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Roses meltdown leaves AU counting their losses

Lizzie Houghton and Samantha Newsham

TWO WEEKS AFTER one of the heaviest Roses defeats in Lancaster's history, the university's teams and athletic union are starting to piece together what went wrong. A lack of practice, poor travelling arrangements and subpar facilities have all been blamed for Lancaster's performance.

The later timing of the competition has also been cited. Many teams have said they had to field weakened squads, as players found games clashed with exams. Roses has traditionally been played over the May bank holiday weekend. This year it was staged a week after. Poor refereeing was also blamed.

Lancaster lost to York 194.5-79.4. Had Lancaster not picked up some vital points on the closing Sunday, York would have easily passed the 200 point mark. Neither university has yet to achieve this. Lancaster floundered, finishing the Friday with just 14.5 points to York's 62.5. By the end of Saturday York had passed the 'magic number' 138, effectively winning the competition.

Players from Lancaster's tennis and badminton squads said they'd only had "two or three" in the run up to Roses.

Both lost out to York's team. The Athletic Union president, Gareth Coleman, admitted that it has been hard for Lancaster's teams this year, being without traditional practice grounds.

He said: "We've struggled here because of the lack of an astro turf. That's been a very big hindrance for our football, rugby, hockey etc. That slashes your training sessions down from the word go."

Coleman said he had arranged for there to be extra opportunities for teams to train in the Sports Centre. But limited space again hindered Lancaster's preparation. "We only have one main hall for indoors, so it's very, very tricky. Just in comparison to York: they have indoor squash courts, an indoor main hall and the sports tent which can be used for anything." It's not just lack of practice that teams have blamed. The finger has also been pointed at the standard of Lancaster's facilities. Robin Honey, captain of Lancaster's Table Tennis team, pointed out that his squad's practice space is confined to the viewing gallery in the Sports Centre. "The Table Tennis training conditions at Lancaster have very little to be desired," He said. "With such a small area, its impossible to train advanced players. We have relied upon the natural talent of our players and the organisation of the club this season, rather than any form of intensive train-



Triumphant: York's Sports President, Alex Lacy, lifts the Carter-James Trophy. (Photo: Rob Miller)

ing, which simply isn't possible in the space provided."

A new sports centre is on the horizon at Lancaster, although it is not yet known when construction will begin. Speaking at Roses Lancaster's Vice-Chancellor, Paul Wellings, said he was confident that once the facilities had been updated, Lancaster would be back on track. "The sports fields [in York] are a bit more playable than ours; ours have just been drowned. The new sports centre is coming on at Lancaster. These things catch up in cycles. In a few years time I think things will close again. For the first two decades Lancaster was ahead. Now York have their nose in front so we've got to catch up."

Despite practical hindrances, there has been the suggestion by some that certain teams no longer take the competition seriously. A member of one of Lancaster's athletic societies claimed that she was woken in the early hours on the morning by members of another team coming in drunk. Both parties apparently had games the next day, but this has not been confirmed.

This will be the second time in the last decade that York has won three Roses in a row. Third years leaving this year will never have seen a Lancaster victory.

Full coverage: 22-32 >

Fusion finished: Cuba's £10,000 debt moves LUSU to axe student night

Liam Richardson
Editor-elect

THE FUTURE OF Fusion, the official student night held in the nightclub Cuba, has been placed in serious doubt as the club has failed to pay back money it owes LUSU. The debt of £10,430, must be cleared before the two parties enter into any further trading negotiations. It is up to the LUSU Trustees and JCRs to decide if Fusion continues next year.

The night, which takes places on a Tuesday, is affiliated with Lonsdale, Fylde, Pendle and County, with a pre-Cuba

social alternating between the colleges each week.

LUSU president, Michael Payne, explained the current stance the union: "As a charity, LUSU can't be a creditor for an organisation. We're here to enhance the student experience not to prop up a bar or club in town. We'll find the best possible deal for students, in consultation with all the JCRs." Payne was also keen point out that the "excellent" work of the JCRs wasn't degraded by this matter and would be kept separate.

This setback for Cuba, follows a two week licensing suspension issued by Lancaster City Council in March, im-

posed for failing to display a premises license and selling alcohol to under-18s. The club's manager and former Lonsdale JCR president, Sebastian Negreira, said the club had made great strides and "improved its health and safety record".

Negreira, when asked if he felt Fusion would continue, answered that it was up to the "trustees and JCRs to give the go-ahead". He went on to play down the row with LUSU saying there was "no animosity, no issue, no problems".

The loss of Fusion might dismay many students and puts pressure upon LUSU to find a viable alternative. Negreira made clear that Fusion's continuation was in the "interests of both

**Cuban embargo:**

Cuba owes LUSU £10,430. It hasn't made any payments to LUSU since February.

parties". But current Lonsdale JCR president, Matt Windsor, had a warning for Cuba that LUSU can easily go elsewhere. He said: "As long as the clubs in town respect LUSU... I don't see why we can't keep enjoying as many nights out as possible. Fusion is one of the many pub to club deals that exist at Lancaster."

He added: "Long may these events, in one form or another, continue."

LUSU have allegedly not received a payment from the club since February this year and have not been handed information on attendance numbers since November 2008. The deal between the union and Cuba is apparently based on the club handing over £1 for every person who attends Fusion.

Fusion has been one of the most popular and innovative dates on the student social calendar in recent times, with various themed nights such as foam and popcorn parties, drawing in big attendances. Fusion's 'world tour' will continue until the end of term.

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BBQ restrictions imposed across campus



New regime: Locations of disposal bins are indicated on the map in fixme. Above, one of the bins.

THE UNIVERSITY HAVE announced new restrictions on the use of disposable barbecues on campus.

The use of the barbecues has been a hot topic in the university since one caused a fire in Pendle college at the beginning of this term. Repairing the damage is expected to cost £50,000.

The safety office have restricted the use of barbecues to designated areas

around metal barrels for the disposal of the hot trays. Those bins are located at:

- By the electric barbecues in County and Grizedale colleges.
- The slopes in front of campus, with a bin by Lake Carter and another one further up the hill, by the woods.
- Alexandra Park, by the perimeter road, overlooking the football pitches.

The measures are temporary, in-

tended as a stopgap until better disposal facilities can be installed.

In future, more locations on campus may be equipped with facilities for disposing of barbecues. In the meantime, students will be moved on by porters if found using barbecues outside the immediate area of the bins.

Head of Security, Mark Salisbury said: "It is requested that all staff and

students co-operate with these procedures in order to minimise risk."

He added: "New steel containers have been purchased in the short term and these should be used to dispose of all portable barbecues. Longer term, the university is producing options for fixed barbecue facilities throughout campus and changes to the use of portable barbecues will be kept under review."



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Anger at £57 Grad Ball ticket price

Lisa Stallard

WITH TICKETS FOR Grad Ball 2009 selling faster than this time last year, the rumours of dissatisfaction circulating around campus seem to be unreflective of the majority of students.

Since the line-up and price for Grad Ball 2009 have been announced, there has been criticism of LUSU and complaints over the acts chosen. Headlining this year is pop star Alesha Dixon, of Misteeq and Strictly Come Dancing fame. Other headlining acts include Bjorn Again, an ABBA tribute band who recently played for Russian President Vladimir Putin, and the Puppini Sisters, a 1940s style trio act.

But the feedback on the union's choice of act has not been completely positive. Fergus Jones, a member of one of two Facebook groups expressing annoyance at this year's Grad Ball, spoke of his feelings on the line-up. "I think it's just a bit of a slap in the face to graduating students to charge them £47/£57 for an incredibly sub-par line-up," he said. "It seems to show that LUSU has a distinct lack of imagination or very little contacts in the entertainment industry."

Other students have also complained about the dominant genre of music the night is catering for. Daniel Jarvis said: "The line up is a massive disappointment. I understand when organising the graduation celebrations for the whole university you have to cater for the masses... [but] who actually wants Alesha Dixon?"

But LUSU general secretary, Janie Coleman, defended the decisions on line-ups, saying that it was "not practical to ask for an act all people want and be able to get it – and also there's never consistency between people." Speaking of the choice of Alesha Dixon, she said: "people don't realise she's only on for half an hour and there's a lot more to the night than just her."

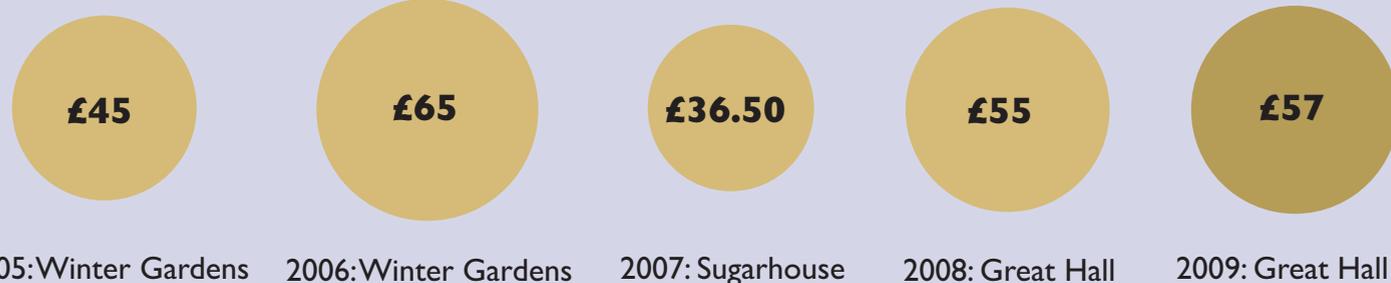
Of course, there are students who are happy with the line up. Rosie Holliday, a final year student in County, is – like many – unsure of her feelings towards Dixon, but said: "I think the complaints about Bjorn Again are a bit harsh, because you're never going to please everyone's taste in music." She added: "I suspect even those that would prefer some indie rock band will be enjoying themselves when Dancing Queen comes on." Jennifer Gaskell echoed such sentiments, saying that she thought Bjorn Again was a "perfect choice".

After one student had criticised LUSU for a "severe lack of negotiating skills", Coleman replied; "It's very difficult to get hold of any large acts to play at Grad Ball – and even if they sign contracts, they can never guarantee they can come – if there is a better offer, acts have clauses in contracts to appear elsewhere."

Another complaint has been about the price of the ticket. Although the ticket is only £2 more expensive than last year, there have been worries that the bulk of the revenue will be spent on an act that many are not bothered about. But Coleman informed SCAN that although an act such as Alesha Dixon



Grad Ball ticket prices over the last five years



costs about £20,000 for half an hour set, the money goes to many different places to make the night a success. Areas which need to be budgeted for include room and cleaning costs, VAT, security, decor, drinks reception and the Funfair which, contrary to many rumours, is included in the price of the ticket. "Grad Ball doesn't have a subsidy from LUSU, because of the subsidy that goes into the extras. We simply can't afford it."

The issue of food has also been a problem for students and LUSU alike. Many students have been asking why at least there is not a buffet included in the ticket price. Coleman explained why the Union had not incorporated any food. "Generally in the past, when held at Winter Gar-



dens, the food was not very good quality. Most complaints in the past have been about food, not necessarily the acts. In the past there have been options for discounts but nobody really took up the offer." She added that although the idea of a big sit down meal is lovely, "we can't please everyone and it would mean pushing ticket prices higher."

Another problem students have been airing, that LUSU claims would again raise ticket prices, is the venue. One student commented that the Great Hall was "a venue that hardly cries out sophistication". In response, Coleman explained: "there are not many places that can hold 1,500 people with a large stage apart from Sugarhouse. We tried it there and it was not what students wanted."

She went on to say that historically Grad Ball has been held on campus. "When it's decorated and it's got the bars in, the acts in their different places and people dressed up and lighting, it doesn't look like the Great Hall of exam sittings." Laura Whitak-

er, a politics finalist agreed, saying it made sense to hold it in "the epicentre of our degrees".

Demonstrating the dissatisfaction, an 'Alternative Graduating Students Social' facebook group has been set up, which, at the time of writing, had 637 members. Charlie Ross, one of the group's founders, explained its aims: "We started the group because we weren't happy at the cost and the quality of the Grad Ball but still wanted to spend a night with all our friends," he said. "The event is in no way trying to deter people from going to Grad Ball, we simply wanted to put on an extra night so people can go to both, or at least have the option to go to something. Our event will be considerably cheaper." The group is focussing on getting local bands, but there is no fixed price or acts as yet. Another, perhaps more cynical group took inspiration from Mastercard adverts, naming itself; 'Grad Ball £57...for everything else there's...', and a whole range of suggestions, both humorous and ridiculous, of how to spend the ticket price for Grad Ball.

Stress pushes students to the bar

Lizzie Houghton
News Editor

A NEW UNIT awareness campaign is being launched to help students keep track of how much they are drinking. The campaign will focus on student union bars, and will showcase different drinks and the equivalent number of units on beer mats, bar runners and posters.

The impetus for the campaign comes after Diageo Great Britain, the company behind Guinness and Smirnoff, commissioned a survey into student drinking habits. It found that one in five students drink more when under pressure, with exams cited as the biggest course of this pressure. 48% admitted to missing lectures or seminars because they had drunk too much the night before and 46% said their studying or revision suffered the next day because of drinking.

Ama Uzowuru, Vice President of Welfare at NUS, said: "There's no doubt that students are under increased pressure at exam time but drinking too much can add to that stress. These new unit awareness tools are a great way for students to identify exactly how much they are drinking so that they can make the most of their social life without compromising their studies."

The survey also found that students are unaware of the number of units their favourite drinks contain. Less than a quarter knew the amount of units in a pint of lager (2.8). One in three knew the amount in a glass of wine or a gin & tonic, (2.1 and 1.9 respectively).

Diageo GB's Corporate Relations Executive, Anthony Walker, explained



Drowning sorrows: 67% of students say their biggest course of stress is exams. One in five admit to drink more when under pressure.

the company's position. He said: "Letting your hair down and enjoying a drink with friends is part and parcel of university life for many students but they don't want it to harm their performance. We want to help students to stay on top of their game as exam season kicks off by giving them the tools

they need to keep track of what they're drinking."

Adult men are advised to drink no more than 21 units a week. Women are advised to have 14 units. According to the website, Drinkware, 31% of men in Britain and 20% of women drink more than the recommended weekly limits.

Long-awaited Bowland bar refurb put on hold due to costs

Liam Richardson
Editor-elect

THE PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT of Bowland bar is to be postponed until the next academic year. The university's Director of Facilities, Mark Swindlehurst, is apparently concerned over the costing of the project and so has refused to sign it off to allow building work to commence. The news coming just two weeks before it was due to close.

The Trough of Bowland will now be open until Fresher's Week 2009 at the earliest. Major events such as Extrav and Graduation are now subject to further alterations. The events are traditionally staged in the bar and its adjacent quad, but were due to take place in alternative locations because of the unavailability of the space.

Bowland's children's television themed extrav was scheduled to take place in the Great Hall on Tuesday 23rd May, the night following Grad Ball. There is now a strong likelihood that the extrav will return to Bowland quad, a move which pleases JCR President Tom Skarbek-Wazynski:

"This is a positive outcome. It has

meant a lot of work today and will mean a lot of work next week but then after that it should be much smoother. On the day it will be smoother because we know how to use the space for an extrav".

This optimistic appraisal is reflected by the current crop of third years who will now be graduating in Bowland quad. Former JCR President, and one of the graduates, Berni Denston told SCAN: "We'd all resigned ourselves to the fact we would be without a bar after week five. I'm really happy we have it back for the end of my final year".

There is an issue however, over how the next intake of Bowland fresher's will be integrated into the college. The old bar could potentially remain open until the end of Michaelmas term with the new one hopefully ready in time for Summer term. This does have implications for Lent term, in which the college will be without any social space, possibly hindering the operations of an incoming JCR in January 2010 and lowering the involvement of freshers in college activities.

College Principle Joe Thornberry was "disappointed but not overwhelmed" by the announcement that the bar will no longer close as planned

but was prepared to admit that university management, and in particular the Director of Facilities, had been more "supportive than not" during the course of the process. This viewpoint was reflected by Skarbek-Wazynski who claimed that Swindlehurst had promised greater consultation with the JCR over "furniture and decoration" for the new bar. Thornberry said in an email to SCR members in the direct aftermath of the announcement:

"This news is a disappointment to us all, not least because at a project exec meeting just last Monday I was given an optimistic assessment of the timescale which I then sent out in the Newsletter to senior members. It's a setback, but not a disaster. We'll deal with it as we always do with such events, with determination, imagination and humour, and in the knowledge that no matter what happens, we are still Bowland and we are still here."

Bowland Bar was preparing to stage an 'End of an Era' party on May 23 with £1,000 already spent on the event by the college SCR. The event will apparently still go ahead as planned because of arrangements already made by Bowland alumni keen to attend the party.

LUSU's anti-fascist campaign of incompetence



On the brink: British National Party leader, Nick Griffin, only needs 8.5% of the vote in the north west to gain a seat in European parliament.

- **Buck passing in LUSU delays anti-fascist campaign**
- **Opportunity for voter registration drive already missed**

Sam Newsham
Deputy News Editor

LUSU HAS FINALLY agreed a plan of action for its campaign to mobilise the student vote in the June 4 European elections.

The Anti Racism, Anti Fascism (ARAF) Committee was established in January by the new LUSU constitution but only held its first meeting last Wednesday, despite longstanding fears in the students union about the threat posed by fascist parties in the approaching elections.

The purpose of the committee is to combat racism and fascism on campus and in the local community. With Nick Griffin, the leader of the BNP, standing for election to the European Parliament in the north west on June 4, many regard the need for such a group as being greater than ever. Griffin needs only 8.5% of the vote in the region to win the first seat for the BNP in the European parliament. In the last set of EU elections in 2004, the BNP got 6.4%. In the current political climate, with the economy in dire straits and the main parties losing support over MP's expenses claims, the risk of the BNP reaching that 8.5% threshold is high.

The ARAF meeting agreed a plan that would focus upon encouraging students to use their votes on polling day. A campaign involving leafleting, flashmobs, slogan-bearing t-shirts and a celebration of European culture was also agreed.

Responsibility for calling the meeting and setting the agenda belongs to the LUSU Race Relations Officer, Kate Fry. However, under the LUSU constitution it must be convened by a sabbatical officer – in this case the women's officer, Sara Dunn. Neither Fry nor Dunn took any attempt to call a meeting of the committee until the beginning of this term.

Fry praised the broad involvement in the campaign. "It's really good that so many different groups are working together," she said. "A strong campaign is needed because this is an issue that threatens so many students as well as the wider community. A union-run campaign allows for more students to

get involved in making a difference by spreading a message of hope not hate."

Because of the slow start, the campaign will come too late to make any difference to the number of students registered to vote. Although most home students living on campus should already appear on the electoral register, EU students (who are also eligible) on campus, and students living off-campus may not be registered. The deadline for registration is today.

Fry, together with the vice president-elect for equality, welfare and diversity, Torri Crapper, called a meeting of the committee earlier this term, in week one. But because it hadn't been called by Dunn, Michael Payne, the LUSU president, ordered that the meeting was unconstitutional and should be held again at a later date.

This delay angered some members of the committee. Block of Six officer, Fraser Welsh, attacked Payne in the committee on Wednesday, blaming him for causing a planned voter-registration drive to be abandoned. "This [discussion] should have happened at the last ARAF a fortnight ago," he said. "We had a timeframe of a fortnight to work in, a timeframe which has now passed."

"When there's no real loop of communication it is difficult to give proper support," said Mr Payne. "We have to adhere to the LUSU constitution"

Dunn defended herself by shifting the blame: "I am responsible for eight subgroups so I feel it is the responsibility of the relevant non-sabb to set the agenda and say when the meeting should be," she said, hinting that it was Fry's fault for the meeting not being called.

In response, Fry said only that "It is a new committee and there was initially confusion about who is responsible for what."

As well as decisions on trade and the environment, large amounts of EU funding goes into the students' union and it therefore has a direct influence on students' lives.

"We need to demonstrate that students are willing to vote," said Mr Payne. "There are a lot of things going on that affect students; they need to turn out so that politicians listen."

Both Payne and Dunn stressed that whilst there is currently a threat from the BNP in the North West, as a registered charity LUSU is not campaigning against them. What they seek to do, however, is highlight how the views and policies of the extremist party are at odds with LUSU's objectives, and how they are most likely to affect students at Lancaster.

BBC campaign gets students eating healthily

Chris Davis
News Editor

AS PART OF a new initiative to promote healthy eating and mental well being, the BBC's 'Grub Club' visited campus on the Tuesday of week three to provide demonstrations for students. The event featured both advice and information about good nutrition, as well as the opportunity to watch a number of student chefs preparing and cooking a selection of simple and healthy meals that Lancaster students were encouraged to try for themselves.

