudging-pot style. Cross Deep South, NWA advocates with Motown rapping, hard-core socialists and you’re still not even close.

Their counter-funded gospel rock from Nashville via Breton has made the sextet something of a mysterious cult. The band’s sound is as strange as their physical presence, which itself is reminiscent of the wizened characters of an Irvine Welsh novel. I had never seen the group live before but having experienced their unique take on Hic, I can say I was suitably impressed.

Their mercurial brand of performance is infectious, yet this passion never concedes to sloppiness and each number is performed to perfection.

The twin and printed illustrated style of the band’s frontman, the Very Reverend Dr D Wayne Love, is indicative of his post-modern, post-horror-chic, narcotic ravaged insatiable persona.

Their energetic performance outdoes their three albums in equal measure. The audience reserved special enthusiasm for classic numbers from their first album ‘Exile on Coldharbour Lane’ such as ‘You Don’t Dance To Techno Anymore’ and the theme tune to ‘The Sopranos’, ‘Woke Up This Morning’.

However, their latest album ‘Pistol In The Blood’ was equally well received, indicating their avid following had been awaiting up on this recently released material.

The new album reinforces their political views with contemporaneous references to the British Nationalist Party ‘enacting refugees senselessly in old Oldham Town’.

If you’re not familiar with the Alabama 3, buy all three of their albums. At once. They are anarchic. They’re the Sex Pistols for the new millennium, but much, much better than Reagan or Vieques, even dreamt of being. They don’t have no country, don’t fly no flag. They can no slack for the Union Jack. The Sex Pistols are out with all those getting.

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Santa Cruz is Comin’ To Town

By Alana Doogan

The Thrills
Santa Cruz (You’re Not That Far) E.P.

The Thrills released their debut single, Santa Cruz (You’re Not That Far), on 5th November. Their style is based somewhere between the Beach Boys, Ryan Adams, and Travis. Notably they share the latter’s fondness for the banjo and use of the ballad.

The title track is the most upbeat song they offer on the EP. It gets off to a slow start, with a bouncy-rock style accompanied by a slickly harmonious and syncopated, vamping piano in the chorus soon boosting the tempo and giving the song a bit of life.

The second song on the single, Deckchairs And Cigarettes, is a ballad with minimum embellishment, emphasising lead singer Connor Deasy’s voice, adding a bit of emotion to the song.

The third song, Your Love Is Like Las Vegas starts with alarming similarity to Celine Dion’s Twenty-Four Hours from Taos but thankfully breaks free from the similarities to a Fleetwood Mac tune as soon as the vocals enter.

The fourth song, Plans, is another ballad with little to offer lyrically but a good melody with strong harmonies.

The 3 lads, formerly known as The Cheating Housewives, hail from Dublin and are currently in Los Angeles recording their album due for release in spring 2003.

Nothing Posh in D4

By Stephen McMullen

The D4 - Come On! EP

If you’ve never heard of the D4, you have my sincerest sympathies. While New Zealand may not be the first place you might consider as the home of dirty, raw garage-punk, this quartet prove that Kiwis can do it just as well as New Yorkers.

Their debut album, 6Twenty, released earlier this year showcased the immense energy in the music these boys play and their packed-out gigs in Whelan’s have proved that they are not just another bloody new rock band, à la The Strokes.

Come On! is one of the standout tracks from that album and was always destined for release as a single.

With its infectious bouncy party feel and heavy dose of late-seventies punk attitude this song will have you torn between dancing the night away and spitting on everyone within range.

The B-sides themselves aren’t at all bad either. Obviously intended to take the Christmas market by storm, I Don’t Believe in Xmas and Santa Claus are like anti-hymns put through a heavy distortion unit and given a New York Dolls kick.

If Johnny Thunders were still alive, he’d be proud to see his legacy stretching as far as it has. Pure quality and the perfect stocking filler.

Memories of Mic with posthumous LP

By Nicky Griffin

Mic Christopher - Skylarkin

This is Mic Christopher’s first full length album, following the ‘Heyday EP’ released in 2001. It has been released posthumously, following his tragic death this time last year.

Raised in Dublin, he has a rich background in the music scene, varying from booking on Grafton Street to two studio-produced albums with his former band, the Mary Janes. Following their split in 1999, he toured solo, before being invited to open for the Waterboys on their 2001 European tour.

The album’s tender acoustic sound coupled with its heartfelt lyrics make it extremely pleasant to listen to. His lengthy time spent as a busker shines through, delivering the unchallenged sound of one man and his guitar.