The event was originally intended to take place in Alexandra Square, but logistical difficulties led to it being relocated opposite the LUSU offices in Slaidburn House. Each demonstration took around thirty minutes, with the visiting chefs talking the audience through four different meals in an effort to showcase how quick and easy preparing healthy food can potentially be. The chefs have received huge critical acclaim for their collaborative book 'Sorted: a recipe for student survival'. They cooked from it, a Portuguese chorizo soup, a Thai tuna burger, a Mexican chicken wrap, and a fillet of salmon with couscous, whilst also preparing a pecan and banana smoothie. Following the demonstration, students were encouraged to taste and rate the meals themselves. Despite the consistent rain throughout the day, the demonstrations were continually well attended, and the feedback from students wholly positive.

"We were really pleased with how the day turned out" said Pete MacMillan, the non-sabbatical LUSU Welfare officer. "The main aim was to raise awareness that you can cook good food cheaply, healthily, and affordably, rath-



Cooking up a storm: Sorted's Ben Ebbrell demonstrates his cooking skills (Photo: Lizzie Houghton)

er than just going for a takeaway. We also wanted to show that these recipes don't take a great deal of time to make. I think the day had a great impact, and it is a great campaign that says a lot without any dumbing down of the issue."

Over thirty universities across the country signed up to take part in the national Grub Club initiative, arranging different demonstrations and events to promote the BBC's message. Grub Club encourages students to make cooking

and eating a communal activity, suggesting ideas such as organising Sunday roasts, exploring international cuisine, or holding cookery competitions amongst friends. The Grub Club website also contains a number of recipe ideas for students to try, including all of those cooked by the Sorted team at the Lancaster event.

The concept of Grub Club emerged out of the BBC's wider mental health campaign, 'Headroom', which explores

diverse issues such as alcoholism, depression and exam stress. Aiming to remove the taboos surrounding mental wellbeing, the campaign offers online resources to help students engage with the topic of mental health and to share their own experiences with others. Headroom is hoping to have an active presence not only across university campuses, but also at music festivals and other communal events held across the summer.

0% interest on student loans

Lauren Hirst

THE NEXT ACADEMIC year will bring 0% interest rate for over 2.5 million students, the government announced last week. Borrowers will still pay 9% of monthly earnings over £15,000.

The new 0% rate will affect all students who took out loans after September 1998. Loans taken out before then will be charged -0.4% interest. The rate is linked to the Retail Prices Index. It had been hoped the negative interest rate would apply to all student loans, after the RPI fell to -0.4%. This would have left students effectively earning money.

Although the changes will not affect borrower's monthly repayments, it does mean graduates will be able to pay of their student loan at a far quicker rate than they would of done if the interest rate was added. Most students leave university with an average debt of £15,000 to £20,000. The news will be welcomed by many as evidence that the government finally listened to the NUS's blatant concerns about the current economic crisis and the repercussion it has had on graduates.

"In the context of a recession, this is the best deal students and graduates could have expected," said Wes Streeting, president of the National Union of Students, in the Guardian last week. He added that the NUS will continue to campaign for cheaper education, adding: "In addition, we repeat our call for the government to look carefully at the issue of the rate used to calculate interest on student loans, in the forthcoming wider review of higher education funding and student support."

Student entrepreneurs have future Sorted

Lizzie Houghton
News Editor

LIKE MOST THIRD year students two weeks ago Jamie Spafford was preparing for his final exams. Unlike most third year students, he was spending his preparation time stood outside a different University's student union handing out free food. Jamie is a marketing branch of Sorted, a company he and his friends set up to help students improve their eating habits.

"It's just about getting the balance," Jamie said. "Obviously university does come first but you're having fun, making a bit of money on the side and you're with your friends."

Jamie is one of the eight members of Sorted. He's joined by chef Ben Ebbrell, photographer Barry Taylor, along with the rest of the crew; Adam Wilkinson, Jon Gavaghan, Richard Smith, Steve Lau and Tom Barnes. All of them, except for Barry, were studying at the time the company was set up. They came up with the idea in their local drinking hole last January.

Ben and Barry saw an opportunity

to combine their talents. They decided to produce a book that would be a simple guide on healthy living for students. The book, Sorted: A Recipe for Student Survival was published last July. Since then the Sorted crew have been touring the country's campuses, promoting healthy eating.

It's a lot of hard work, it's a lot of stress but if you put your mind to it you can do it. We're living proof of that.

"I'm working pretty much full time with my photography," Barry said during Sorted's recent visit to Lancaster's campus. He and Ben are the only two of the Sorted crew who work with it full time. "We're basically picking from these guys when and where we need them. Just so as long as it fits in with their degrees, because that's obviously their main direction."

The crew are one of the country's best examples of student entrepreneurship. Sir Richard Brandson and Duncan Bannatyne have already endorsed them and they are currently

working with the BBC as part of their Grub Club drive.

Jamie offered simple advice for any students thinking of setting up their own business: "Just do it." He added: "It's a lot of hard work, it's a lot of stress but if you put your mind to it you can do it. We're living proof of that. There are others out there who are doing the same sort of thing: setting up there own businesses. You can do it because anyone can."

Barry echoed his teammate's sentiment. "This is the best time to do it. There aren't many jobs out there and at the age we're at it's the best time to try it. We've got nothing to lose."

Jamie added: "It has helped Ben accelerate his career. He's been on a few TV shows himself and won a couple of competitions. It's helping all of us, obviously. It's something to put on your CV. I'm graduating this year, it's been a great help to my CV."

Ben Ebbrell graduated with a degree in Culinary Arts from the University College Birmingham. He's recently won UKTV's Market Kitchen Talent Search competition.

Online revision given academic go-ahead

Rob Maidstone

REVISION COULD BE set to undertake "a renaissance" according to debating website Debatewise.com. The claim comes after the development of their new 'Wiki' based revision method.

Debatewise's new revision method, dubbed Revisionwise, uses the Wiki method with students submitting their revision notes online in the form of an argument. They can argue either one or both sides of their debate and other students can add their own views/research on the topic. According to the site "writing notes as debates makes them much more memorable" and sharing your online notes with your friends allow you to "benefit from their brilliance" while they "benefit from yours."

Professor Murray Turoff at the New Jersey Institute of Technology reckons that the nature of Wikis mean that students "consider [their work] more than if [they] were conversing face to face" and that public collaboration produces

better work in general.

The founder of Debatewise, David Crane, strongly believes in the potential of this project and sees a strong future for online revision stating that, "the future of human learning is collaboration and the future of collaboration is the internet."

Academics are starting to warm to the once unpopular Wiki method to revision. The Wiki method encourages its users to view, edit and create articles on the site. This method, championed by online encyclopaedia Wikipedia.com, has been slated in the past, as the information is often inaccurate or misleading.

However this method has been recently improved according to Wikipedia founder, Jimmy Wales. He said: "We're beginning to see a changed understanding about the quality of work that communities are able to do by working together." He went on to describe how Wikipedia is now "thoughtful and responsible" with the online community working together to check and edit each other's work.

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Lancaster falls 4 places in Guardian university league tables

Lauren Hirst

LANCASTER HAS BEEN ranked 19 out of a possible 117 places in the Guardian's 2010 university's league table.

Despite of Lancaster's slight drop in the Guardian's 2010 university rankings, the table still demonstrates Lancaster as one of the top universities in the North West, beating both Manchester and Liverpool University by a total of 23 positions. Lancaster is also leading in other major publications as the top university in the north west in the Independent, Times and the Sunday Times league tables.

In the past two years, Lancaster University has featured in the top 20. In 2008 the university was rated as the number 22 institute in the country. In 2009 it had moved up ten places to twelfth.

The Guardian website said: "all the institutions in the top 20 are strong in research. We judge them purely on their teaching. They would argue that their teaching is enriched by their research". A reflection of this can be seen in the high level of students each year who achieve top class degrees and, also, the high level of student satisfaction year after year.

Michael Payne, LUSU President, saw Lancaster's position as "positive". He said: "Although Lancaster has dropped slightly in the Guardian University Guide, it's positive to see that across the league tables that have been released, so far Lancaster remains the leading university in the north west." This, he believes is due to Lancaster's "strong student and academic experience".

The Guardian judges all universities by a variety of categories from teaching quality to the student facilities that the universities have to offer. Amanda Chetwynd, the university's pro-vice chancellor for colleges and student experience, believes Lancaster's standing is actually better than the Guardian suggests. "The papers all use slightly different measures and in particular the Guardian does not take into account the research quality of the university which is why the rankings are slightly different in each paper," she said.

"The Guardian is also using old data on graduate prospects. They have used the figure from 2004/2005 of 61%. The excellent work of CEEC, our careers service, together with the academic departments has seen the graduate prospects for our students move up to 77% which is amongst the best in the country."

Over the past 5 years Lancaster University has strived to become a top university in not only the north west but in the UK, improving its facilities and staying true to its mission to excel in academic research with 92% being of international standard.

'I didn't know who to turn to'



Easy access? Lancaster's campus is "generally accessible" for disabled students. (Photo: Lizzie Houghton)

With parliament debating up a new equality bill, Lizzie Houghton looks at what studying at Lancaster is like for the university's disabled students

CAT CLARK HAS already started making plans for Freshers' Week. "Freshers' Week can feel quite isolating when you come to university where nobody knows about your problems. I feel that it is going to be up to me to make sure all Freshers understand that I am here during Freshers' Week for them to come and talk to me."

Cat is the Furness JCR disabled students officer. She's one of a number of student officers who offer support for students with disabilities. They act for Lancaster's 500+ disabled students, offering support and making sure they are represented. They've been able to achieve this even without the support of a permanent non-sabbatical officer this year. In terms of fighting for student support, Clark has found she's had no problems. "For me, the university has been really helpful," she said. "I have not really got any disappointments with the university's support."

The student support services offer guidance to perspective students on apply for Disabled Students Allowance. They also provide research and library support, note-taking support, and specialist equipment for scanning and producing materials in alternative formats.

First year Collette McColgan, who has Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis, has been very impressed with the levels of support she's been offered. "I've never

had to consult the university about any issues so far, but I feel safe in the knowledge that they'd help me out if I needed it," she said. In particular she pointed out how well informed she'd been kept during her application process, and how patient the support services had been.

Despite the many students who feel they are being well catered for, there are some who believe more still needs to be done. Adam Hoolahan, who is severely blind, was another first year in Furness. He left the university at the end of last term, as he felt he wasn't given enough support from his department. "It started off not so enjoyable," he said, "especially when I had problems, I didn't know who to turn to."

'Freshers' Week can feel quite isolating ... nobody knows about your problems.'

Hoolahan said that in particular he felt unsupported by Lancaster's Politics and History departments. He claimed that the departments were not aware enough about the nature of his disability and that he found it hard to obtain essay extensions. "In terms of my course it was taking me a lot longer to type up material than anyone else. With books, I was having to go to the library and scan books in, without having a book list or anything. I was scanning books in to find they were a load of rubbish and not really relevant."

The convenor of Part I Politics, Dr Graham Smith, could not comment on Hoolahan's individual case, but offered the department's policy on students with special needs. He said: "In all cases where disabilities are identified to the

department we work with the student, Student Support, and other relevant agencies to ensure that an appropriate level of support is offered. This could include: research and library support, note-taking support, and specialist equipment for scanning and producing materials in alternative formats."

The disability services manager for Student Services, Christine Quinn, said: "I am always dismayed to hear of any student who leaves without completing their course of study, particularly when such a lot of effort across campus goes into supporting and retaining students." McColgan, who took the same Politics course as Adam, maintains that she never had a problem with the department.

Another area, which Hoolahan highlighted as being difficult, was orientation and access. Hoolahan required the help of a carer – funded by his local education authority – in order to get around the university campus. He said the worry he might not get that support in his second year was one of the key factors in him choosing to leave. The Equality Challenge Unit is currently undertaking an audit into how higher education institutions can improve the access for sensory disabled students.

The university does have very extensive access routes, which are used by all students. Joe Hardacre knows the routes than most. Being in a wheelchair, he says he finds the campus "generally accessible". We went for a tour of the northwest campus to see if this was true. Starting with the Chaplaincy Centre, we found that the first floor was practically inaccessible for students with mobility disabilities, as there was no lift. A member of one college's JCR had raised the issue, saying they felt the Chaplaincy Centre wasn't accessible enough. SCAN

attempted to contact the Chaplaincy Centre regarding their accessibility but did not receive a reply. The first floor of the Centre includes the Buddhist Meditation Room, the Natural Health Centre and a number of the chaplains' flats.

Next we went to one of Hardacre's departments, Linguistics and English Language in Bowland College, to see

'A lot of effort across campus goes into supporting and retaining students.'

how accessible his seminar room is. The lift up to the department, which already has a door too narrow for Hardacre's wheelchair, wasn't working properly when we got there.

"The campus is generally accessible, though there are a few complaints," Hardacre said afterwards. "The practically inaccessible lifts, while amusing, are ultimately pretty frustrating. Also the seminar room for my linguistics was particularly annoying. The university are to blame for that one, as it was the second term and they knew full well I was in a wheelchair, so sticking me in a room when I could only gain access by walking was pretty bloody stupid."

If and when problems such as these arise, all the students SCAN spoke to agreed there was one support group they could always count on. In Cartmel, their female equal opportunities officer, Rosanna Spray, thinks this is the right direction for support services to be taking. "There is a stigma between people our age: disability scares us. If we were better educated normal students would be able to help too, instead of awkwardly moving out the way."

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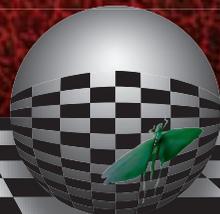
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Athletes complain of newspaper bias

Lizzie Houghton
News Editor

The Women's and Men's Firsts hockey teams, along with Lancaster's Trampoline Society, have complained of "ridiculous" levels of bias and a lack of professionalism from the York student newspaper, *Nouse*.

The report of the Men's hockey game described Lancaster's captain as "plump", adding "the Lancaster captain gave a hint to the lifestyle choices that have caused his current globular shape, by downing two litres of Strongbow through a hose."

The biggest complaints however have come from *Nouse's* coverage of the trampolining. The article, written by Camilla Jenkins, *Nouse's* deputy politics editor, abuses the Lancaster team's slogan along with the York team's eating habits. She then went on to call the sport "irrelevant", demeaning the novice and intermediate sections writing they consisted mostly of "awkward bouncing and over-zealous leg-slapping".

Clare Blunt, president of Lancaster's Trampoline Society, in particular felt offended by Ms Jenkins report. "She seems to think that

a cheeky slogan - actually quoted wrongly in the report - is our attempt at 'being seen as serious athletes'. I think we proved our athletic ability on the trampoline. The fact we actually have a kit ... shows our sense of team spirit and pride for our university. Something she obviously doesn't have as she slated her own team and a very demanding sport."

Ffion Davies of Lancaster's Women's Hockey Club, echoed Ms Blunt's complaints. She said: "I realise that student papers are always going to be biased, but to make a mockery of Lancaster's efforts is a disgrace," said. "I have read a few reports from the weekend and it angered me to the extent I didn't want to read any more, especially when it was said that York won the 'moral victory'."

The editor of *Nouse* has spoken out in support of his writers. Responding to SCAN's request for a statement he said: "I stand by all our reporting of Roses, and find it rather ironic that were it not for our hard work, the reports would not have existed and no comments could have been registered, either derogatory or otherwise. In the case of the trampolining ... I hope all of Lancaster's sports team appreciate the coverage that they received."

Local MP speaks out against expenses

Samantha Newsham
Deputy News Editor

LANCASTER'S MP HAS this week criticised his colleagues' "appalling" expenses claims. Ben Wallace, Conservative MP for Lancaster and Wyre, claimed £175,523 in 2007-8, the fourth largest claim in the country. However, Mr Wallace described extravagant claims made by some MPs as a "disgrace".

In response to the recent publication of figures, Mr Wallace made a statement on his website. "I make no excuses for the system nor for those of my colleagues who have behaved in such an appalling way," he said. "What we have all witnessed has been an unacceptable use of taxpayers' money by some MPs."

Mr Wallace publishes full details of his expenses claims on his website. He was the first MP to take this step, which won him an award from the Spectator magazine. "I did this because I believe in transparency and that it was wrong for MPs to hide [expenses details] from the taxpayer," he explained.

Defending his own expense claims Mr Wallace said that the Lancaster and Wyre constituency is 20% larger than average. "I pride myself on being a hard working MP and I only claim what is necessary to represent my constituency to the best of my ability and I will continue to do so."

The controversy surrounding MPs' expenses has recently come to a head after the Telegraph newspaper printed a series of allegations, detailing the worst offenders. Conservative MPs who have made exorbitant claims have



Courting controversy: Ben Wallace, Lancaster's MP, has the fourth highest expenses claim in the country

been ordered by party leader David Cameron to repay the money. These include Douglas Hogg, MP for Sleaford and North Hykeham, who charged the taxpayer over £2000 for cleaning his moat. The Labour MP for Bury North, David Chaytor was suspended on Saturday after the Telegraph alleged he had claimed money for a mortgage which had already been paid off.

GreenLancaster offer students internship after injection of charity money

GREENLANCASTER IS OFFERING students a ten month internship starting this September. The position will entail supporting the new GreenLancaster manager in the setting-up, promotion and running of volunteer projects.

Lancaster undergraduates with a placement year option for 2009/10, and students graduating this year can

also apply for the role.

The opportunity comes after the department received an injection of funding from the youth volunteer charity, V, as well as the university's Estates Management. Along with the internship, GreenLancaster will also be offering more volunteer opportunities.

GreenLancaster started off as a partnership between LUSU, the uni-

versity's Estates Management department and the Universities Partnership Programme. The extra funding they've received from V and Estates has allowed GreenLancaster to expand its services.

Students interested in the position can apply online on the University's vacancies website. Alternatively they can contact Mark Taylor, on 01524 594648.

*green*LANCASTER

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GreenLancaster is offering one lucky student at Lancaster University the chance to contribute to the exciting work of this new environmental initiative.

It has recently received funding from the charity v and the University's Estate Management department, and so will now be offering environmental volunteering opportunities to students.

To help it provide a range of inspiring and practical projects, GreenLancaster will soon be opening its new Hub on campus, and will be hiring an intern to support the new GreenLancaster Manager with the setting-up, promotion and running of volunteer projects. The post will be full-time for ten months, starting in September, and, as such, current Lancaster University undergraduates with a placement year option for 2009/10 are particularly welcome to apply, as well as those graduating this summer.

If you're interested, you can apply online from Tuesday Week 5 on the University's current vacancies webpage, www.personnel.lancs.ac.uk, or for an informal discussion about the position, contact Mark Taylor on 01524 594648.

scan:COMMENT



Wes Cosgriff

Certainly not right, nor anything resembling honourable

The expenses scandal has laid bare the ugly Westminster culture of fiddling, and their collective ignorance of what public money is for

Westminster has reached its nadir. Entrusted with the running of our nation and ensuring that our taxes go towards improving Britain, each member of parliament is supposed to be a representative of the British people, bastions of trust; bulwarks of responsibility; guardians of hope. Instead, honourable members and peers alike have shown themselves to be everything that the media colours them to be: corrupt, immoral and certainly not right, nor anything resembling honourable. A violation has taken place whereby the sacred trust a constituent places upon his or her representative has been unforgivably breached.

Each MP and Lord is entitled to an expenses allowance to allow them two homes: one in the constituency, and another in London for when parliament is in session. This is reasonable – to a point – otherwise, the MP for Lancaster and Wyre, for example, would spend all of his time travelling instead of working, and we would be complaining about that instead. Expenses cover the staffing, travel and office costs that an MP will run up over the course of their time in parliament.

Theoretically, this allowance exists to ensure it is not just the rich or trade union-backed candidates who can run for office in this country, thus giving any individual the opportunity to pay for the costly life of an MP, regardless



of party allegiance. This money is provided by the taxpayers but, like many an idea implemented with the purest of intentions, the system is open to abuse, as this most recent parliamentary scandal has proved.

Entrusted with this money, a culture has grown in the Commons and the Lords that sees expenses not as a means to help them serve the public, but as a handout and perk of the job. Taxpayer's

money is spent uneconomically and, more worryingly, is often seen as a rightful bonus for becoming an MP. This money vested in our verminous MPs has been used by people with little moral fibre; spent on improving – not London homes, (if indeed, in the case of Baroness Uddin, they actually live in their London homes) – but for the maintenance of other important facets of a politician's life, such as dredging

the moat surrounding Douglas Hogg's manor house, or purchasing additional footage for Jacqui Smith's husband's porn collection.

Is it possible that the members of both parliamentary houses awaken each morning and wonder what would be a more important use of taxpayers' money: a £5,000 gardener (Alan Duncan); a plumber to re-fix the toilet seat (John Prescott); or a £6,000 redeco-

ration of Lib Dem leader, Nick Clegg's home? MPs of all parties have been found guilty of abusing the taxpayer's money they receive which, in another age, might go by the name of 'profiteering'. More worrying, however, is that few of the expense claims actually break parliamentary rules: this indicates just how corrupt a body of people can be when deciding how much of a 'perk' to award themselves.

Thankfully, not all MPs and peers have acted in the same odious manner as their immoral and abhorrent colleagues and are calling, rightfully, for heads to roll. In the nation that pioneered modern parliamentary democracy and where, in comparison to the US and in parts of the EU, corruption is relatively minute, we should be proud that this scandalous betrayal of our trust would appear to be the exception rather than the rule.

However, this does not excuse the behaviour of those who would abuse the public's faith in our democracy. The shackles of suspicion and mistrust that our politicians have forged for themselves are deserved: party politics aside, every scandalous career forced to an end and any abusive MP finding themselves without a seat in parliament as a direct result of this debacle, deserves nothing less than utter contempt from the public and nothing more than to be thrown from the Commons into the political wilderness. Is it any wonder voter turnout is at an all-time low?



Alex Harris
Comment Editor

Anti-scientific witch doctors have no place in the NHS

Homeopathy has no basis in scientific evidence, so why is it publicly funded?

Here's something we can all relate to; those irritating internet ads that claim to offer a 'natural, herbal remedy' for some common ailment that everyone seems to have. It seems inviting as there's a kind of modern fetishisation of nature. There's probably some sort of evolutionary reason for it, but somehow herbs give the impression of being more beneficial towards one's health than a pill designed in a cold, stale laboratory, regardless of whether or not this is true. I suppose our brains are just hard-wired to accept plants and trees more than they are a paracetamol tablet.

If you do a further bit of investigating into some of these sites, you'll find that they are offering an alternative to so-called 'Western' medicine. (Attaching a region to a science is a ridiculous thing in itself – how does Belgian Astronomy sound?) A lot of the time it will be what is known as homeopathic

treatment, which sounds nice and fancy – almost scientific. Okay, you think, but what's the catch? The catch in this case is that the scientific claims homeopaths make range from the non-existent to the downright farcical.

The basic idea is that like cures like, which is a nice advertising sound bite. It also happens to be the basis of inoculation, so let's admit that there is some scientific credibility behind it. But homeopathy works on treating symptoms, as opposed to treating the disease itself. Put simply, if you're unable to sleep then you are given a heavily diluted dose of caffeine. When I say heavily diluted, I mean to the point where there's as much chance of the mixture containing a single molecule of caffeine as there is of it containing a molecule from the blood of Genghis Khan (look it up if you don't believe me).

The scientific claims range between simply calling homeopathy a 'mystery that works', or some dubious claims

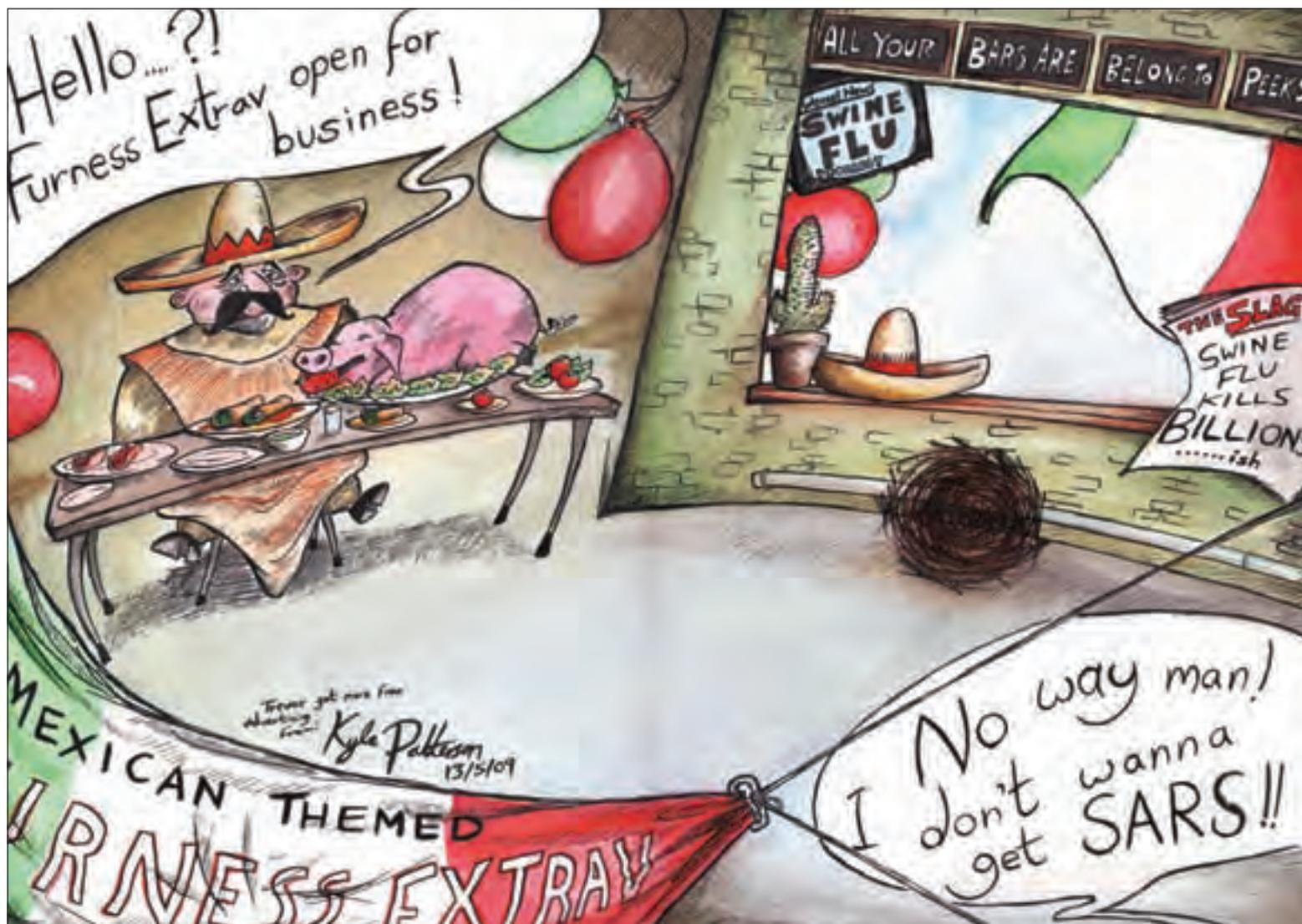
about water having a 'memory' for the 'vibrations' that molecules cause. Not only is there no scientific basis for believing this, but it would mean that a memory of every other impurity would also remain in the water. Following the homeopath's logic, rainwater is a miracle cure for everything!

Despite widespread protestations from the scientific community and medical practitioners, homeopathy continues to be funded by the NHS, along with other dubiously unscientific treatments like acupuncture. Anecdotal evidence for homeopathy isn't hard to find. I've heard people swear it cleared up their ear infection in just one week (an ear infection would probably cure itself in a week anyway) or that it works on animals (it doesn't). However, real scientific evidence is virtually non-existent.

The danger with alternative medicines is several-fold. Firstly, it causes people to waste a huge amount of mon-

ey on treatments that can at best boast a placebo effect. Secondly, whilst that placebo effect may have caused a cold to clear up slightly quicker than usual, a willingness to turn to unproven 'alternative' therapies can make people forgo real medical treatment when something serious presents itself, delaying action and making conditions more severe.

But perhaps the most serious transgression of alternative medicine is that it presents a science vs. reality dichotomy. The term alternative medicine itself is a misnomer. It's like having alternative physics or alternative biology (see: Creationism). Medicine simply embraces treatments that work and can be proven to do so, and discards those which don't. There is a temptation to avoid seemingly patriarchal and self-interested institutions like the NHS and to view lesser-known alternatives as somehow more pure and honest. That is a temptation that should be avoided for the good of one's health.



Power, not principle, is why we must use our votes

Students' demands have been neglected because there's no votes in satisfying them, writes **Robbie Pickles**

Don't turn the page! This isn't another of those preachy, pro-democracy articles that talk at you about rights, liberty and the pursuit of some higher ideal. Neither is it a rallying call to send you out to vote for any particular party. Instead, I want to lay down a key point that can prove that there is some value to your vote and that it does, believe it or not, make a difference, and one more than you think (no, seriously).

The most important reason to vote is simple, but often overlooked: increasing the power of our generation. This isn't to do with becoming more political, or even exercising any particular viewpoint or ideal. Instead, it is simply a case of numbers, and the willingness of the main parties to woo the bulk of their electorate. In the UK, 75% of people aged over 65 voted at the last general election. Compare this with the measly 34% of 18-24 year olds who turned out. As I write this, with perhaps a year to go to the next UK parliamentary elections, Gordon Brown, David Cameron and the other party leaders are piecing together their manifestos. When it comes to apportioning precious resources (made even more precious in the light of a global recession), who do you think these parties will try to satisfy: us apathetic youngsters, or the grey vote?

One thing is certain, there aren't enough resources to satisfy both. It is a sad fact of politics that our flawed electoral system forces parties to please the majority vote to gain power, even if their real aim is to help the rest of us. Whilst pleasing the majority doesn't sound like such a bad idea (majority rule is, after all, the point of a democracy), in the past, that majority has sometimes been homophobic, racist, nationalist or worse. Our system of government is simply not able to satisfy the minority without displeasing the majority, leaving those unfortunate enough to be on the periphery even more under-represented.

Today, in this country, students form part of this speechless minority. We've often received a raw deal from government because our reluctance to turn out on polling days means governments doesn't need our mandate to form policy. With a low voter turnout, we cannot hope for the government to listen to what we say or think.

In order to effect change, and for students to get what they want, we must turn out to vote in force, whenever we have the opportunity. On June 4, elections for the European Parliament are being held, and turnout here will not only influence who gets elected to Strasbourg, but also the policies of next year's party manifestos. And so I urge you, no matter what party, no matter what belief, to go out, place your vote, and show the country that students want to be taken seriously.



Sam Newsham

Batten down the hatches, the media storm is here

Swine flu, just like bird flu, SARS and MMR before it, only seems to cause sickness in the media

The worst is yet to come," the Daily Express tells us. "This could be a bigger threat than nuclear warfare," warns the Mail. The Sun, meanwhile, is short and to the point. "Swine flu is here," its headline screams.

Swine flu is here. Ever since the first case was confirmed in Britain on April 27th it has been impossible to hide. From newspapers, television and the radio, from Government leaflets to Government broadcasts at Premier League football matches, wherever we go we are confronted with the same inescapable fact: swine flu is here.

Preparations are under way across the country to deal with the threat. The Government is stockpiling Tamiflu. The World Health Organisation is activating its pandemic alert system. Here in Lancaster, the university has set up a website to keep students informed and mobilised an emergency management team to monitor the situation closely. The public is concerned, and organisations need to be acting. Or do they?

To date there have been 4,702 confirmed cases of swine flu around the world and 53 confirmed deaths. To put that in context, each year between

250,000 and 500,000 people die of seasonal flu. Yet the majority of sufferers experience little more than a bad cold.

So why is there such a panic? Why are doctors bombarded daily with ridiculous questions from terrified patients? Why are schools closing and contingency plans being drawn up to cancel exams? Because from any media source you care to name the message is the same: swine flu is here and we need to be worried.

The hysteria stretches beyond the tabloids. The Times recently ran the headline "Don't assume swine flu is mild, says chief medical officer," whilst the Guardian advises its readers to stock up on basic foodstuffs in case of an outbreak.

It is true that the swine flu virus is a strain that has never been seen before, so most people will have no immunity to it and experts will struggle to predict the effects it will have on sufferers. It is true that the speed and breadth of its spread has sparked fears of a pandemic – a word which refers to the extent of a virus's spread and not its severity, though you would be hard pressed to find a news report that made this clear. It is true that this particular

virus strain is unusual in that, unlike seasonal flu, many of its victims were young and otherwise healthy.

It is also true that in 2003 there was widespread panic over SARS, and again in 2005 when cases of avian flu – a far more dangerous disease than swine flu is thought to be – were reported. Neither disease had anything like the effect we were led to believe they would by the media. Swine flu may be the same or it may not, but it is far too early to say.

Meanwhile, the newspapers preface every reference to the disease with 'killer' or 'deadly', hint that the Government may run out of anti-viral medication, and the country panics.

From the effects of the economic crisis to the furore surrounding the disappearance of Madeleine McCann two years ago, swine flu is just the latest in a long series of examples demonstrating the power that the media has to influence and sway public reactions. On the one hand this isn't necessarily a bad thing; to a large extent this is what the media exists for.

On the other, when we're being warned by our tabloids that Britain has no chance of obtaining enough face

masks to cope with the demand despite there being no scientific evidence whatsoever that they help stop the spread of viruses, we need to stop and ask ourselves if this is what our newspapers should be telling us.

We need to question the power that the media has over us. There will always be a battle between giving the public what they want to hear and what it's thought they ought to hear. It goes without saying that the main aim of a newspaper is to sell as many copies as possible, and if scaremongering tactics sell papers then scaremongering tactics are what we're going to get.

In 2005, we were warned that 150 million people could potentially die from avian flu. In fact the number of deaths was around 200. Now it's reported that swine flu may infect two billion people. Up to now less than 0.0025% of that number have been affected.

It's like the boy who cried wolf; eventually we're going to turn a blind eye to these figures, reasoning that anything so overblown isn't worth reading about. The chances are that the time we do that will be the time that we really should be listening.



Liam Richardson
Editor-elect

Grad Ball is not a concert. If you disagree, don't go

The facebookers complaining about the acts are missing the point: it's about friends, not music

Every year Graduation Ball divides opinion and courts controversy. In recent years, this controversy has filtered into the world of facebook. A swarm-like tendency has developed whereby group after group appears slating the student union and the event it's offering its membership.

I must profess that the line-up this year, which appears to be the primary bone of contention, is perhaps not as exciting as the fare provided by Hull University, who have mainstream stadium rockers Feeder and Athlete for their students to enjoy. Some people argue that the acts do not match up to last year's performers the Sugababes.

I'll be the first to admit that I had to look up Alesha Dixon online to discover she was once a member of Mis-Teeq and had made an appearance on Strictly Come Dancing. I'll even own up to the fact that Abba are not my favourite band of all time, and that Bjorn Again, a band covering their work, does not exactly set my pulse racing.

However, as far as I am concerned the acts at Grad Ball only contribute to a small portion of the overall entertainment on offer. There will be a fairground and casino, as well as burlesque performers and CanCan dancers. Perhaps the salient point is that this ball presents a unique opportunity to gather together a whole year group before they depart. Surely, musical performers pale into insignificance in compar-



Magical: Can this year's Grad Ball emulate the success of 2008?

son to having one last great night with people who you have spent a considerable amount of time with over the past three years of your life.

Having the event on campus was a major success last year and a vast improvement on previous years when bad food and sloppy service characterised Grad Balls held at Blackpool's Winter Gardens. The rather disparate and unfocussed attempt at holding Grad Ball across town in 2007 taking in the Sugarhouse and Toast also had its share of detractors.

Grad Ball this year appears on course for a similar level of success to last year

with tickets selling at a reasonable pace despite a vocal minority who have vigorously slated the event online. If they are hoping the event flops, they appear already to have failed. The ticket price may be prohibitive for some, but £47 (with a purple card) for a Grad Ball is reasonable in comparison to others across the country and is certainly preferable to a night in the Carleton, which after three years should be wearisome for most people.

For those who moan about the cost and quality of acts, they should be made aware of the fact that the university does nothing to support the event

whatsoever in terms of funding. University management do nothing to aid the event, and instead charge £5,000 for hire of the Great Hall complex. Perhaps this vocal minority who lambast the work of the student union in organising Grad Ball should target their ire at the university instead. Without this fee, more money could be directed into the acquisition of higher quality acts, or a lower ticket price. It should also be noted that Lancaster has just fewer than 14,000 undergraduate students in comparison to a university such as UCLAN with almost 27,000 undergraduate students. The simple economies of scale of putting on an event for more people means it will be cheaper for the individual. LUSU, with its relatively small membership, misses this benefit.

As a collegiate university, LUSU also places a significant wedge of its cash to enable college JCRs to stage their summer extravas, which certainly play a major role in enhancing the collegiate experience. Would people be willing to skimp on extravas to secure bigger acts for a Grad Ball? I for one certainly do not subscribe to that viewpoint.

People should take the Grad Ball for what it is, and not hold preconceived notions of what to expect purely on the basis of who'll be performing on the night. They should not be so quick to negate the hard work put in by union officers. For those not interested, instead of whining and complaining, the answer is simple: just don't go.



Michael Payne
LUSU President

Tokenism is not what students need

Campaigns to see a freeze in interest rates on student overdrafts, media outcries over the decrepit university bursaries system and national lobbies and protests to call for a fairer system of funding and tuition fees in higher education have all been at the forefront of student politics this year.

The number of students withdrawing from university due to financial worries and concerns adds insult to the injury of this government's woeful support for students. But last week, the endless lobbying of the National Union of Students finally bore some fruit: the government's announcement that a 0% interest rate will be applied to student loans from September 2009, has been long awaited.

The recession has prompted many calls from unions and the NUS to offer financial support and relief for students across the UK. The move away from matching the interest rate to the Retail Price Index (RPI) measure of inflation, is one which seems to offer some signs of hope for students graduating in the coming months. Many of these graduands will have debts of over £20,000.

Also, the income threshold, beyond which graduates start paying back their

student loans, will stay at £15,000 for the next 12 months. This too has certainly prompted a sigh of relief on campuses across the UK. Had the government decided to link the threshold to March's RPI of -0.4%, which was considered, graduates would have started repaying earlier and ended up paying more. Severing the link between interest rates and RPI has also removed the rationale for linking the threshold to it as well. Another reason for the NUS to be cheerful.

Behind the headlines though, this change only goes part of the way to providing the financial relief that students need right now. It has also encouraged cries of 'why stop there?' and 'is this enough?'

With taxpayers money propping up major UK banks, one has to ask why there hasn't also been a compulsory freeze on student overdraft interest rates or why graduates aren't being given the option to defer loan repayments for a year (until those 'green shoots' of recovery are beginning to bloom). This would allow them to secure a place in the already dwindling job market before they begin chipping away at their mountainous debt.

'Efficiency savings' announced in last month's budget will mean circa £180m of cuts in higher education funding. If

this government is serious about 50% of school leavers going to university, it needs to get serious about the financial support it offers. These few headlines may be sweet relief for the government amidst the relentless march of the recession and the outrage caused by expenses revelations, but their austerity leaves a bitter aftertaste for students.

These token gestures, cuts in funding and the measly increase in student numbers promised for 2010/2011 are all made all the more ridiculous when they circulate in the same media cycles as headlines about public money being squandered on moat cleaning, false mortgages, silk cushions, manure and biscuits. In comparison, these piecemeal proposals for students really do take the biscuit.

We can only hope that the wholesale review of higher education funding later this year will be taken seriously. With luck, the already heavy financial burden that students carry will be at the forefront of MPs minds when they scrutinize any new proposals. After all, they may be sitting comfortably on their silk cushions in their well pruned gardens at the moment, but a general election looms and students empty piggy banks will be a key driver in how they vote.

scan

Tuesday, May 19, 2009

A thorny subject

STAFF IN LUSU struggle to remember a Roses when Lancaster was beaten quite so decisively as this year's 194.5-79.5 point drubbing. Although no current third year finalist will leave Lancaster having known victory at Roses, the defeat away in York last weekend was certainly noteworthy for its left.

The timing of the tournament surely damaged Lancaster's chances. But considering the limited preparation that some of our teams had, the result is even less surprising. We had tennis and badminton players who could count the number of practices they'd had in the last few months on one hand. No surprise then, that Lancaster was comprehensively annihilated in the racquet sports.

What training our teams did have though, was rarely conducted in ideal conditions. The table tennis team complained about how training advanced players is near impossible in the restrictive space available in Lancaster's sports centre. Looking at the state of the university's pitches too, it isn't hard to imagine how their condition hampered our field sports teams' training.

University sport at York has sacrificed autonomy for plentiful funding – spent both on facilities and coaching. Here in Lancaster, we have an AU with students union-preserved autonomy, but resources that all too often seems insufficient. The drubbing that Lancaster received at Roses 2009 should be the catalyst for discussion about where the future of the AU should lie: autonomously in LUSU, or bountifully with the university.