The four songs that constitute the ‘Heyday EP’ are also on Skylarkin. ‘Heyday’ is an upbeat showcase of his deep vocals, ‘Kids’ Song’ is a fragile, innocent song about segregation and ‘Listen Girl’ is a mellow, dreamy love song, ‘Looking for Jude’, although uplifting, has a chorus a little too similar to ‘Heyday’.

These four songs really stand out on the album, but there are a few other gems such as the Beatles-esque ‘That’s What Good Friends Do’, and the lush, reflective ‘What a Curious Notion’.

The album is being released on the first anniversary of his death, November 29th. This will be celebrated with a gig in Vicar Street at which Mic’s friends will perform his music, with all proceeds going to a children’s charity.
By Bryan Collins

This Christmas, two major franchises are gunning for a space in your DVD collection. Peter Jackson is having a second go at the market with the release of a special edition of the Fellowship of the Ring. Meanwhile, Lucas is wooing his starstruck fan base with Attack of the Clones.

A long time ago in a galaxy far far away, there lived a certain baker, 'exceedingly ropey in patches and why did he even make enough money to do this?' To Jackson's credit, his special edition of Lord of the Rings held the promise of providing an improved version of his film. The Four CD volume contained more features than you can shake a hobbit at. The DVD held not one but four, yes, four commentaries from the cast, the production crew, the writers and of course Peter himself. There's plenty of behind-the-scenes footage, more than enough to pass the festive season; there's even an interactive map of Middle Earth!

It is however, the new cut of the film that puts the special in special edition. Peter Jackson has painstakingly edited a further half an hour of footage into the film. Wasn't it long enough at just under three hours before?

The answer is a definite no. The extra half-hour adds greatly to what was already a film so broad in depth and scope. It was frightening.

In fact, the extra half-hour are scenes in the Shire, the gift giving sequence, and extra action footage. This is the definitive version of the film. (Alas no two discs.) Doh! But Jackson explains why in the commentary.

If you've hated The Fellowship of the Ring, this special edition won't change your mind. This DVD is going to appeal to those who thoroughly enjoyed the book and praised the film. The exhaustive list of extras should satisfy even the hungriest hobbit enthusiast.

R eviewing Star Wars is an uncertain path. Are you going to buy this no matter what the critics say? (I know I did.) So are they right to part with the overvalued Euro?

Attack of the Clones had a problem. The dialogue was awful. The acting was ropey in patches and why did they let it go on for so long? But people have been unfairly harsh on the film. The projects had quite a legacy to live up to, i.e. one of the greatest franchises ever. Also, I don't know if anyone has watched the original trilogy recently but the dialogue wasn't up to much then either.

Despite its problem, Attack of the Clones is a success. The film looks great, its climax being a case in point (ball, even Yoda uses a light sabre). Acting wise, Ewan Mc Gregor and Christopher Lee hold themselves admirably.

Hayden Christensen is good at the angry bits while Nathalie Portman looks hot. Plot wise, Lucas ties some of his strands together nicely. Lucas's far away galaxy might not be as pristine as Middle Earth but it's still good fun.

When it comes to the stronger film the force might well be with Peter Jackson but don't write off Lucas's Attack of the Clones DVD either.

The Phantom Menace's extra were, in the words of a certain baker, 'exceedingly bloated'. The ample supply of extras turned what was a mediocre film into an essential purchase. There's no let up with Attack of The Clones. Included is the obligatory commentary, an extensive series of behind the scenes documentaries and the usual or perhaps infamous deleted scenes.

Those critiquing this DVD argued the deleted scenes were not of the action kind, and focused too much on the poorly written romance between Anakin and Padme. Maybe, but the film is still bloated with action sequences. The deleted scenes add an extra touch to the film's background. (Perhaps Lucas should have deleted a few more scenes from the actual film though?) The documentaries are insightful and prove interesting viewing for any self-confessed fan.

Ultimately, if you have to make the call between the two franchises this Christmas, borrow your mate's Star Wars. Jackson's offering is lord of the DVD's and worth every inflated cent.

Two Towers to lord over Christmas box office

By Miguel Delaney

The hype only just seems to have died down since the last Harry Potter but excitement is already building for yet another fantasy novel sequel. Yes, December sees the long awaited release of the second instalment of the Lord of the Rings trilogy, the Two Towers.

The film of the second book in JRR Tolkien's saga has a lot to live up to. The Fellowship of the Ring was a breathtaking visual epic featuring groundbreaking special effects. Probably the biggest movie series since the original Star Wars trilogy. Four Oscars, host of Baftas, of which Jackson explains why in the commentary.