The fascist threat

IF THE BRITISH National Party win a seat in the European parliament on June 4 – increasingly likely, though far from inevitable – it will be meant as punishment for the main parties for their lamentable inability to keep their MPs from abusing their privileges. But the people who vote for the BNP, or those who don't to vote, will do far more than give the established political elite a bloody nose.

A BNP victory in the European parliament, though seemingly distant, will transform the extremist party. It will give them access to hundreds of thousands of pounds in salaries and staff allowances which nobody can stop being used to indirectly fund their campaigns, allowing them to further entrench themselves.

The BNP bans anyone not of the "indigenous Caucasian racial group" from even being a member. It denies that black or Asian people born in the UK can ever be British.

The BNP stands in stark opposition to LUSU and SCAN's belief in equal opportunities. SCAN urges you to make your vote an anti-racist vote on June 4.

Letters to the Editor



Send your letters to scan@lancaster.ac.uk together with your name and college (even if you would like your letter printed anonymously). Letters longer than 150 words (not including signature) will be shortened. SCAN reserves the right to edit your letters for publication.

Tangible anger

I was deeply offended by Michael Holt's recent article claiming the futility of student protests. Moreover, I found that he missed the point entirely when it came to the purpose of Reclaim the Night. Discouraging rapists isn't the intended goal; the point is to remind society that women are not to blame.

I found Holt's description of the fictional rapist to be a product of the myths Reclaim the Night attempts to correct. Only 9% of rapes are committed by strangers. Women are raped by their boyfriends, coworkers, and husbands, where they are even less likely to be believed in court. Furthermore, sexual assault is not an "intangible"; problem; it is faced by nearly a quarter of all women. Perhaps Michael Holt should attend one of these rallies before deeming its nobility "misplaced".

Hazel Monforton
Cartmel College

Wit-critique

Despite Mr Holt's lack of faith in communities working together ('What will all this bluff and bluster really achieve?', Comment, May 5), protests can achieve results. It is often very hard to engage people in matters such as domestic, sexual or psychological violence; some people just do not want to know or it is of no interest to them. But to negatively pick apart, humour and ridicule the protests of those who want to help someone other than themselves is ignorant.

I couldn't help but wince and feel a little nauseated by Holt's technique at getting his point across, through what I can only describe as a 'wit-critique' hybrid on the matter of rape. Why the details of 'the stains'? Why the crystallisation of one of the most damaging 'stranger' rape myths around? Mr Holt lives in a bubble of wit, irony, and dark humour that I seem unable to access, inevitably alienating me, the reader, from the

point of his opening paragraph.

It seems, Mr Holt, that where we lack in the method of communicating our perspectives, be it through protest or written form, we both excel in alienating our audiences.

Sara Dunn
LUSU Women's Officer

Worthy praise

I just thought I would write and say congratulations to all the Lancaster teams who competed at Roses. It is of course a shame that we didn't win, but I think everyone should recognise how tough it can be for competitors and that taking part really is what counts. Well done also to Gareth Coleman. Events like this must be difficult to organise, but everyone seemed to have fun regardless of the scores, which is defiantly the most important thing. So good luck to all the sports teams for next year, I think everyone is looking

forward to another sunny day full of Lancaster talent, keep on training.

Charlotte Bennet
Bowland College

All Greek to me

It really shouldn't surprise me that my JCR seems to have no knowledge of the world beyond their own egos, but it does. Lonsdale proudly proclaims its extrav is a Lonsdalius Extravius, the name suggesting a Roman theme. Indeed, they even give the date in Roman numerals.

But then they go on to say they want a "sea of Gods, Spartans, Aphrodites, Poseidons, legionnaires, Greek senators": most of which are obviously references to ancient Greece.

I'd like to think they'd at least have the intelligence to say a "sea of Gods, Caesars, Venuses, Neptunes, legionnaires, Roman senators". I don't expect them all to be history majors,

but I'd have thought the difference between ancient Greece and ancient Rome was pretty basic stuff.

Obviously they never completed Key Stage 2 history.

A member of the classically inept Lonsdale College

Unanswered questions

Two questions. First, what made Lizzie Houghton choose to relive the tamagotchi, out of all the amazing crazes of the nineties? You could have kept your flatmates up all night with a furby or broken something expensive with a yo-yo.

Secondly, why would you choose a badger when you could have raised a flying penis? To me the choice would be obvious. Although perhaps some would say that the penis can be just as annoying and difficult to raise as a badger. I still think the idea of mothering flying genitalia would be far more rewarding than mothering those things which sometimes appear with Bill Oddy. Perhaps that's just personal preference?

All in all though, your article made me laugh a lot, I defiantly think that 90's kids had the best toys!

A curious reader

Corrections

We quoted Sarah Clark as saying "My experience has been fantastic with many new and exciting memories and adventures..." ('The most stressful days I have ever experienced', News, May 5). In fact, the quotations in the final paragraph of the story should be attributed to Sara Tennant instead.

Due to an editing error, the headline '10-man Grizedale see off bottom-of-the-league Cartmel' was incorrect. It should have read '10-man Grizedale hold on against bottom of the league Cartmel'.

If you notice any factual mistakes in SCAN, please let us know by emailing scan@lancaster.ac.uk, including the issue's date, page number and story headline.

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Michael

&

*Sarah*

A Woman who is navigating her degree comfortably and a Young Man who is praying he doesn't fail, train their magnifying glass upon the relationship issues of Lancaster University

(You could do with a magnifying glass to read this bit properly)

I am literally addicted to social networking. I now consider every aspect of my life in terms of whether or not it would make a good status update. I get the shakes if I haven't checked in any given hour. I even tweeted the process of sending you this email. This is the first thing I've written that wasn't less than 140 characters in months. Help Me.

Twitter twattle

MICHAEL: It is a great irony of social networking how progressively they are making us all more antisocial. The floodgates of the mundane have been opened. Every single act can now be flippantly broadcast to the world. The way human beings think is changing. There will soon come a time when people wander down the street blurting out every single observation: 'just saw a seagull pecking at a chip'; a passer-by will unconsciously respond 'just heard a man say that he saw a seagull pecking at a chip', one of them may even say the word 'lol'... out loud. Everyone's opinion now counts. A standardised weighting of 140 characters has levelled Stephen Fry and Dane Bowers alike. Truly we have reached a democracy, and it's hideous.

But there is still hope for us all. If every time we reached that sign-in

page we had a single moment of clarity, stepped back from the brink and thought 'No! I am going to use this time to do something qualitative and beautiful! I am going to write a poem, or the overture to a symphony instead of thoughtlessly telling people what I'm currently eating,' we'd stop the rot right in its tracks. 'Then again, I might have photo comments.'

SARAH: Twitter is one of the few occasions in which people should realise just because Stephen Fry is doing it doesn't make it conducive to your lifestyle. Quoting Q.I. will always be necessary in life, but cyber stalking celebrities will not. Moreover, who cares enough to sign up to a site predominately composed of notifications of what people are doing from one minute to the next? This epidemic is now world-wide,

with more and more feckless people checking their page every half-hour just in case they've been invited to a dire event they won't attend but will nonetheless spend fifteen minutes investigating just in case their new crush is going.

There are rare bursts of sunshine in Lancaster – please make the most of it and spend some time outdoors instead of festering in your bedroom needlessly commenting on other people's status updates. Presumably if you are logging in this frequently nothing has occurred since your last five minute tap of the refresh button? You need to break away from this obsession and try socialising in the real world, with real people and without the intervention of a computer. Your life can be thought provoking and textured once more if you can kick your absurd cyber relationship.

I'm really short. I have a sort of inferiority complex about it. Everywhere I go it seems both men and women are taller than me. I always feel like I've got something to prove, like I'm starting at a disadvantage in every single relationship I set upon, either friendly or romantic. I've tried to compensate, but people still refer to me as 'short arse', instead of my name. Why is society so united against the small?

The long and the short of it

MICHAEL: There's no need to get so tetchy about light-hearted jibes like 'short arse'. Everyone has to be defined by some sort of affliction, for instance, I have 'bong eyes' which I am ribbed about sometimes, though in most cases people choose to keep quiet about it on account of the fact that I'd most likely kick the shit out of them if they dared.

Ultimately it's all about the mindset. It's probably only you that's completely defining yourself by your own diminutive frame. The things that you are most self-conscious about usually aren't noticed by others. They are most likely too worried about their own personal afflictions to take any fundamental

disagreement with yours. If you're a nice guy who generally takes everything in his (admittedly reduced) stride, then who cares what size you are. Always remember that though you have the body of a dwarf, you will always have the heart of a giant.

SARAH: I think the disadvantage in your relationships might stem from self pity more than height difference; you need to first accept your height and then when people mock your less than statuesque build you can make jokes or simply rise above it. So what if you're short? Does this actually disadvantage you in any real way in your day to day life?

You should work on building up

your confidence, the gyming sounds as though you have already started and that's brilliant, but you need to do more. Get involved in rock climbing or dancing, anything that throws you into an environment where you need to make the most of your form. Stop thinking you are disadvantaged, no one likes a moaner, and instead get out there. Talk to girls and make new friends. To start with perhaps stay away from the rowing team, giants will not help in this scenario. And of course, where would this response be without the fail-safe reply: to girls, size doesn't matter. Failing all of that, platform shoes are back in, so why not try the Simon Cowell style Cuban heels?

My housemate has had a friend from home here for over a month. The dilemma is that my housemate's friend got kicked out of his family home for using drugs; now living in our flat indefinitely, sleeping on our sofa. They are both always incredibly loud at night getting drunk or stoned. I've told them off but they still keep doing it. If I go to the porter he'll get chucked out and he'll have nowhere to go; but also I fear for my degree.

Squatter stress

MICHAEL: You are in quite a difficult situation; as much as you have every right to be annoyed at their disruptiveness you've still got to admire their determination to commit to such a sitcom-style existence. There's no need to be the killjoy here, far from it! You can heighten the fun and get them out your hair by getting your housemates to club together with you to buy them both a tent where they can fart around somewhere on the outskirts of the university instead and leave you undisturbed. Just tell them that they can do a whole host of creative/destructive things with fire outside that simply aren't possible indoors; such as building a little bonfire and toasting marshmallows; or burning crap effigies

of Salmun Rushdie. The situation has got to give sometime however. The prodigal son will have to return home at some point; your housemate will ultimately get tired of having to accommodate him in his life and if his family refuse to let him back Lancaster has a pretty vibrant tramp scene that will welcome him with open scruffy arms.

SARAH: You need to balance the needs of you and your housemates against the threat of homelessness for the unwanted friend, and that may require you all sitting down together to talk it through. Be clear that you have exams and state you need quiet time to study and sleep prior to these. I appreciate it is your home too but perhaps try remov-

ing yourself from the situation for prolonged periods, the library is the place to be right now, try camping out there for a day as you will benefit from the distance from the stress and will also get studying done. Realistically how much longer can this arrangement go on for? I know it is stressful and tense but at some point he will return home, most likely when the food and money has run out and there is an absence of clean pants. Its not worth kicking off over and falling out with your housemate; try approaching it calmly, give them plenty of reminders when your exams are and as hard as it will be try to refrain from chucking all of their belongings outside in a rage. That really only happens in soap operas.

Relationships in focus #3

Kissing

Michael Holt
Mr kiss kiss bang fizzle

I LOVE KISSING. I could do it indefinitely. There is no more satisfying feeling than when that awkward preamble of wanky small-talk ("so, who are you here with?", "God, I shouldn't even be out; I've got so much work to do!") is punctured by a glance or gesture that immediately signals the need for you both to just brush everything aside as you dreamily lurch for each others' faces.

I remember my first kiss. It was terrible. It was at Leanne Purdy's 13th birthday party at the Seaton Working Men's Club in Hartlepool. I tentatively made my way into the function room where the party was in full swing, boys and girls sat polarised on either side of the room; Shit was bangin'. I was clutching in my timid hands a nondescript girl-themed card, with a gift voucher nestled inside, ready to deliver to the birthday girl. I couldn't find her through the dry ice and neon lights so I just plonked it down in the allocated gift area with the rest of the impersonal tokens of friendship.

The DJ broke out Oops Outside Ya Head which firmly dealt with the dance-floor segregation as everyone tottered their arses down on the sticky laminate floor and clapped and jived in time. One of the girls leaned over mid-clap and shouted in my ear: "Oi! Michael! Jessica pure fancies you! She wants to meet you!" This was an unprecedented revelation. After the song subsided I called my friends together for an impromptu conference where it was collectively decided upon that I should go for it.

I tracked down mediator girl, who'd suggested the tryst, and nodded firmly in acquiescence to the proposal. She led me into the girls' toilets (which were surprisingly well furnished) where there was a whole battalion of girls assembled with Jessica stood squat in the centre. We both did a mutual hurried lunge and began inexpertly lapping at each others facial features until we grew mutually self-conscious and shuddered our shuffling goodbyes, going our separate ways and avoiding eye-contact for the rest of the evening.

It's funny to wonder where these people who provide these pivotal milestones in your formative years end up. I last saw Jessica, out of the corner of my eye, two years ago at a local bowling alley where she was now incredibly fat and could quite possibly have been with child.

We may have both gone our separate ways in life but I will always remember the moment we shared together; and somewhere, breastfeeding a new-born calf, I hope she feels the same way.

Preparing for the New World Order

According to those 'in the know', the world's governments are plotting a gigantic light show in the sky to convince us all of an alien invasion and enslave us all in an endtimes-esque New World Order. **Daniel Ash** reckons it would make for good viewing

CONSPIRACY THEORIES ARE everywhere nowadays, from Tutankhamun's treasure sinking the Titanic, to America faking the moon landings. But how certain can we be that the crazy looking nut with the sandwich board, and some interesting ideas about aliens, isn't right? How do we know which conspiracy theories can be rejected, and which ones should have us stocking up on tinned goods in abject terror?

Conspiracy theories about aliens are abound, and the internet is teeming with people who seem to have little more to do than explain where and when they will invade. The better informed of the paranoid bloggers will point out the apparent fact that governments around the world are preparing us for 'the truth' about aliens. Even the Vatican is on board, declaring that it is not a sin to believe in little green men.

What if this is the start of a type of mass psychological conditioning, designed to get us to believe in the existence of aliens? Not because we need to be prepared for a real-world *Independence Day*, but because that's what the mysterious and all-powerful 'They'

want you to believe (cue *Twilight Zone* theme music). This is the theorised premise behind Project Blue Beam, the giant global conspiracy in which all the major governments of the world are supposedly complicit: a plan to create a New World Order on a bizarre and fascinating level.

Believers in Project Blue Beam claim that we are being slowly convinced not only of aliens, but also that all the world's religious doctrines are wrong. The evidence of this is apparently all around us, from films such as *E.T.* and *Jurassic Park* (to convince us of aliens and evolutionary theory respectively; Darwin just wasn't enough), to fake earthquakes that reveal religious artefacts designed to get us to question contemporary faith systems.

The real trouble will start when They fake an alien invasion. They will use cleverly positioned satellites, radar dishes, aerials and even 'chemtrails' (those wisps in the air left after planes pass, which other theorists maintain are a plot to slowly poison the human race) to create a gigantic 3D light show in the sky. This will all be in the name of tricking the world's nuclear powers to fire off its stocks of WMDs, effec-

This will all be in the name of tricking the world's nuclear powers to fire off its stocks of WMDs

tively disarming the entire globe at a single stroke.

The (fake) aliens though are only phase two in this nefarious scheme. Phase three gets a lot more exciting. Once the phony aliens have been to atoms with the power of several million suns, two-way telepathic gizmos will be used to make the world think that God is talking to them. Psycho-messages will be poured into our heads, telling us that the messiah has appeared, corresponding to each nation's main religion. Another light show will create a gigantic blending of all these figures into one New World religious leader.

The light show will then again be used to convince us that 'good' aliens are coming; the start of a Christianesque rapture that will pretend to be a universal fulfilment of all the ancient prophecies. This is where conspiracy theorists seem to disagree more than usual. Some think that the 'good' aliens are real, and humanity will embark

upon a life amongst the stars on alien spaceships. Others reckon this will indicate the coming of a global satanic super-hacker who will infiltrate phone lines, internet cables and all manner of electronic hardware, like an evil, hellish matrix. Either way, the earth will be gripped by the sort of terror and evil as predicted in book of Revelations. Out of the ashes of the old world will be born a New World Order, in which every nation is united under a single faith against a common, fictitious enemy. One would assume more evil aliens, though I'll admit I was very confused by this point in the narrative.

To me, all this looks a lot like some one watched *The Passion Of The Christ* and *Close Encounters* side by side a few too many times, but the internet kept trying to persuade me with 'evidence' that I'm pretty sure wouldn't convince a three-year-old.

For instance, there was indeed a record number of earthquakes in 2008, as predicted. But I'm yet to come across any stories of Jesus, Buddha, Mohammed or Krishna's secret diary coming to light as a result of any of them – one would imagine it would be pretty big news. We're also expected to believe

that the numbers of satellites orbiting the earth are evidence in themselves. "How many weather satellites do we need?" asked one online conspiracy theorist hangout. Not enough to evacuate New Orleans, apparently.

The clincher in their argument, apparently, is the convenient fact that the United Nations (that all-powerful global NWO government that struggles to agree on how to tie shoelaces) has designated 2009 as the International Year of Astronomy. This will, one supposes, send all our gazes skyward just in time to catch the light show. What more convincing do you need?

You may well have realised that this theory is holeier than Jesus's socks, with just about no part of it being realistic, sane or feasible. Perhaps most entertaining, is the news that the UN has also been preparing the aural accompaniment to the light show: they've already picked out Beethoven's Song of Joy as the anthem for the New Age.

I for one think it would make the premise for a pretty cool movie (maybe with the talents of Will Smith and Edward Norton). But then maybe that would just spoil the surprise for everyone when the sky lights up.

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Sir Bill Taylor rejects the label of 'politician'. "I've been interviewed a load of times by local radio stations, and they'll say 'you're a politician of course,' but I don't think I ever have been.

"Politics doesn't exactly grab me. I wanted to improve people's lives, and in our democratic structure [to do that] you have to get involved in some politics. But I've tried never to take my eye off improving sports centres, improving community centres, improving the schools.

To him, politics is merely a means for improving people's lives. He didn't become a councillor in Blackburn to get into political fights, nor did he become Jack Straw's election agent to be a strategist. So what is it that makes Sir Bill Taylor tick, that gave him his passion for public service?

The young Bill came to Lancaster in 1970 after a council estate upbringing in Birmingham. His mother had raised him single-handed. Throwing himself headlong into extra-curricular pursuits, he won a position on Bowland JCR and later became vice-president of the Student Representative Council - the predecessor to today's LUSU.

In those days, the campus wasn't much to speak of. Much of the university was in Lancaster itself in the St Leonardsgate area, with most of the students living in the city or even in Morecambe.

The political atmosphere in the university was quite different to today's much vaunted apathy. "They were quite heady times; it wasn't long after the Par-

is student riots," says Taylor.

"We closed the university down for two terms," he said, explaining how the sacking of an English department lecturer, David Craig, for perceived "working class bias" in his choice of course texts, catalysed widespread student boycotts of lectures in protest at the undermining of academic freedom.

"There were massive meetings in Alexandra Square... with tannoys and stuff so that people could speak," he recalls. "[The meetings had] a thousand people or more. There were only about 3,000 students in the university all told."

But Bill and the SRC didn't let the boycotts hamper the students' learning. "There was not a lot of lecturer to student teaching going on... [so the students] mimicked the curriculum of the university teaching. Lectures took place, but they were conducted by other students who'd genned themselves up on that particular issue, so we carried on learning."

Seeing how the university operates today, Taylor sees the Craig affair as a step toward creating the more "collaborative" learning environment that exists now. "It was a pretty didactic experience coming here in the '70s... like a deferential thing; from the top down," says Taylor.

He added: "[the boycotts] was about what we saw as empowering the students and democratising the learning experience."

That less regimental ideal of education stayed with Taylor after university, and through his time as a youth worker.

"In some ways, that theme of independent learning and informal education ran through my working life as well," he says. At one point Taylor ran a youth club, earning only £1,645 a year as a youth worker, before going on to working in schools and informal education.

He traces his drive to connect to young people to his childhood: "When I was a teenager, my mum and dad split up, and the buildup to that was fairly difficult. I used to go into school and fall asleep. Pieces of chalk used to get thrown at me, and then the board rubber, but nobody ever asked me 'why are you asleep?'"

"That's almost an analogy for why I wanted to work with young people and give them a chance to speak for themselves," he admits. "If young people can get those kind of things off their chest, share them with other people and get some kind of response and some support from it... they can face forward."

His youth work drove his early dabbling in local politics. A conversation with a vicar from a working class parish in Blackburn, convinced Taylor to run for a seat on the council, promising to get a youth club built on his council estate (that vicar was Geoff Pearson, now the Anglican Bishop of Lancaster).

"Right in the centre of the community now, there's a place which is used by young folks, old folks, it's a library, it's an after school club, it's a toddlers club and all the rest of it," he says, proudly.

"Through my work as a councillor in Blackburn we have something between 25 and 30 community and neighbour-



On air: Sir Bill being interviewed on student radio at Blackburn College. During his time at Lancaster, Sir Bill helped set up Bailrigg FM.

Lancaster alumni, youth worker, former leader of Blackburn Council, Knight Bachelor, and now one of LUSU's trustees; Sir Bill Taylor enjoys a colourful life. **Dan Hogan** finds out what drove this 'poor kid from Birmingham' to a life of public service and helping others.

'Not bad for a bloke who never bought jumper until he was

hood centres - probably the best provision in the north west, I would guess."

To him, such facilities are vital for healthy relationships between neighbours. "If communities have places to meet, they have chances to work with each other and rub shoulders with each other."

But the youth clubs that Taylor help set up have sometimes been used to drive communities apart. He recalls what happened when the National Front got wind of plans to turn a terraced house in Blackburn into a mosque. "I was on a pro... planning permission march, while the kids from the youth club were being wound up by the National Front to heckle and throw stones."

He compares the BNP's tactics in a byelection they won in Blackburn to those of Nazi propagandist, Joseph Goebbels. "He told some whopping lies, some massive, massive lies... In one of the leaflets they put out, they claimed there was going to be some kind of Saddam Hussein-esque scimitared gateway into the main Asian area of Blackburn... It was completely untrue."

Building strong communities, is the key to beating messages of hate and division, according to Taylor. "By having community centres and groups, and

inter-ethnic groups as well... interfacing between the Asian community and the white community, people get to know and respect each other, and understand each other a bit. It's those small ways that will combat the big lies."

He adds: "I think what the students union is doing here, with all those different groups, and all those different societies and organisations, is a microcosm of that kind of thing."

Having seen the rise of the far-right first-hand in Blackburn, Taylor has a view of what drives the BNP's appeal. "People's fears about change and difference" is the problem, he says. "These extreme groups flourish in difficult times, and we're in difficult times now"

Things haven't necessarily been helped by the government, he thinks. Although he's been a member of the Labour party since 1974, he sees that, in many ways, the government has failed to strengthen working class communities, like the ones he grew up and worked in. "This government has done fantastic in terms of improving the health service and education, but they haven't strung it together properly," he says. "I don't think they've really stretched working class communities, like I was stretched in the 60s; to aspire to go into univer-

I didn't ever start a career, I just went to work one day.

sity, or to aspire to change my housing conditions. And I think that's an oversight."

Through coincidence, a canvassing session, and his wife's hastily made pie, he wound up as Jack Straw's election agent - on a "temporary basis" in 1979. He's still Straw's agent today.

I asked if he thought that Straw, widely touted as a potential successor to Gordon Brown as prime minister, has any ambitions in that direction. "Probably not. Jack's about 62. His name is always put around at these kind of times. He's a safe pair of hands, he's got a load of frontbench experience... But I would guess it's a 'no' now, and I'm not sure the Labour party could cope with any change in leadership at the moment."

Regardless, he sees Straw's approach to being a parliamentarian as better than more recent crops of MPs. "I

think MPs, by and large, have gone from A-Levels, university, often into the law, and then out into the world again."

"I think if more of our MPs did the soapbox, the surgeries, the listening, and the sitting in magistrates courts [like Jack Straw]... they'd have a better idea of what can make people's lives flourish, and what can get in the way of that."

Speaking to people in this way is something Taylor did a great deal of himself, while serving a stint as Mayor of Blackburn, an experience he found "quite humbling".

"I was the youngest guy ever to do it... You find so many different community groups struggling, really," he says. "You learn how much unsung work goes into a community."

In 1998, when Blackburn became a unitary authority, Taylor was appointed chair of the education committee, which he regarded as a "fantastic opportunity". "20% of our schools were failing, or in special measures, so 20% of our kids weren't getting a decent start in life, which is what I had got, by going to good schools in

Birmingham. So, that was my mission, to improve the schools.

"We had to say goodbye to some of the headteachers, because the leadership was found to be lacking. But we ended up having the best OFSTED reports that the [Local Education Authority's] ever had."

He mentions being leader of the council almost as if it was a walk in the park.

"Then I became the leader, and we were council of the year, and stuff like that."

Taylor reflects on his career as not really having started at all. "I didn't ever start a





ever had a as 12'

career, I just went to work one day. If you look back at 57-year-old and 58-year-old Anne and Bill Taylor, it looks like they've had a career, but when you look at it from [the other] end, I only just went to work on the first day."

"My daughter especially is quite worried about [her career]... She said to me once: 'I don't really know what to do, Dad.' And I said, 'well I don't either.'"

His career probably played a part in the decision, in 2003, to award him a Knighthood, which still baffles Taylor slightly. "I've got to say, it was a rather scary process... you can't ask why you've got it, and you can't ask what's happening."

He recalls the discussion he had with his wife, when pondering whether or not to accept. "People like me don't get knighthoods," he said at the time. "We agonized over it for two reasons. One is, do we believe in this sort of thing? The other one is, should I get one?"

The day itself was a defining moment, when he realised just how remarkable his situation was. "I was sat with Helen Mirran, for three of four hours. That was a bit of privilege, because she's a bit of an icon," he says. "As Prince Charles came towards me with the sword, I thought, 'this isn't bad for a bloke who never had a bought jumper

until he was twelve."

The honour, he thinks, was to do with his achievements in public service and "striving for excellence in all that you do." Not being allowed to know the reasons for the knighthood, he still doesn't know for sure.

He uses the prefix to his name sparingly though. "I use it when I think it's useful for the people I'm working for or with... I quite often get called it in the third person: 'do you know my friend, Sir Bill Taylor?'"

What does he make of his current role as an external trustee of LUSU? "I guess it's kind of like a check and a balance around what the students union can get up to, should get up to and does get up to. I guess it's some kind of financial watchdogging."

These days, Taylor runs his own local government consultancy, Improve Your Council, alongside a range of projects for various third sector organisations. But his experiences, his career, and his defining ethos were best summed up in the last minutes of our interview.

"What we've got to do is look at social mobility; I'm fairly socially mobile. I've come from a working class, single parent background. I just want more people to have the chances I've had."

Green dream or pipe dream?



Emma Newman looks at the mixed bag in organic fruit and veg available in supermarkets and asks, is organic really all that green?

IN TODAY'S HEALTH-OBSSESSED culture, we are increasingly aware of which foods we should and shouldn't eat and how much fat is lurking in every mouthful. We are bombarded with conflicting advice, photos and recommendations from the media. One page of your newspaper highlights the UK's growing obesity problem while the next features the latest emaciated size zero celebrity.

One oft-pushed food tip is to buy and eat more organic food. It is said to be healthier, more nutritious and friendlier to the environment than its mass-produced counterparts. In other words, it is what we have all been waiting for. But organic farming isn't new; in fact the concept was put into action in the early twentieth century.

So why wasn't organic food readily available all this time? Well, quite simply, it was. But it wasn't in major supermarkets, or part of a global advertising drive and it was more expensive than non-organic produce. Today, organic living has lost its negative association with tie-dye wearing hippies; thanks to celebrities, saving the world through salad is an A-list pastime.

The idea behind organic food is farming, processing and distribution that don't damage the environment by avoiding the use of pesticides and fertilisers. It also promotes high standards in animal welfare with livestock that are kept in as natural conditions as possible.

It's also supposed to be more nutritious than standard fruit and veg as it is grown naturally without chemicals. This is meant to strengthen and boost the

natural immune system and research has also shown organics to be higher in Vitamin C, essential minerals and photo-nutrients. Anecdotally, many people who only eat organic food have claimed that since eradicating non-organic produce from their diet, they have suffered from fewer coughs, colds and other illnesses.

Sales of organic foods are booming, with an estimated £1.6bn spent on produce last year. This is a 40% rise on the amount spent in 2004. The market is still growing and this year's rise is meant to be even higher. In fact, 1 in 40 pints of milk we buy is now organic.

However, cracks have been appearing in this expanding 'green' organic market. Produce is often flown so far around the world it is less eco-friendly than some conventionally farmed mass-produce food. There has also been a drop in regulatory standards due to supermarket battles over limited produce. To meet demand, chains are air-freighting organic produce into the UK and encouraging industrial scale production. It is this style of farming that the movement originally intended to replace.

You may think organic food has a good reputation, but if you look behind the glossy façade you may find your 'eco-friendly' produce has been flown half way around the world in order to reach you. Importing produce poses major problems for the organic food movement. One can ask why organic associations would allow their seals to be stamped on produce transported from the other side of the world. Fair enough, we cannot actually grow certain foods, but why ship foods which are readily

available in the UK?

One example of this is the import of organic potatoes from Israel, around 2,187 miles away, during the British potato season. An estimated 350,000 tonnes are imported every year. The ecological gains of organic production are easily wiped out by the carbon cost of transporting produce and flying it from the far corners of the globe.

There has been a further drop in standards with many supermarket chains desperate to meet demand for organic food; some have begun to buy produce from farms that are not certified but that have promised to go organic in the future. In the UK, we have just passed the market's tipping point; the millions now buying organic has forced standards to be lax in order to meet demand. There is a line to be drawn between promoting organic farming but avoiding industrialised production.

It is all well and good buying organic produce from supermarkets, but we need to open our eyes to the factors which have undermined its eco-friendliness. One way to do this would be to check where your food has come from before putting it in your shopping basket. If your potatoes have been flown from Israel or your apples are from South Africa, don't buy them; you will probably find mass-produced British apples in the same store which are more eco-friendly, despite not being organic.

To find British organic produce, simply shop in the markets and farm shops around your locality – Lancaster included. Just because your produce isn't all packaged up, ready and waiting in a supermarket, doesn't mean it is any worse than conventional produce.

Screen me up Scotty

Film Review: *Star Trek*

Chris Pine, Eric Bana, Simon Pegg, Zachary Quinto
Dir: J.J. Abrams

Francesca Beckett

NOT BEING A big trekkie myself, when I heard there was a new *Star Trek* film in the pipeline it excited me about as much as the news of Hannah Montana's transference to the big screen.

But then, I saw the trailer, and I read the previews (the aesthetic appeal of Chris Pine may have also swayed me into excitement too; lets be honest, I'm still a girl).

So when last Tuesday, I decided to attend Vue's 'Mystery Film' night, I was pleasantly surprised to find the film was to be *Star Trek*, and very glad I'd forgotten to book my tickets for Thursday (the film's actual release date) although to be frank I'd have been more than happy to watch the film again two

Swagger and stone:

Kirk (Pine, right) and Spock (Quinto, left) are acted brilliantly, avoiding unpleasant arrogance or lack of character, as was the risk with the characters.



days later.

The opening scene hits the ground running, with an absolute blood bath of a battle that proves not only to be visually stunning, but emotionally engaging too. We are introduced to the bad guys – a Romulan space ship with a Captain (a heavily made up Eric Bana) in the mood for revenge – and given something of a back story for Captain Kirk, the franchise's arrogant genius of a protagonist.

I'd be loathe describe this film as an action movie, because it really does end up being so much more. The plot is engaging, with enough twists and revelations to keep the audience interested in where it's all headed, rather than other movies like *Transformers*, where the story appears to be little more than an excuse for big explosions. There are some brilliantly funny moments too, even during the action sequences; these are provided by all the cast, and not sole-

ly, as I had previously feared, derived entirely from Simon Pegg's brilliant turn as Scotty. With a script that is nothing short of genius, we come to watch characters that we genuinely care about; and end up willing them to succeed.

Chris Pine's Captain Kirk is brilliantly played, with both the swagger and charisma required to pull off a character that could easily be misinterpreted as unlikeable. Spock is revived with aplomb by Zachary Quinto,

bringing humour and warmth to a role that on paper should really be neither. Both, however, risk being upstaged by supporting roles such as Doctor 'Bones' McCoy (Karl Urban), who oozes cynical humour, and the young Pavel Checkov (Anton Yelchin), with both characters delivering solid and enjoyable performances.

Rather than falling into the trap of making the film obscenely long, it keeps to a succinct 126 minutes, mean-

The latest *X-Men* is just another mediocre comic

Film Review: *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*

Hugh Jackman, Danny Huston, Liev Schreiber, Taylor Kitsch
Dir: Gavin Hood

Daniel Savage

So, *Wolverine*. A prequel to the three *X-Men* films already made, following Hugh Jackman's Wolverine/Logan from childhood through pretty much every war America fought in since 1850 to a few years before *X-Men 1*. The wars themselves are covered in

a *Watchmen* style credits montage, before focussing on Wolverine's time as a mutant mercenary, and his attempts to escape this life. Without spoiling the plot too much, this largely involves explosions, stabbings, shootings, and lots and lots of death.

There are many irritations about this new instalment of the *X-Men* series, and I have to be honest – many of them are fanboy annoyances that don't really have any larger effect on the film itself. The average cinema-goer won't really care that the Cajun Gambit doesn't speak with a Cajun accent (although they may be justifiably annoyed that Taylor Kitsch doesn't manage a consistent accent of any sort).

However, there are many other, far more fundamental flaws. The CGI is mixed, at best. There's a scene shortly after Wolverine gets the adamantium injected into him where he examines his claws – which look less realistic than they did in *X2*, released about six years ago. There's at least one explosion shot where you can tell that Jackman's simply standing in front of



Unrecoverable: Jackman performs well in the latest *X-Men*, but even that can't save the movie



ing that the pace never lets up, and we encounter no needless padding. Everything in the film feels necessary; there are no sequences that appear to have been put there for the sake of it. So many potentially excellent films are often ruined by too many false endings and needless fluff. By keeping to such a short length, we never have a moment to yawn or check the time, because there is nothing in the movie that we could, or would, want to miss.

This is a film that had a lot to live up to – not just to satisfy old fans; it needed to recruit some new ones too. In my opinion it exceeds expectations, with a snappy plot, absorbing performances and quite frankly beautiful special effects. Not many blockbusters can squeeze plot, performance, love and laughter into so short a time, but Star Trek did this and more. Let's hope that this is one film franchise that goes on to live long and prosper.

book adaptation

a projector screen. On the other hand, these are the exceptions, not the rule, and much of the action is entertaining, if far from original.

The script is weak to say the least. There are at least four repetitions of Wolverine sinking to the floor, arms spread, claws bared and bellowing at the sky, and it gets sillier every time. There are plot holes wide enough to get a bus through: why wait until after making Wolverine invincible to try and wipe his memory? Worst of all, the plot isn't really original, even taking into account that it's an adaptation of roughly thirty years of comic book material. Basic plot: two immortals try to kill each other. Death is only possible through decapitation. Anyone else seen *Highlander* recently? Of course that plot line gets tossed out of the window for the final fight (the scriptwriters apparently realising that since both characters are alive for *X-Men*, they can't have any other pay-off). Couple all of this with no memorable dialogue, and nearly every other line being a variation on 'Kill him!', and you have a poor

set-up for a film.

Acting wise, Jackman and Schreiber give good, charismatic performances as Wolverine and Sabertooth, and do their best with the script. Huston, as Colonel Stryker, doesn't quite match Brian Cox (who played the same role in *X-Men 2*), but is still suitably villainous. Ryan Reynolds comes close to stealing the film in his initial appearance as the psychotic Wade Wilson, although it perhaps says something about the rest of the film that this appearance is about five minutes long. He reappears at the end, but by this point, the character has been catastrophically neutered. If you're a *Deadpool* fan, his appearance in the final fight may make you want to set fire to something. Taylor Kitsch is muted as Gambit, but isn't required to do anything but look cool, which he manages fairly well.

To sum up: a film of two halves. A poor script, weak plot and dodgy effects, buoyed by (mostly) decent acting, and entertaining, if shallow, action scenes. Take another star off if you're a comic geek like me though.

Highly efficient humourists



Predictable:
Henning Wehn and Otto Kuhnle use the same tired stereotypes

Theatre Review: 1,000 Years of German Humour

Kathi Michaelis

THE GERMAN SENSE of humour: it's efficient, but it's not really that funny.

Having been confronted with that exact preconception about my nation's funnybone for my past three years at Lancaster University, I was quite excited when I heard about a show called *1,000 years of German humour* at the Dukes Theatre.

Two German comedians, Henning Wehn and Otto Kuhnle (one of them a 'comedy ambassador') are on a mission to bring German stand-up to the north of England. Strange idea, I thought. And that's even disregarding the fact that most British people don't seem to believe in the existence of German humour in the first place.

First things first: despite my flatmates' jibes that there couldn't possibly be enough material to last any longer than five minutes, it lasted 90 (exactly timed with a stopwatch), and there were definitely more than the announced nineteen jokes (eleven in the first half, eight in the second). In fact, the audience thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and not just because they were ordered to do so.

Admittedly, even I had my doubts before I went to see the show. As a friend of mine used to say, it's not the racism in German jokes that's offensive, it's the monotony – and he's right, after a while the 'two world wars and one world cup' thing really isn't that funny anymore. Every Brit-

ish person knows the stereotype of the German nation (after all, according to Wehn and Kuhnle, you invented it), and listening to the same jokes over and over again can be quite tiresome.

most British people don't seem to believe in the existence of German humour in the first place

In that way, the show held little in the way of surprise: of course it was the same old prejudices that were addressed and ridiculed. German efficiency, German work ethics, the German attitude to beach towels – I can't say I hadn't heard it all before. The jokes were funny, no doubt, and Herr Wehn and Herr Kuhnle even managed to make the entire audience join in the chorus of German folk songs. But, some bits were decidedly too silly for my liking – Herr Kuhnle seemed to be more amused by shoving five table tennis balls into his mouth than any member of the audience, and I'm not entirely sure whether I needed to see him pull a balloon into his mouth through his nose.

Remarkably, it did take the two comedians a whole fifteen minutes (and twenty-three seconds) to mention World War II. The wars still seem to be a touchy subject for many people today, so I for one am glad that Herr Wehn did not avoid them. Of course, some jokes might have been a bit too much (and I'm definitely not saying that the Holocaust is laughable, by any means), but the fact that we can now laugh about them proves how much we really have moved on from the prejudices we used to have.

Overall, a good performance – maybe not the best German comedy I've seen, but definitely good enough to convince a British audience that Germans are actually very capable of being funny.

Theatre Review: Kellerman (Imitating the Dog & Peter Brooks)

Adam Nash,
Simon Wainwright

Robert Spragg

KELLERMAN IS A story told through an array of visually arresting multiple Medias that juxtapose a two story stage, revolving floors, and large front and back projection screens. It is a very ambitious concept, and one that has drawn national acclaim. Understandably, I was intrigued to see what all the fuss was about.

Harry Kellerman is a mathematician, who, after being sectioned for making an attempt on his own life, spends the entirety of the performance searching for a wife and child he believes to exist, yet there remains no trace of their existence to anyone but himself. The performance covers such ambitious issues as identity, mental disturbance, and the ability to transcend time through the means of calculus. The piece claims to be inspired by 1950's comic books; this is evident within the stage set up which is framed like a comic book story board, sectioning segments of action from one another, exaggerating the abstract quality of the narrative.

In terms of a linear reading it is easy to get lost in the visual quality of the experience; concurrent with the live action, the back projection emits a seemingly cell-shaded image which mirrors that of the main action, as in Richard Linklater's *A Scanner Darkly*. Combining all the live action with digital Medias seems to suggest a more rounded cinematic experience; actively disengaging traditional theatre's emphasis on the raw immediacy of acting, so sometimes I found myself watching just the screen much like a film. Admittedly there were some great moments that justified the set-up, such as a great scene with a long dinner table that subverted the viewer's perspective, or a really striking hanging scene which would never be possible without the extravagance of the production design. The stage's intricate scene changes act in a manner much like the calculus that Kellerman refers to within the performance, yet it still feels as though any narrative would not live up to the show's impressive production style.

The story on its own was initially interesting, yet diminishes once you become acclimatised to the visual presentation as a whole. It's abstract in a David Lynch sense, yet so dispersed it becomes increasingly lost in translation, never producing a sense of closure. On the other hand the performances were quite good, particularly Kellerman's physician. This character's entire dialogue was presented on the large foreground screen adding to his impact as a menacing figure. Yet the performance's dialogue does not take any vocal precedence. That is left to the set design, which as a multimedia experience alone is well worth watching.