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The film of the second book in JRR Tolkien's saga has a lot to live up to.

The majority of that will come in the film's centrepiece - the Battle at Helm's Deep. Described by the film's special effects guru Richard Taylor as 'one of the greatest triumphs of cinema history' this digitally created battle will consist of Aragorn leading the Riders of Rohan against 10,000 Orcs.

The Two Towers will also see a host of new characters introduced, including the digitally created Treebeard and wise King of Rohan, Theoden, played by Bernard Hill.

The film also marks the return of Gandalf (don't worry, it's not a spoiler, he's in the trailer), reborn as the infinitely more powerful Gandalf the White.

However, the most eagerly awaited aspect of the Two Towers will be the appearance of Gollum, the mutated and twisted former bearer of the ring. WETA Workshop, responsible for the effects in Fellowship of the Ring, have employed the groundbreaking technique of digital motion capture to animate the character and it will be intriguing to see how he is brought to the screen.

If Jackson manages to pull such brave moves off then The Two Towers looks set to surpass the Fellowship of the Ring and provide a true classic this Christmas.
UCD end unbeaten run

By Seamus Reilly

DIT's Senior Football side finally lost their unbeaten run in the higher education league game as they fell to a strong UCD team this week.

After a poor start, UCD went on to dominate the first half and score another two goals to win the match.

UCD were full of confidence going into the game, as they had not lost to a strong team for some time. UCD's defence was solid and they nullified the DIT threat with ease.

DIT's manager Mickey Whelan was left fuming after the loss, as his team could not find the net despite their best efforts.

UCD's three first half goals were enough to take the lead, and they went on to win the match 3-0.

Third place finish shows potential but ultimately disappointing

UCD's win against DIT was their first of the season, and it showed their potential in the higher education league. However, DIT's defeat was a wake-up call for the team, as they had been in good form leading up to the match.

DIT's defeat came as a shock, as they had been hoping to win the match and move up in the league table.

UCD's win was a testament to their hard work and determination, as they played well throughout the game and created many scoring opportunities.

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Hynes takes silver as DIT come fifth in Cross Country Championships

By Colin McGann

SINCE we have arrived back to college it's been raining non-stop, one of the reasons why sports news is littered with cancellations. For a while Tolka Park could have replaced the cross-country runners running during an Irish winter but this is what cross-country runners prepare for during the other three seasons.

On Tuesday the 26th November Athlone IT played host to the HESF Cross Country Championships. DIT has always been well placed in these championships despite a lack of athletes. This on occasion four of our boys went to the starting line.

Athlone have hosted this race for the last number of years and the course has gained a reputation for being very fast. Despite the amount of rain we have had the course remained remarkably dry and so with the good grass.

Gary Hynes, who had finished a remarkable 10th in the All Ireland Inter College Cross Country Championships in Maynooth in the previous Sunday, again showed his ability by racing himself into second place. For a while Tolka Park could have replaced the cross-country runners running during an Irish winter but this is what cross-country runners prepare for during the other three seasons.

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Gary Hynes will be in contention for a medal in the 3000m. and Herbie is hoping that DIT can also pick up a medal in the sprints.

The next important athletics championships will take place in Dublin. On the 30th DIT will be clear plastic boards and titanium rings as the results from the 1500m. will show. The New Years resolutions to get national buses and travel to Europe. With only one DIT Man's team running in Galway. Athletes looking to take part in these are asked to get in touch with the sports officer as soon as possible.

DIT have had serious trouble forming competitive teams and coming up to Claire Herbst would be an ideal opportunity to get involved in athletics in DIT and to get in touch sooner rather than later. Judging from the results in Athlone there is potential there in this team and in fact there is a matter for numbers to show.

As of yet there are very few ladies interested in the club. New Years resolutions to get some exercise would be much appreciated.

The 21st of November witnessed another topping in 18 DIT INDEPENDENT DECEMBER 2002

Haleian stars as DIT fail to Trinity

By Seosamhnie Ni Ghallainigh

DIT ladies Gaelic Football Team fell to Trinity College at muad sodann Trinity Ground on Saturday this month, despite putting in a spirited and at times exciting performance.

Playing with a strong breeze, Trinity went into a 2-0 lead before Laura Halligan expertly converted a penalty she had herself. Trinity hit back with a goal and two points, before Halligan again slotted her marker and Trinity on the bar to leave the half-time score 3-03 to 1-01 in favour of Trinity.

Playing with the breeze, Haleian started the half with a typical tactical goal, following a ripping shot from Ann Marie Buckley which the keeper failed to save.