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White Lies under white lights

As White Lies ended a weekend of live music at in Leeds, **Joe Polechonski** spoke to Bassist Charles Cave and drummer Jack Lawrence-Brown before the gig

Are you looking forward to tonight?

"We're really excited for this tour, it's the first night and everything looks great, everything sounds really good, it's a big step up from everything we've been doing so far so it's a big night for us."

What's an average day on tour like?

"There's usually quite a bit to be done, we have quite lengthy sound checks at these shows, because we're playing quite a few new songs, and we have to make sure we get them all right. It can be quite dull during the day, but every city you go to you make the most of it and go and explore."

Where did the hype around White Lies come from even when you had only just started as a band?

"It's got to be from the songs really, that was the first thing everyone heard of. We didn't do any live shows for the first six months of being a band so people were basing their judgments of us on a couple of tracks, and that built a lot of excitement. We can't really complain about that; we wanted people to be interested in the music and songs first and then come and see us live later on."

We wanted people to be interested in the music and songs first and then come and see us live later on

How soon was it before you were signed?

"We got signed after our first show, we made the first show a real event and most of the UK music industry showed up which was a lot of pressure for us early on in the band. We were kind of ready for it, and we took it from there. It was a great show and it opened all the doors for us and meant we had offers on the table the next day and we were able to pick which one was our favourite."

When did you start recording the album?

"It was pretty soon, our first show was in February and we were in the studio by May. When we played the first show we had five songs written then we toured for a while, then the label sprang it on us "go and record an album" so we had to write the rest of the album pretty much in the studio."

out there and it going to number one?

"We toured the album without it being released for the best part of a year, and you forget what it feels like to have someone know your songs and then when it finally came out we did the NME tour with it being number one during the first week of the tour, so playing the shows and everyone knowing the words was amazing. It was a good feeling as we'd waiting a long time to get it out there, it made it feel a bit more real."

It's not the kind of thing you can control, you just record, promote and play the live shows and if it does well they're doing their job as well

With bands getting hyped up only to be dropped soon after, was it a relief that the album was successful?

"I'd like to think that had this album done terribly and flopped the label would still keep hold of us, but I can't guarantee that they would have. They signed us for a reason which at the end of the day is to make money. They love our music, but at the end of the day they want to make money at the same time. It was kind of a relief but it's not the kind of thing you can control, you just record, promote and play the live shows and if it does well they're doing their job as well."

This is your main headline tour – will you be playing the full album?

"Yeah, we're doing the whole album and a couple of surprises."

Will you be playing the Kanye West cover you did for Radio 1's Live Lounge?

"No! Not that many surprises! One day we'll play that song and it'll blow everyone's minds and we'll never do it again but that won't be for a while."

Was that something that you practised for ages or did it just come quickly?

"It was one of those things where we were told about it and put it off for ages, then it was like, 'shit, Radio 1 Live Lounge next week! Let's pick a song... Kanye West!' We went to the rehearsal room and three hours later we'd made it a White Lies song. I think we picked an amusing song but did it really well."



Commanding: White Lies frontman, Harry McVeigh, has a powerful stage presence. (Photo: Joe Polechonski)

White Lies Live at Leeds Met University May 3, 2009

THE GIG ITSELF kicked off with Canadian band Wintersleep as the first support. It was clear to see why I'd only heard positive things about their music as they delivered a captivating performance from start to finish, leaving you hanging on every note they played. The set was a perfect example of what a support band should do: grab your attention completely; which is exactly what the main support, School of Seven Bells, did not do.

White Lies arrived on stage to the thumping drums and distinct guitar line of album track *A Place To Hide* following straight into singles *Farewell To The Fairground* and *To Lose My Life*.

From the moment I first heard their demos, White Lies were clearly something special, and the gig only went even further in cementing this opinion. Their album has been out for a little over three months, yet they are already showing a live performance

ahead of their years. When looking at comparable bands, the Killers never sounded this tight and never looked this confident this early on in their careers. White Lies look like a band who have been doing this for years, which can only mean good things for their future.

The band's vocalist and guitarist, Harry McVeigh, is a great frontman in the making with the ability to replicate the stunning vocals from the album whilst commanding an understated stage presence. There's no rehearsed stage moves with McVeigh, he's just playing, singing, feeling every moment of the music which really comes across.

Everyone at the gig was there because they love White Lies and they love the album which really added to the atmosphere of the gig. The sound was amazing and could have filled an arena. Yet being at the 1,000 capacity Leeds Met venue, the band were much closer, only heightening the involvement with the music, which for a supposedly 'depressing' band had such an amazing euphoric quality.

Listing highlights would just be the set list, although *Fifty on our Foreheads* with a sped up outro and *The Price of Love* particularly stood out with them ending on the massive *Death*.

Lady Sovereign Jigsaw (Midget)

Meer Shah

WHY IS IT that now that grime has gone mainstream, it's lost its original exuberance? When Lady Sovereign first came out, she was a much-needed breath of fresh air; despite having some critics, *Public Warning* was a brilliant début.

Her return, however, suffers heavily from 'second-album syndrome'. Gone is the tight production and cohesion (this in spite of being shorter than *Public Warning*). The opening couple of songs are awful: *Let's Be Mates* is reminiscent of the shitty electro-pop you might hear when drunk in a club at 2am on a Friday night, while the title track sounds more like a poor attempt at an Indie anthem.

This would be enough to put off listeners early on, which is a shame because the album does eventually pick up momentum. There are standouts where we can really appreciate Sov's mic skills, though it is important to note that these tend to be the most faithful to grime in terms of sound. *I Got You Dancing* is a terrific example of her genuine talent and charisma, while *Pennies* gives us a hilarious new quotable line, "fother muckers".

But then everything is ruined when high-school dropout Lady Sov calls university students "arty farty" – hardly likely to go down well anyone at Lancaster. As a result, the dextrous bragging of the album closer *I Got The Goods* isn't justified, because the rest of the record simply fails to live up to expectations.

In short, *Jigsaw* is exactly that – a complete mess of an album where the listener has to work a little too hard to piece it together and find the rare highlights. There are one or two decent tunes if heard in isolation, but as part of the whole album, their impact is soured.

Similar Artists: Shystie, Tinchy Stryder, Missy Elliott



La Roux Bullet Proof (Polydor)

James Barker

More electro fun from Elly Jackson and Co *Bullet Proof* continues La Roux's 80s revival. Great keyboard riff and sing along chorus you can't ask for much more. Lyrics are nothing to frighten Dylan but if that's your main concern your missing the point. *Bullet Proof* keeps La Roux exciting and danceable and keeps us eagerly waiting for the album on June 29th.



So where do we go now?



Sue Wynes

LUSU Vice President-elect for Sports

THE BUILD UP was tremendous, the preparation second to none, the excitement paramount, yet it all went horribly wrong.

This year's Roses held in York was as exciting as any previous Roses yet there was one significant difference: the rapid and unexpected loss of points from day one. Are we justified to blame the home advantage that York had? Or can we blame the timing of Roses, which was a slap bang in the middle of all our exams? Or do we have to admit that we are simply not as good at sport as our York counterparts?

One thing is for sure, things need to change. If we continue our losing streak, not only will Lancaster students, sportsmen and women, and supporters alike become down trodden and disheartened, but if it's to always be a foregone conclusion the Roses competition itself will lose the prestige and anticipation it has had since its inception.

Those who saw the closing ceremony at York experienced the striking show they put on. Although it was a rather painful experience; seeing York receive such a significant amount of the awards (though, dare I say, not in a particularly dignified manner), there is no doubt that it was a truly impressive spectacle. Not only was it dramatic and well produced, it also showcased the talents that they harbour within the university outside of their sports clubs, with demonstrations from their societies and clear use of their media teams. I'm not suggesting for one second that their various spectacles and exhibitions lead to their victory in the event, but it definitely enhanced their whole experience.

Lancaster is due to host the next Roses in 2010. Not only do I believe we can win, I believe we can do it in style. For us to achieve this we must engage the entire university, from the student population to the students union right through to the university itself. An event like this cannot sit on the shoulders of one sports sabbatical officer. Only by working together can we break the formidable York teams and show the north what we have to offer. For too long, sport has been overlooked at this university, and now we need to put it back at the forefront of our efforts. We have some amazing sporting talent here at Lancaster and we must prove this to everyone, especially York.

Let's start next year with Roses in mind, introduce the newcomers to the anticipation and excitement of the event, and let's prepare ourselves for a well-deserved victory and a magnificent overall event.

Rally the troops, my friends, for York may have won the battle, but the war is ours for the taking.

Women's pool crush York as men's lose 3 straight clinchers

Liam Richardson
Editor-elect

LANCASTER'S MEN'S POOL team were confident of emulating the heroics of last year's Roses team ahead of this match. With nine players competing in a potential three frames each, and striving to hit the magic five wins to claim the four points, a marathon session of pool was already on the cards.

Lee Osbourne, the only fresher in the squad, had just finished an incredible year in inter-college pool winning 13 out of his 16 games and it was little surprise to see the confident Lonsdalian open the match. He began well, with some great pots and clever tactical play, covering a pocket and making life difficult for his opponent. But York's Mike Walsh had the patience and nerve to claim a 2-0 victory. Osbourne's inexperience arguably cost him the tie, making a couple of errors, which were severely punished. Lancaster then slumped 2-0 down as County's B team captain and league champion, Sean Doyle played similarly. Though carving out good opportunities, he was unable to take full control of his match. Virtually every mistake was punished, and Doyle could only look on as the York player produced an excellent clearance that included a difficult long black.

Bowland's John Bekalo played some trademark attacking pool to get Lancaster back into the match, taking York by surprise. A hugely risky double in the first frame paid off and Bekalo – on his birthday – secured victory with a brilliant pressure clearance. Bob Floyd – a veteran of three Roses pool encounters – did not disappoint either, claiming a classy victory in which he almost seven-balled his opponent in the opening frame. Floyd never looked like losing and only added to his already substantial reputation.

Lancaster surged 3-2 in front thanks to co-captain Craig Charles. The York player was clearly talented but he twice let Charles in, who made the most of the



On target: Lancaster's Women succeeded where the men could not. (Photo: Tom Skarbek-Wazynski)

host's generosity easing to a 2-0 victory. Ben Gill, the former Roses pool captain, did not live up to his typical high standards on the night but still carved out a 2-1 win against a limited York player.

At 4-2 up and needing one more win, Lancaster's victory appeared within a hand's grasp. But York pulled one back after their player got the better of Fylde's Jack Aspden. Aspden was not at his best and the York player's methodical rather than spectacular approach constantly left him in awkward positions with few

pots on.

Bowland's James Milnes had another opportunity to seal the match but struggled against York's former captain and star player, Luke Fleet. In both frames, Milnes engineered frame winning opportunities but a fatal loss of position in both meant Fleet had an open table to clear. The onus was then left on Maurice Wong in the decider. Wong's seven-balls had won several 4-4 deciders for County during the league season. But on this occasion he was on the receiving end, seven-

balled in the second frame after already going 1-0 down to York's captain. Wong was left with very few chances against a clinical opponent and could only look on as York's comeback from 4-2 down was sealed in impressive fashion.

PLAYING ON A second table, Lancaster's women pool players stylishly gained the four points that proved beyond their male counterparts. After a dramatic 5-4 win last year at home, this year's team built on that potential by crushing York 7-2. This was all the more impressive considering the team had to deal with the breakage of the table early on which had to be repaired. This probably hampered the fluency of both sets of players yet it was Lancaster who displayed the character to take a 3-0 lead.

Grad's Sarah Garner and County pair Kate Crawford and Rachel Rooney all had decent games in which they out-potted the opposition. Rooney in particular did well to put aside going 1-0 down after defaulting the game in potting both white and black to storm back in the following two frames. York successfully clawed the overall score back to 3-2 after defeats for Lauren Forrester and Clare Blunt. Neither of the players were showing their best form and suffered from a bad run of the balls. It was left up to Louise Whitehead to prevent York levelling the match. She did this in a star performance which saw her win both frames comfortably. It was a confident display and Lancaster's best of the night. It also took the women one away from victory.

Step up, Lorna Kirkham, the captain of the team. She followed on from Whitehead in crushing her opponent with a solid display which was enhanced by a good tactical performance. With the match won, Hiyat Kara and Lucy Hartshorn added further gloss to the overall score line with straightforward wins. A brilliant display from the girls and a fully deserved 7-2 win against a York team which looked significantly weaker from the one which travelled to Lancaster a year previously.

Apathetic lacrosse team are Lancaster's embarrassment

Lizzie Houghton

IN AN EMBARRASSING weekend for Lancaster perhaps the lowest point came in the men's and mixed lacrosse games. The men's game finished with the home team romping to victory 28-0. The mixed with half the players on each side still inebriated from the night before.

Lancaster's men's did start promisingly enough, weathering the first two quarters and conceding only a handful of goals. It was in the second half of the game that the floodgates opened and York came into form. The away side never had much reason to expect more from the game. They finished bottom of the BUCS Lacrosse Northern Conference Men's League, winning only one game and conceding 108 goals. This defeat cost the Lancaster Roses Team four points.

Captain Josh Wood, said after the game: "The fortitude of the guys on the

pitch was a real testament to their commitment to the team. Even with a final score of 28 - 0 I can see the silver lining, and it by no means gives a fair representation on how close the guys kept the play at times."

Lancaster's women's did beat their York counterparts, quite emphatically. However, as it was a friendly match no points were awarded. The Lancaster Women's team do not compete in a league, so were not eligible to take a competitive part in Roses. There was a reasonable hope though that the women's good form would rub off on the men in Sunday's Mixed match.

Unfortunately this was not the case. Although Lancaster did manage to score in that game the end result was 18-5 to the home side. Lancaster's keeper performed well, but he was let down by his defence.

There was also the matter that both teams had been out the night before. One York player shouted that he was sweating out all the alcohol. One Lan-



Step ahead: York proved a class above Lancaster. (Photo: Ben Robins)

castrian was still wearing his snakebite stained t-shirt.

The game ended in farce. At one point the York players were playing piggy-in-the-middle with a Lancastrian. It would

be unfair to say that none of the players seemed to be taking the match seriously, as there were many who looked genuinely despondent at the end of the fourth quarter.

Painful closing ceremony shows off York's bravado

Dan Hogan
Editor

THE ROSES CLOSING ceremony was painful for Lancaster's teams. Held in York University's brutalist central hall, the audience were first treated to truly impressive displays by York's cheer-leading squad, various dancers, and martial artists.

York's student union president, Tom Fixme (elected as 'Pete the Pirate') tried to give a flamboyant commentary of the event, but just came off as ridiculous. The roll call of individual sport trophies brought home the margin: trophy after trophy went to York, occasionally punctuated by Lancaster wins. The smaller Lancastrian crowd savoured the victories where they could, doing their best to out-cheer their counterparts, but the mood for them was still unmistakably sombre.

After a short film showcasing the sports that make up the competition, an atmospheric, but fundamentally absurd video created a faux-medieval mythology around the Carter-James Trophy, before it descended – to a mix of glee and incredulity in the crowd – from the ceiling into a cloud of fake smoke, suspended from a carabiner.

The scale of York's victory perhaps made sports president, Alex Lacy, too giddy to unfasten the cup from its wire. It needed Lancaster's AU president, Gareth Coleman – clearly sick with defeat – to help remove it, before handing it over to Lacy.



Glittering gimmickry: Above, the Carter-James Trophy descends from the ceiling (Ben Robins). Left, York's impressive dance demonstration (Rebekah Fuller).

As he lifted the trophy, still wearing yellow and black face paint, streamers fired from around the hall, falling unhappily on the Lancastrian's heads. They left hurriedly, rushing to catch coaches, with heavy hearts.

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Sir Chris shows Dyke how it's done



Revenge: Sir Chris knocks York back into place. (Photo: Rob Miller)

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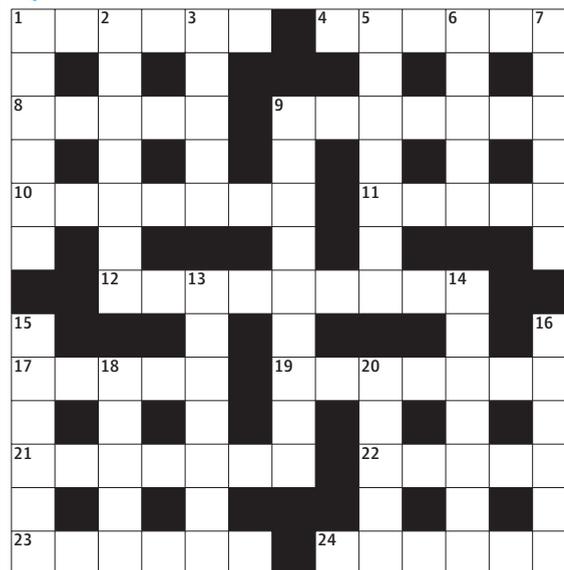
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Quick crossword no. 11,842



Across

- 1 According to one's own inclination (2,4)
- 4 Beetle revered in ancient Egypt (6)
- 8 Herb (5)
- 9 One of group of five elements (used in this type of lamp) (7)
- 10 Selfishly aggressive driver (4,3)
- 11 Foot-operated lever (5)
- 12 Book listing names of inhabitants, users etc (9)
- 17 Fight – fragment (5)
- 19 Pressurised canister that emits spray of fine droplets (7)
- 21 Gain by force (7)
- 22 Entice (5)
- 23 Life supporting element (6)
- 24 Fractured (6)

Down

- 6 Unbending (5)
- 7 Ornamental arm or leg band (6)
- 9 Raised child's seat (9)
- 13 Bursting (7)
- 14 Muslim veil (7)
- 15 Hitchcock thriller (6)
- 16 Protein found in cereals (6)
- 18 Not viscous (5)
- 20 Revolving part of machinery (5)

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Lizzie Houghton

SIR CHRISTIAN BONINGTON, 74, may seem like an unlikely candidate for the best performer in Roses but Lancaster's chancellor put on a display that left his teammates and opposition reeling. The former mountaineer finished first, in what turned out to be one of the closest contests of the weekend.

Cheered on by the Lancaster rugby team, Sir Chris struck the centre peg while York's sports president, Alex Lacy, was still struggling to run the second loop. Lancaster's own AU president, Gareth Coleman, finished soon afterwards.

The York team was hampered by an apparent lack of understanding of the game, as well as some excellent tactical play by the Lancs vice-chancellor, Paul Wellings. Wellings' superior knowledge of the game showed through. He kept York's star player, chancellor and former director of the BBC, Greg Dyke, out of the game for the first half of the match with a series of clever roquets. As Wellings knocked Dyke further and further away from his hoop, Coleman and Sir Chris were able to power on through.

York soon cottoned on though. Once both his teammates had finished, Wellings was left without backup and to the mercy of Dyke and the York VC, Professor Brian Cantor. Even as the Lancaster crowd chanted "no one likes a bully", Dyke contrived to knock Wellings further outfield.

Despite the odds being stacked against him, Wellings managed to pull a victory out the bag. Lancaster may not have walked away with any points, but at least they finished the last event of Roses with smiles on their faces.

Surprise basketball loss



Head in the game?: A subpar performance cost Lancaster. (Photo: Ben Robins)

Liam Richardson
Editor-elect

THE MEN'S BASKETBALL team put in a spirited performance in their defeat to York but were made to pay for a poor second quarter in which York built up their advantage.

Lancaster made a great start in the first quarter passing well and looking tactically astute. However, their hard work was undone in the second quarter in which too many fouls were conceded. This coincided with York raising their game and intercepting the ball extremely well. A gung-ho approach in the third quarter by the away team did little to help the cause and again York remained in the ascendancy. Despite refocusing and improving in the final quarter there was simply too much to

do and the York side were happy to hit back after soaking up pressure.

Once they scored again a few minutes from time the Lancaster players appeared to realise the game was up, becoming lackadaisical which allowed York to extend their lead in the final minutes to 50-38. This was a great shame considering Lancaster were able to reduce the deficit to just four points at one point.

York proved to be worthy winners but if Lancaster had performed to their best then they would surely have won. A combination of being a little panicky in front of the basket and lacking patience in their build-up play proved costly. Again it was a disappointing defeat for Lancaster but with young players such as James Dunne that will only improve and develop further; there is optimism for the future.

Jumbled results in judo

Lizzie Houghton

FOR MOST OF the Lancaster Judo squad this was their first senior competition. Unlike their York opponents, who had recently competed in tournament in Sheffield, most of the away side were relatively unschooled. It is to their credit then that they were able to claw back some much needed, but unfortunately redundant points for Lancaster late on Saturday afternoon.

York picked up the points from the opening Women's light and heavy weight rounds. Lauren Bell and Lucy Oliver did admirable jobs, and both seemed to be confident in their maneuvers. The one thing they did not have were the decisions. In the end they both lost out. A recovery was needed to save the squad from the embarrassment of most of Lancaster's other teams.

As the tournament moved on to the Men's under 73kg, Mark Wilkinson brought Lancaster back into the contest. Although he himself did not win any points, his constant grappling and pinning forced York's Chris Lau into a fowl. He was penalised, although one point still went to York's overall score regardless.

The real breakthrough came in the under 81kg round, where Jonny Tennant made light work of his opponent. The round had barely begun when Tennant hurled him to the ground, picking up a Lancastrian point on the way. Longer was Phil Riding's match in the under 90kgs. Both players matched up equally. For every move one had the other successfully countered. It ended fittingly with a draw, which neither side could reasonably feel cheated by.

The contest ended with the over 90kgs, which again Lancaster made quick work of. Andrew Lloyd picked up another point for the away team, leaving the final scores as Lancaster 2.5 to York's 3.5.

After the match Lloyd said he felt the tournament had gone "really well" for all of Lancaster's squad and hopes to improve upon it in next year's Roses campaign.



Breakthrough: Lancaster had mixed results in Judo. (Photo: Duncan Monteith)

Mixed results in volleyball



Up for it: Despite a confident start the mixed team could not match the success of the Women's, losing to York two sets to nil. (Photo: Ben Robins)

Lancaster pour water on host's polo hopes

AFTER A SEASON of mixed results, the women's team headed to York hoping to end their year on a high. Following a walkover result of 11-1 in the Roses 2008, and a win against York during the season, the pressure was on the women to show that they were the superior force.

The first quarter gave a glimpse of how the match would pan out, with Lancaster hitting the crossbar within the first 30 seconds of play. Lancaster's dominance was capitalised upon with captain, Joss Bass, opening the scoring in style.

The second quarter saw a phenomenal display from Lancaster. Goals courtesy of Joss Bass, Emma Whittingham and Louisa Ball made the scoreline 5-0 at half time, reflecting York's total lack of attacking power.

The second half proved as successful as the first. A further three goals from Emma Whittingham (making her personal tally five) and a fantastic

cross-pool lob from Catherine Wright took Lancaster's total to nine. But a lucky shot taken by York's captain gave them their only on target attempt of the match, and consolatory goal.

AFTER SOME INTERESTING adjudicating during the swimming, the men's polo teams were more than ready for a tough game in this year's Roses tournament. Having watched the girls' team make easy work of their York counterparts, the lads were keen to secure another 4 points. Captain, Dan Korcz, was confident going into the game having defeated York twice last year and leading a good run in the U-polo league this year.

Lancaster were in it to win straight from the off, scoring twice in the first quarter and making much of the better play. While the second quarter was goal-less as both teams defended tight with sharp keeping at both ends, the third saw an early goal from Lan-

caster, followed by a desperate attempt by the hosts to get back into the game.

A lucky deflection eventually helped York put the ball in the goal despite the run of play. The solid defending from the captain and phenomenal keeping from Chris Morrish was more than enough to stop York from causing any real problems. Korcz added his name to the score sheet late in the third quarter but a late lob saw York pull the score back to 5-2.

A solid performance from the whole team saw Lancaster cruise to victory. It finished 6-3 to Lancaster with a superb penalty save from Morrish summing up the game and concluding a memorable victory. The score-line arguably flattered the hosts – truly outclassed by a better side. The men's victory wrapped up Lancaster's domination in the pool, taking 11 out of 12 possible Roses points available for swimming and water polo.

Lancaster's tennis hopes slammed



Aced: It proved a bad day for Lancaster on the tennis courts. (Photo: Dan Hogan)

Sam Newsham

LANCASTER'S TENNIS HOPES did not really get started as York won all six of the matches in the mixed doubles. Players on both sides were frustratingly hampered by strong winds, which frequently blew the ball off course. York dealt better with the conditions, winning all matches easily. All six were won in straight sets and despite Lancaster's best efforts on the day, no set was particularly strongly contested.

Lancaster's third pair, Craig White and Amy Christie, lost their match 6-2 6-0. Their opponents communicated very well together which resulted in solid teamwork. Both of the opposition were strong serve-and-volley players.

The high blustery winds impacted upon the matches severely with the majority of points played being cut short due to the conditions. Despite the wind playing havoc, this did not stop some thrilling tennis being played. One of the only long rallies of the match came in the second set as Lancaster served at 0-3 down. There were some excellent strokes played by both teams but York eventually took the point to go 15-40 up.

After the match, both White and Christie commented on the weather, saying that "the standard of tennis would have been better without the wind

blowing balls out." However, despite the defeat they admitted that the conditions were the same for both sides and added that although they had lost they had thoroughly enjoyed playing.

LANCASTER WERE ONCE again outplayed all round in Saturday's tennis matches as York swept the board in all six events, easily claiming the ten points available for the matches.

The men's second team were on court at 10am to play first doubles then singles. In the doubles, played first to eight in just one set, York won the three matches 8-3, 8-0 and 8-6. The singles were won just as easily; Lancaster's Graham Randall lost the closest match 6-3 6-4.

The men were followed on court by the women's first team. In the doubles, the first pair Amy Christie and Helena Jones were less affected by the wind than during Friday's encounters. Unlike previously, long rallies were often possible and both teams soon found their rhythm with some good strokes; however the York players were the stronger pair and won 8-3. York won the other doubles matches at a canter 8-0 and 8-2.

The singles followed, and Lancaster's first player Helena Jones was up against York's star player Lauren Cockbill. Jones started nervously, double-faulting twice on her way to dropping serve in the first game. Cockbill held her serve

easily to take the score to 2-0. After this, the serve standard picked up a little with both players getting the majority of first serves in and the points lasting longer. But Cockbill was the stronger player throughout, producing a fine forehand volley at the net to take it six games to love.

Jones served first in the second set, but in a closely fought game, Cockbill's forehand won her yet another break. As the set progressed the rallies grew more frequent, with both players producing good shots. But this was not enough for Jones as Cockbill sent a winner down the line to seal a 6-0 6-0 victory.

In the other singles matches, fifth player Alex Bramley played the closest match, eventually losing 7-5 6-4.

Although obviously disappointed by such a resounding loss, the girls enjoyed their Roses experience. "It was great, we'd definitely do it again next year," said Jenny Tsang and Verena Kaufmann. When asked why they thought the York teams had won so easily, they replied "They're very good, they practise a lot – and they're not suffering lack of sleep."

The last events were the men's first team doubles, which York won 8-0, 8-3, 8-3, and the men's first singles, which were interrupted by rain just after 4.00. The rain delay only strung out another York victory as York dominated as with the previous events when play resumed to notch-up another victory.



A hit: York slashed Lancaster's unbeaten run. (Photo: Ben Robins)

York end fencers' winning streak

Sam Newsham

UNBEATEN THROUGHOUT THE entire season so far, the men's first fencing team faced their toughest foes against York's finest. With Lancaster trailing far behind on Roses points before the day even began it was confidently hoped that their success would continue and regain at least some of the ten fencing points available to salvage some glory for Lancaster. However, as the contest wore on, it became apparent it was not meant to be.

Despite all teams being fairly evenly matched it was a disappointing day for fencing all round as the men's 2nd and women's team also succumbed to defeats in their matches.

In the women's match the girls started well, taking early leads with all three weapons – epee, sabre and foil – but slipped towards the end, eventually losing 45-38 in sabre and 40-39 in foil. However, they did emerge victorious in epee as they won 45-43, losing overall by a margin of six points.

Captain of the women's team, Sarah Lamb, reflected upon the team's per-

formances. She said: "they were evenly fought matches and all very close, we gave it a good shot and really enjoyed it even though we didn't win."

The men's 2nd results were almost as agonisingly close. With resolute performances they lost 45-27 in foil and 45-38 in epee but overcame York in sabre with a win of 45-26.

James Titterton, the team captain was gracious in defeat. He said, "I'm not disappointed with the way we fought. We played a really good match and it could have gone either way, so well done to York."

The men's 1st team may have been yet to lose a match but team captain Aaron Gardner refused to be complacent before they began, saying he wasn't sure about the team's chances.

However, they made a good start, winning the epee 45-41. The foil was another closely fought match, eventually going to York 45-34. It came down to the sabre to decide and it was then that York unleashed their secret weapon, a Latvian named Pavel Guzamiovs who fences internationally for his country. With Guzamiovs' help the York team won the sabre 45-43, giving them a final total of 131-112.

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Bad times in badminton

Dan Hogan and Sam Newsham

THE FIRST EVENTS of the Friday of Roses saw Lancaster and York face off in badminton. The Lancaster teams entered the venue with brave faces, despite their apprehensions about the coming matches.

In the mixed doubles, Lancaster's Rachel Anderson and Rick Wallbank won their first match with ease, slaughtering their York opponents in two games: 16-21 and 10-21. But York rapidly turned the tables. Rohit Murthy and Emmeline Cosgrove fared badly, losing their first match 21-14, 21-17. The discovery of cracks and frayed strings on Murthy's racquet revealed the cause of their poor performance.

From there on in, York were in charge, beating Lancaster on all fronts in the mixed category throughout the event.

Kyffin and Hall at one point looked as though they might pull a match back in Lancaster's favour, winning a game 16-21 after only narrowly losing the previous one by 23-21, but by that point, York had already won the event.

Temper impeded Lancaster in the last match, adding to the troubles Murthy's broken racquet were already giving the side, as his racquet sent the cock flying low and wide time and time again. Despite this, Murthy and Cosgrove made York work for their points, fighting to 22-20 and 21-17. But York took the match, to make it 8-1 overall, and happily accepted the four Roses points that came with it.

BOTH THE MEN'S and women's 1st badminton teams suffered defeat in their matches on the Friday. Following defeats earlier in the day by the mixed and seconds teams it was hoped that the firsts could pull some points back for Lancaster. However, in the end, the men were comprehensively beaten 8-1, while the women fought hard but were eventually outclassed 6-3.

Despite the resounding reflection of the scorelines, several of the matches played went to the wire, with many impressive long rallies. Emmeline Cosgrove, who with her partner Charlotte Hall make up Lancaster's first women's pair, said that although they lost everything she was happy with the way she had played. "It's just a bit annoying for the girls, the scores are very close and they've not gone our way all day," she added. "It's been really good though."

Cosgrove and Hall lost their first match 21-18 in an entertaining encounter before losing 21-13 in their second game. The second pair, Linda Thornbarrow and Rachel Anderson, were in the same situation; they played a closely-fought match but in the end the important points were won by the York team.

In the men's matches the first pair Phil Roberts and Ben Kyffin matched York all the way in the first game before eventually losing to the York firsts 22-20. Their second game was not so tight as York paved their way to a fairly comprehensive 21-9 victory.

Altogether each pair played three best-of-three-sets matches, playing the opposing side's first, second and third pair.

Lancaster's cricket side bowled over by York

Lizzie Houghton

61 DAYS BEFORE the eagerly anticipated return of the Ashes, Lancaster's cricketers were hoping they would produce some showcase cricketing of their own. Instead were dealt a huge blow in what was a game hampered by wind and rain. In the end, York walked away the better, beating Lancaster by four wickets. Lancaster had been confident to begin with as they took to the crease, but by the end of the first innings the general feeling was 121 runs would not be enough to secure the desired 4 Roses points.

It was a match Lancaster should have won. The dire weather conditions affected both teams equally and with York having lost their last two games, Lancaster had reason to possess such early confidence. On the back of a successful campaign, and Lancaster having recently achieved promotion the confidence was there for all to be felt. The belief on the Friday morning prior to the first over was that they would win and put some much needed points on Lancaster's board in doing so.

A lack of luck and an increasingly bold York team meant that Lancaster did well to get past the hundred run landmark. All but three of their batters were out before reaching double figures including captain Michael Stevens, who went for 8 in the twelfth over.

With the game being played an hour and a half after its scheduled slot, York won the toss and elected to bowl. Vishal Goyal and Sriram Krishnamurthy were to open the batting for Lancaster and took to the crease. It was a promising beginning for Lancaster with Goyal demonstrating fine form which carried him through until the 21st over. Krishnamurthy did not fare quite so well as his partner at the crease. He was caught out by the York bowler for 8 in the seventh over.



All out: Bad weather and strong a York side hampered Lancaster's chances. (Photo: Dan Hogan)

From that point onwards Lancaster took a long time to recover. Goyal provided a sharp contrast to the other batters who seemed as sporadic as the weather. He pushed Lancaster on, scoring a series of boundaries that must have left York wondering how they were going to send him back to the pavilion. In the end, their bowler Emerson took him for an LBW, but not before Goyal had totalled an impressive 41 runs. It was only when Rob Child, soon followed by James King stepped up to bat that their luck began to change. The pair were a prom-

ising partnership, tallying up enough runs to save Lancaster from embarrassment. Had they been able to continue it is likely they would have taken Lancaster to a healthier score. As it was, Child was run out before they had done too much damage to York's morale. King was left to save Lancaster's score, finishing with 27 not out. The last two overs were called off due to heavy rainfall.

Once the rain had passed York lined up to bat. The weather however soon caused the game to stop again. With half an hour lost through rain York needed

a revised target of 111 from 43 overs to win.

As bowlers, Lancaster proved just as ruthless as York making quick work of the home-side's batsman, including the York captain Nick Vanner. York however found the winning partnership they needed in Remi Remington and opening batsman Tom Hudson. Between the two, they evaded Lancaster's bowlers and fielders, with Hudson eventually hitting the winning two runs, and passing a half-century in doing so.

York corrupt table tennis team's perfect season

Sam Newsham

DESPITE A "FANTASTIC season" of results behind them, Lancaster's first table tennis team was yet another victim of York's relentless Roses campaign as they suffered defeat on the Sunday.

However, there was at least some consolation from the fact that the second team won their event by nine games to five and gained two valuable points for Lancaster.

The first team lost by nine games to four with a performance described by team captain Robin Honey as "patchy". "I don't think any of us in the first team played up to our best. On paper there was no reason why we couldn't have won."

Prior to Roses, the team had won the Northern Conference 2A and in the local league had won the Premier League for the first time in addition to Division One. They had not lost a match this year and wanted to carry on this superb form.

The first seven games went as expected, with York leading by 4 games to 3 at the end, but Lancaster's number one player Stephen Arliss lost the eighth to York's number three. It was downhill from then on, with Lancaster winning just one more game before the match was ended. With the game being played to best of seventeen, once York had won nine games the match was all over for Lancaster.

As he had been fairly confident about the chances of winning before the match began, Honey was disappointed at the loss. He said, "I did hope that Roses could give us the perfect end to a perfect season."

He identified several possible factors, including the absence of the team's best player, and pointed out that although their season's results were excellent, York's team had in fact been playing in the division above them.

Honey paid tribute to all members of the team and gave special mention to Martin Simmons of the second team who won all four of his games, and Seth Butcher who won three of his.



Imperfect finish: Roses proved a step too far for Lancaster's Table Tennis team. (Photo: Rebekah Fuller)

"The B-team certainly lessened the damage for us. I'm very proud of everyone."

Like so many other players, though Honey stressed that he and his team

had thoroughly enjoyed the Roses experience and that those members still at Lancaster next year were already looking forward to playing York again and getting their revenge.

Springing to victory



Flipping fantastic: Lancaster's trampolining society out did their York counterparts with a series of complicated maneuvers. Captain Clare Blunt said she was "very proud" of her team. (Photo: Duncan Monteith)

Sink or swim: Lancaster fall behind in the rowing as York steam ahead. (Photo: Rob Miller)



York edge out Lancaster in boating battle

Rob Miller
Assistant Editor

A CLOSE-FOUGHT SERIES of races saw York take the lion's share of the points in Roses rowing, winning 12 points to Lancaster's 8.

York got off to a flying start, first edging out Lancaster in the women's novice fours by the narrowest of margins before achieving a more decisive victory in the men's novice fours, each worth two points. Some confusion over the exact location of the finishing line almost left York with egg on their faces, with their team relaxing some two lengths before the actual finish and allowing Lancaster to save some face in

their defeat.

York continued their winning ways with an exceedingly comfortable victory in the women's freshers fours, but with no points on offer Lancaster's deficit remained at a perfectly surmountable four points.

Lancaster seized their chance in the next race, the women's senior fours, winning comfortably to grab the four points and draw level with York. York immediately hit back and took the men's freshers fours, but the scores remained at four apiece with twelve to play for.

It was York that drew away first, their pace proving too much for Lancaster in the men's senior fours to win four points. They followed up with victories

in the men's and women's novice eights to give themselves a justified 8-4 lead, leaving Lancaster needing to take all the remaining points if they were to win.

Lancaster rose admirably to York's challenge, however, and delivered a strong performance to take the women's senior eights and its four points. The scores, then, were level leading into the final race of the weekend with Lancaster having every chance of victory.

It was not to be, though. York's men's senior eights team had too much for Lancaster, and powered down the final stretch to take the four points and leave the final score at 12-8. Lancaster had fought bravely, though, and their eight points were a significant contribution to Lancaster's total haul.

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Hockey

Women's 2nds take 1-0 win as 1sts fail to create lead

Thomas Bentham

THE LANCASTER WOMEN'S 1st XI opened the match by dominating the play, some fine passing and even better tackling set the standard for this fast paced game. Lancaster's dominance was shown early on as Fran O'Neill made an excellent strike which forced a great save from the York keeper. However occasional strong defending from York and better saves from their keeper kept the scores poised 0-0.

Emotions ran high throughout the match and some questionable umpiring decisions did nothing to quell these, evidenced when Lancaster's Fran O'Neill, whose play was the backbone of Lancaster's first half performance, was shown an undeserved green card. Late in the first half Lancaster's Eleri Jones made a fantastic run, challenging the York defence, but nothing came of it.

The second half opened in the same way that the first had finished, with a highly charged atmosphere and a high pace to match. Lancaster immediately re-established their dominance, creating some early chances with strong passing and effective teamwork. Lancaster received a string of short corners, each one getting closer to breaking the deadlock. One of these earned a deflection from a York stick into the back of their own net, but in another questionable umpiring decision the goal was disallowed for being 'too high'.

A frustrated Lancaster team kept fighting despite being riled by the decision. Events just came to a head after another poor decision by the umpire resulted in a York short corner and the temporary removal from the pitch of



Denied: Lancaster 1sts only goal was disallowed by the umpire. (Photo: Rob Miller)

Lancaster's Emma Collette after a yellow card, leaving Lancaster forced to defend with only ten players on the pitch.

The umpiring got worse and argu-

ably even biased as the match continued, but Lancaster pushed through, earning themselves a draw as the final whistle went. In the end it was a disappointing result for Lancaster, having

been cheated of a winning goal and on the receiving end of questionable umpiring throughout.

FOR THE WOMEN'S 2nd XI, the first

of the clashes in the Roses hockey, the majestic green York astroturf, obviously relaid since the last away tournament, was shining in the Saturday morning sun. Lancaster made their way onto the pitch looking confident in their attempt to relive their success from the Astroturf last year.

The first half opened with a strong start by Lancaster with them holding possession and passing strongly. Lancaster dominated the York side, and created all the chances, but there was just no precise finishing on show. The York keeper took all the shots that could be thrown at her and Lancaster seemed unable to put themselves ahead.

As frustration set in, the Lancaster side became despondent and their sloppy passing allowed York to seize control of the ball. They then earned themselves a short corner which was wasted with a poor injection and even worse strike. Lancaster regained their composure and kept the play until the end of the half.

After the break, both sides came out reinvigorated from their half time team talks. Both York and Lancaster challenged strongly, with each side creating chances but neither able to break the deadlock.

All of the best chances in the match belonged to Lancaster, but fantastic saves by the York keeper and some dreadful umpire decisions both sides remained level. But in the closing minutes of the game, Lancaster's Nicola Henderson managed to get a shot off at a very tight angle and scored giving Lancaster the lead and shortly after, the victory.

It was a hard earned win for Lancaster which should have seen far more goals hit the back of York's goal.

Lancaster men's 1sts get their revenge as 2nds flounder

Thomas Bentham

HEAVILY TOUTED AS a grudge match in revenge for last year's overall York win, sealed in the Men's 1st hockey, Lancaster opened at a high tempo. Three minutes in, their skill shone through as striker Konstantin Klein fired a good strike straight past the York keeper to give Lancaster the early lead.

York seemed unable to hold onto the ball and with some great tackling by Lancaster defenders Endika Albimarrate, Luke Morley and Craig McIntyre were unable to even penetrate the Lancaster D. Some great distribution by Lancaster captain Ollie Hill and midfielder Jack Keating had York chasing their tails.