A real tussle seemed in store but badly, the heavy conditions took their toll on DIT and it was the Trinity girls who finished the stronger, scoring freely in the last quarter to win by 5-06 to 0-02.

For DIT on the day were forward Ann Marie Buckley, midfielder Lindsey Gilmour and in defence full-backs Kathleen Holmes and Suzanne Ledwith tried hardest. However player of the match was undoubtedly Laura Halligan who got all DIT scores for the day. The full forward has been most consistent for the club in recent times.

DIT performances have improved dramatically this year under new manager Michael Roche. If not for their losses of two of our best players out for training and games, success will not be far behind, anyone available contact Michael at 087-8784553. DIT ladies plan to go on a skiing trip at Christmas and need your support in Kavanganas, Temple bar on Wed 10th Dec. A great night is guaranteed all.
Top ten sporting moments of 2002

Compiled by Miguel Delaney, Daragh Clifford, Jason Burke and Ciaran Murray

1. Ireland beat Australia
On a unique day when all three of the Southern Hemisphere rugby powers found themselves defeated within minutes of a World Cup exit.

2. 4 Paul McGinley wins the Ryder Cup for Europe
Tactically it was a brilliant move by European captain Sam Torrance. For Sunday’s singles matches, he sent out his old pros, early, deep, they delivered.

3. Robbie Keane v Germany
The one moment of true drama (on that pitch) of Ireland’s World Cup campaign. Having been much put all year.

4. 5 Ireland beat Australia
On a unique day when all three of the Southern Hemisphere rugby powers found themselves defeated within minutes of a World Cup exit.

5. 6 DJ Carey
Well what can we say? DJ played a total of 140 minutes in this year’s championship, but somehow enough to change the hearts of the country all over again. Kilkenny, who looked like champions in the Kilkenny final against Wexford, was turned around magically by the DJ in the semi-final against Tipperary.

6. Against Clare in the final, a traditionally strong Clare defence from the first minute. The greatest forward of our day, and possibly of all time. DJ ranks up there with other hurling gods like Christy Ring and Nicky Rackard.

7. Media Puzzle wins the Melbourne Cup
Not only the highlights of the year for Irish racing but also a landmark victory in one of the world’s most prestigious races that stops a nation.

8. 8 Ronaldo’s miraculous rebirth
When Ronaldo’s knee collapsed three years ago, the injury was more than a blow for his club Inter Milan and Brazil - the whole world felt it.

9. 9 Five-star Ferrari
Formula 1’s credibility took a battering during 2002. This season was half-controled, and controversial. However it would be wrong to give credit to last year’s World Champions, Beccarelli F1, who deservedly won the title.

10. Ireland’s Winter Olympian
It had been a long time coming for the Irish public, finally got the sporting success they had been waiting for from the Irishman, just in time for the Winter Olympics.

By Jason Burke
Over Christmas and New Year, grab a can, sit back and take the darts. Before you go grabbing the page, this article is in the right section of the paper. Yet it is a sport and yes, darts players can be classed as sportspersons, not quite athletes though.

Over the festive season, Darts World Championships will take place. Where are they? Why are there two? The answer lies in the money and advertising and a split that occurred in 1994. Currently, there are four tours that beat the traditional fans of darts to enjoy two great tournaments each year.

So, which is better, the BDO or the PDC? The ten-time World Champion Phil Taylor?

Phil Taylor
Championship that Sky Sports televised? A case can be made for both. Statistically, the BDO is regarded as being better but it is the voice of PDC darts, Sid Waddell. Waddell has a unique style of commentary.

Sid Waddell
Nobody would suggest that many of these players could not be better but when you consider the size of the BDO to the PDC over the years means that now, many of the best players and exciting characters are part of the PDC.

12 hours a day, but he’s not shy of the body barg.

Favourie for this year’s Championship will be world number one Tony David. The challenge may come from the garrulous Andy Fordham, known as the King and not because he needs his adrenalin, like Ray Barneved. Dubbed ‘Barney’ is arguably the most exciting player in Embassy Darts.

The PDC championships may take a familiar look if they were sweeping all before him. The ten-time World Champion thought by many to be the greatest of all time. Would Phil be number one in the world? Who would lose their job at the BBC to accommodate Waddell? We’re even though fans of darts can hardly complain.

So this Christmas check out the Darts. As Waddell puts it: ‘You couldn’t get more exciting here if Elvis went into eating a chip sandwich’.
do your banking when it suits you

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Gráinne Muldoon
AIB, Bolton Street – 874 0409
Anne-Marie White
AIB, Kevin Street – 475 9680
and AIB, Aungier Street – 475 9654 about

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