Following the break York came back stronger, forcing Lancaster to make some drastic challenges resulting in Lancaster's Tom Gordon receiving yel-

low card. With Lancaster one man down York took control of the game with some quality first touches. The York strikers entered the game properly for the first time sending a series of good shots at Lancaster keeper Sam Quilleash. But his saves and some good defending by the Lancaster team allowed them to survive the 10-man disadvantage.

Once Gordon returned to the pitch, Lancaster took hold of the game once again and some great build-up play involving the entire Lancaster team allowed them to push forward. This set up Lancaster captain, Ollie Hill, for a fantastic strike which doubled his team's lead.

York took advantage of scrappy play, getting a goal which brought the game back within their reach and a reinvigorated York side doubled their efforts in order to get the equaliser. What followed was a tense ten minutes with Lancaster being forced onto the back foot, deep inside their own half.

The Lancaster supporters on the sidelines had their hearts in their mouths as the minutes ticked down to victory. As the whistle finally blew Lancaster had themselves a well-deserved victory after playing the better hockey and being unlucky not to keep a clean sheet.

THE 2ND XI hit the pitch with an air of determination to overcome the horrific 7-4 defeat they suffered last year. A terrific start by Lancaster showed off their ball control and passing ability. However, bad umpiring once more reared its ugly head, with a bad decision allowing York to sneak the ball into the back of Lancaster's net.

This spurred Lancaster on and a fantastic through ball by Andrew Crute created a great chance for Lancaster to equalise. But this came to nothing after some good defending by York.

York pushed forward and doubled their lead to two nil. York continued



The grudge: Lancaster got their revenge over York for the men's 1st match that sealed their overall victory last year. (Photo: Duncan Monteith)

their attacking play and only some great defending from Crute stopped York extending their lead again.

In the second half, York controlled the majority of the play with Lancaster getting few chances. York kept the pressure on and Lancaster keeper Ryan Adams performed some wonderful saves to keep the away team in with a chance.

Late in the match Lancaster managed to piece some fantastic passing play together which set forward Marc Harries with a wonderful strike which brought the side back into the match. But it proved too little, too late and despite some late opportunities and shots, forcing saves from the York keeper, the match ended with York the victors.

**SPRING BANK HOLIDAY MONDAY 25th May 09
UNIVERSITY SERVICES INFORMATION**

Service 2A and X1 will operate a normal Sunday service to the University on Spring Bank Holiday Monday, however, we will be operating additional Service 3 journeys on this day, as shown below (cut out and keep this timetable).

Service Number	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3A	3A	3	3	3A	3	3	3	3A
South West Campus												1223			43 03 23	
University Underpass	0848	0903	0933	1003	1033	1103	1133					1203	1228		48 08 28	
George Street	0900	0915	0945	1015	1045	1115	1145					1215	1240	then	00 20 40	
Lancaster Bus Station	0903	0918	0948	1018	1048	1118	1148	1100	1200	1218	1243	1300	at	03 23 43	00	
Torrisholme Square								1110	1210			1310	these			10
Morecambe Battery								1136	1236			1336	times			36
Higher Heysham Combermere Road								1148	1248			1348				48
Service Number		3A	3	3	3	3A	3	3	3	3A	3	3	3A	3A	3A	
South West Campus			1743	1803	1823		1843	1903	1923		1943	2003				
University Underpass			1748	1808	1828		1848	1908	1928		1948	2008				
George Street			1800	1820	1840		1900	1920	1940		2000	2020				
Lancaster Bus Station	until	1800	1803	1823	1843	1900	1903	1923	1943	2000	2003	2023	2100	2200	2300	
Torrisholme Square		1810				1909				2009			2109	2209	2309	
Morecambe Battery		1836				1929				2029			2129	2229	2329	
Higher Heysham Combermere Rd		1848														
Service Number	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3A	3	3	3A	3	3	
			B&S													
Higher Heysham Combermere Road										1000			1100			
Morecambe Battery										1012			1112			
Torrisholme Square										1037			1137			
Lancaster Bus Station	0825	0830	0835	0840	0910	0940	0955	1010	1040	1048	1110	1140	1148	1203	1243	
Common Garden Street	0828	0833	0838	0843	0913	0943	0958	1013	1043		1113	1143		1206	1246	
Bowerham Hotel	▼	▼	0843	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Hala Square	▼	▼	0846	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
University Underpass	0841	0846	0852	0856	0926	0956	1011	1026	1056		1126	1156		1218	1258	
South West Campus														1223	1303	
Service Number	3A		3	3	3	3A		3A	3	3	3	3A	3A	3A	3A	3A
Higher Heysham Combermere Road	1200				00		1800					1900				
Morecambe Battery	1212				12		1812					1912	1930	2030	2130	2230
Torrisholme Square	1237	then			37		1837					1937	1948	2048	2148	2248
Lancaster Bus Station	1248	at	03 23 43	48	until	1848	1903	1923	1943	1948	1958	2058	2158	2258		
Common Garden Street		these	06 26 46				1906	1926	1946							
University Underpass		times	19 39 59				1919	1939	1959							
South West Campus			23 43 03				1923	1943	2003							



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Football

Football firsts falter 4-0

Rob Miller
Assistant Editor

GIVEN THAT ROSES had been settled the day before, you might have forgiven York for going into this match with some measure of complacency. Their 4-1 thrashing at the hands of Lancaster in last year's fixture, however, seemed to provide its own motivation and York set about their revenge.

The match began scrappily, with neither side able at first to find their rhythm and the only initial excitement coming courtesy of a toga-clad rugby player's inexplicable decision to urinate in the Lancaster goalmouth. Lancaster's decision to field what was effectively a 4-5-1 and York's to field a 3-5-2 produced a packed midfield, frequently leading to stalemate before York eased into the game at around the ten minute mark.

York's relative comfort in possession seemed to frustrate Lancaster, who gave away a series of needless fouls. Nevertheless, it was to be poor refereeing that provided York with their first real chance of the game. After York gained a free kick on the edge of the area, the resulting cross saw York striker Dom O'Shea rise above Tim Monshall to send a header wide of goal. With both sides preparing for a goal kick, the referee inexplicably awarded a penalty for a supposed shove on O'Shea, to the amusement of both sides. Mark McLeod stepped up for York and slotted coolly past Dan Zimmerman to make it 1-0.

If Lancaster felt aggrieved at such a soft decision, they were left scratching their heads a few minutes later as Mark McLeod was given only a warning for his cynical scything-down of Lancaster captain Louis Rowlands, a dangerous challenge that deserved a booking at the very least. Lancaster's subsequent booking for dissent can surely be sympathised with. To their credit, though, Lancaster threw themselves back into the game and continued to battle in midfield.

Determination was not enough, however. Striker Andrew Bingley had neither the pace nor the height to challenge York's defensive line effectively; with Bingley alone up front most of the time, York could afford to devote two of their three centre backs to marking him out of the game, a sight which was distressingly frequent.

When he was able to hold up the ball, he received no support: Andrew Strachan, supposedly roaming behind him, was taken out of the game by York holding midfielder and penalty hero Mark McLeod, and there was scant service from the wings, with midfielder Alex Baldwin having a particularly torrid time for Lancaster and providing a stark contrast to York's two marauding wing-backs, Ed Murrills and Ian McKellow.

Although the balance of play was at times fairly even, York looked just that bit more threatening in the final third and Lancaster's defence was tested frequently, the pace of York striker Anton Murphy proving particularly trouble-



Outplayed: Andrew Strachan marked by a York player. York had no trouble overcoming Lancaster's disjointed play. (Photo: Dan Hogan)

some. It seemed only a matter of time before York broke through, and their chance came at the half hour mark. A perhaps inevitable lapse in concentration from Lancaster's under-pressure defence saw Ed Murrills come out on top in a goalmouth scramble to find the roof of the net.

Lancaster finished the first half the victims of two perhaps unjustified goals, but their inability to test York's defence was their undoing. They came out in the second half with real purpose, but their failure to adapt their game-plan to York's meant that the second half progressed much the same as the first.

The game was finally killed off on 70 minutes, when York striker Anton Murphy popped up with a looping header before throwing his shirt into the crowd, sprinting the length of the pitch, then sheepishly walking back to retrieve it.

If Lancaster's frustration was understandable, there was no excuse for Andrew Bingley's petulance shortly after York's third goal. His repeated arguing with the referee earned him first a warning and then an entirely pointless booking for dissent, and perhaps summed up Lancaster's performance.

York completed the rout shortly

before full time, with O'Shea calmly rounding Zimmerman to pass the ball into the back of the net and make it 4-0. Although it was a match York dominated almost from start to finish, the referee's early decisions to award York's penalty and to keep York captain Mark McLeod on the field must surely leave Lancaster wondering how different it could have been on another day—or with another referee.

Lancaster (4-4-1-1): Dan Zimmerman (GK), Rob Parsley (RB), Andy Ibbotson (LB), Kieran Heaney (CB), Tim Monshall (CB), Alex Baldwin (RM), Alex Whelan (LM), Si Thompson (CM), Lewis Rowlands (c) (CM), Andrew Strachan (AM/CF), Andrew Bingley (CF)

York (3-5-2): Andrew Emmerson (GK), Shaun Evans (CB), Greg Gardner (CB), Alex Cooper (CB), Ed Murrills (RWB), Ian McKellow (LWB), Mark McLeod (DM), Matt Witherwick (c) (CM), Joe Brennan (CM), Anton Murphy (CF), Dom O'Shea (CF)

Man of the Match: Ed Murrills

Home defence melts as Lancaster waltz to 3-0

Liam Richardson
Editor-elect

LANCASTER WOMEN'S FOOTBALL team has long been a jewel in the AU's crown, enjoying notable successes in recent years. It was no surprise then that one of the few chinks of light, in what proved to be a dispiriting weekend, was provided by the female footballers.

York were utterly outplayed by a team which defended with ease and attacked at will. Particular success was had for the away team by getting the full backs into attacking positions which caused massive problems for the York defence. Any semblance of an attacking threat from the home team was eliminated in midfield, as York's rare forays forward were nullified. It did not take long for Lancaster to take the lead, with a simple finish for Emma Leahy. Georgia Phillipson, centre half and best player on the day, then added the second with a spectacular chip over the keeper to extend Lancaster's advantage. The game then became almost a training exercise as the away team constantly streamed forward and York

desperately had to defend to attempt to keep the scoreline respectable.

They failed in this respect as some shocking defending led to Lancaster's third. Following a penalty box scramble from a corner, Beresford's shot was parried by the keeper, but only to Zuchetto who could not miss with a tap-in to make it 3-0. Beresford, who like Phillipson, had an extremely good game, did grab a deserved goal following more success from a set piece which York lamentably failed in dealing with all afternoon. There was time for Zuchetto to hit a second and Lancaster's fifth before half-time, swivelling past the last defender and shooting into the bottom right corner of the net.

The second half was largely a non-event. With a five goal cushion, Lancaster were happy to sit back and hit York on the counter, utilising the pace of star striker Sue Wynes, who caused problems for the home side all afternoon despite not getting a goal herself. In reflection, it was a brilliant victory for the women's football team, providing Lancaster with one of their most comprehensive performances of the weekend.



Success: Sue Wynes takes a volley in the women's 1st game (Photo: Rob Miller)

Rugby

York's lightning turn-arounds outmaneuver Lancaster

Dan Hogan
Editor

THE TEAMS RAN on to boos. The most vocal of the home and away supporters were lined up along opposite sides of York's uneven rugby pitch, with members of Lancaster's crowd kitted out in the customarily camp garb found only at Roses rugby matches or nights at the Carleton. But having just seen Lancaster's 2nds trounced 32-3 in their match, and losing all of the VII's matches the previous day, the visitors' confidence had already been dented.

It didn't take long for this match to start going the same way. Within minutes of Lancaster's poorly aimed opening kick, York took advantage of Lancaster's cold back line to put Tim Walker in the in-goal area. A conversion put Lancaster 7 points behind almost instantly.

Less impressively, scrappy play by York gave Michael Stevens the opportunity to win Lancaster's first 3 points with a penalty. But the deficit was soon restored to 7 points a minute later, when Lancaster gave away another penalty to York's side, a mistake repeated 15 minutes later to make the score 13-3.

Lancaster looked hopeful as their held the majority of possession back and forth over York's 22 line. But their surges came up against York's solid defence time and time again. The to-and-fro was broken when York sliced deep into Lancaster's half with little resistance. A lineout, 5m from Lancaster's line, led to another York try. The conversion went through off the bar, to put the home side 17 points ahead.

After the traditional half-time stalker-display the scrappy play continued, with another penalty being awarded to York 10 minutes into the



Out of reach: Despite Lancaster controlling long periods of play, York left the visitors in their wake throughout. (Photo: Dan Hogan)

second half.

But it wasn't long before Lancaster's dominance of possession and the pressure on the York side finally paid off. As the weather took a turn for the worst, the soaked players finally pushed across York's try line from a series of scrums barely five meters out. But the try wasn't converted, leaving Lancaster still a long way behind on 8 points to York's 23.

As the game moved into its last 15 minutes, York demonstrated their flexibility and speed with a lightning try from deep inside their 22, as a gap in Lancaster's offensive line allowed the defenders to switch to offence in a blink, flying down the right hand side. Taken by surprise, Lancaster found themselves with a 20-point deficit to contend with in a matter of seconds.

Barely three minutes later, it almost happened again, with York punching deep into Lancaster's territory from a line out, five metres from the York try line. Lancaster were lucky to blunt York's final sweep, but gave away another penalty before the match was up.

The full-time whistle blew with the score at 31-8. Lancaster took it on the chin.

Speaking after the match, Lancaster's captain, Fixme, explained how the occasionally sloppy play put Lancaster at a disadvantage: "We lost our discipline a bit, with three sin bins. If you play half of the game with fourteen men, you can't really complain about losing."

He also praised the abilities of the York team: "In one on one tackling, I can't fault them. They had a few pace-men; their back three were good. There were a few good set moves that got through our lines a couple of times."

He added: "I couldn't have asked any more of the lads, to be honest. I'm proud of all of them."

Tables turn on women's 1sts

Dan Hogan
Editor

LANCASTER LOOKED HOPEFUL of winning four much-needed points in the women's 1st Rugby Union match on the Saturday of Roses. But after clinging on to an early lead for the entire first half, York made the most of the weather to take the match.

Things got off to a rapid start. Within three minutes of kickoff, Lancaster's Laura Grunby sped down the left to take an early try. With the strong winds in Lancaster's backs, Louisa Abbott converted with ease. It didn't take long for the York to regroup though, with a quick try from the hosts' prop. The strong winds again came to Lancaster's aid, forcing the conversion to fall short of the try line, bringing the score to 7-5 to Lancaster, only 5 minutes in.

The middle of the first half was fought almost entirely behind York's

22. Throughout several scrums, Lancaster kept the pressure on the York defence, who failed to find an opportunity to kick the ball to a safe distance. Eventually, after almost 10 minutes of slogging around the York 5m line, Grunby punched through the defence to score a spectacular try. After the conversion, Lancaster's lead stood at 9 points.

Just before half-time, York struck back, scoring another try; this time, converted.

Lancaster's meteorological advantage vanished as the teams swapped ends, with the wind now favouring York. The home side's kicks sailed long distances down the pitch, making the push forwards far easier for the hosts. An inevitable try, though unconverted (the wind was a mixed blessing for York), put York in the lead.

As they fell behind, with the play dominated by York around the visitors' try line, Lancaster got scrappy.

The Red captain, Jin Zhou, was the first of three players – two Lancaster, one York – to be exiled to the sin bin in the following minutes, as frustrations manifested as unsporting aggression.

As the match drew towards its conclusion, Lancaster's defeat was sealed when an impressive converted try by York put them clear of anything Lancaster were able to muster in the closing minutes.

But undeterred, Grunby once again exploited the left wing to win herself a hat-trick, and save her team's pride. The chance for a comeback though evaporated as the final whistle went, closing the game 22-17.

Lancaster's backs were a saving grace for the team, who would have fared far worse had it not been for the sterling efforts of Laura 'Rider' Grunby on the left wing. But in the end, York played more cohesively, maintaining better discipline and flow in their play throughout.



Gotcha: York were lucky to catch Laura Grunby, whose speed allowed her to score all three of Lancaster's tries. (Photo: Rebekah Fuller)

Read more at scan.lusu.co.uk

Dismay among Lancaster teams as York deliver Roses hammer blow

Dan Hogan
Editor

LANCASTER HAVE SUFFERED a staggering Roses defeat at the hands of York University. At three day annual inter-varsity sporting competition, which started on March 8 in York, the hosts secured their win before the second day of events had even finished.

Before the second day's events even finished, York passed the 138 'magic number' required to win the competition, with Lancaster still floundering on 53.5. York finished the competition on 194.5, with Lancaster over 100 points behind on 79.5.

Lancaster's fortunes improved slightly on the last day of the contest, just enough to prevent York reaching the 200 point milestone that would indicate a complete rout of the visiting teams. Had York hit the 200 point mark, it would have been a first in Roses history.

SCAN could not find a comprehensive history of Roses results, but York's points tally, 71% of the points available, is by far the largest margin of victory that either side have known in recent

memory.

Away teams traditionally suffer a disadvantage at Roses, which made Lancaster's task a difficult one from the beginning this year, playing on rival turf. But despite the difficulty of winning away, York still took the Carter-James cup back east last year when the tournament was held at Lancaster, winning the tournament by a slim 2 points. But the scale of Lancaster's defeat in York, has left many of Lancaster's players and supporters, as well as the AU president, Gareth Coleman, scratching their heads.

In the tally of Roses tournament wins, York have now increased their lead, having won 23 tournaments to Lancaster's 21 since the tournament first started in 1965. Lancaster haven't won away at Roses since 1985.

There were several major upsets for Lancaster in terms of the results. Lancaster's men's fencing team, hitherto unbeaten this year, had their winning streak tarnished by York. Lancaster's men's football 1sts also suffered a disappointing defeat after last York 4-1, losing this time 4-0. The hockey results were mixed, with Lancaster winning the men's 1sts, 3rds and women's 2nds,



Look of defeat: The result could be read on the faces of the Lancaster teams. (Photo: Dan Hogan)

but York taking the rest of the points.

Many were touting this year to be the end of Lancaster's unlucky streak. In the last issue of SCAN, before Roses, the AU president said in SCAN that Lancaster had "a very good chance of winning the tournament" this year. Though this optimism could be explained as a drive to boost morale, Coleman insists his confidence was sincere. On the Saturday evening of Roses, after York had cemented their victory, he told SCAN: "I've never contemplated losing. From day one I've been thinking about what we needed to do to win."

"It's an embarrassment, quite frankly," he said, commenting on the result. "I don't know what the score will be by the end of the weekend, but now we're playing for pride."

The Lancaster teams may well have done him proud on the last day, keeping York below the 200 point milestone and almost doubling Lancaster's own points tally.

Coleman identifies a number of potential reasons for the landslide defeat, from trouble with training facilities back in Lancaster, to the "shambles" surrounding the timing of the event itself, which meant many of Lancaster's best players stayed home to prepare for impending exams. He said: "Moving the whole thing to this weekend has been a shambles from the start, and has really affected us."

He added: "It's taken the entire year to prepare for [Roses], so it will probably take the whole next year to work out what went wrong."

York	Lancaster
194.5	- 79.5

Reflection: No excuses, York were simply better across the board



Gareth Coleman
AU President

'YOU WIN SOME, you lose some.' 'Gutted'. 'Unbelievable'. 'Deflated'. **These are but a few of the words and phrases that have been spinning around my mind since Roses weekend.**

Before I reflect on the devastating result, I want to thank everyone who has helped me with Roses 2009, rang-

ing from the staff, the sabbs, the AU, Roses Exec, friends and family – you all know who you are, you've been brilliant and I couldn't have done it without you. Also, I wish Sue Wynes the best of luck for Roses next year. She'll do a fantastic job, and fingers crossed, she'll be lifting the Carter-James Trophy in around 50 weeks time.

I've been trying to put my finger on what exactly happened at Roses 2009, and why Lancaster came off so badly compared to the close-fought battle we put up at home last year. The deficit between us and York, nearly 100 points, made the closing ceremony possibly the most excruciating experience of my life to date.

I won't make excuses for the score. I'll take it on the chin, take responsibility and admit that across the board, York were simply better than us on the day. That said, there were many factors that contributed to our defeat, mainly our in-

ability to field full-strength teams due to exam commitments. Roses was a week further into the term than usual, meaning many of our players didn't travel because of finals. But across the weekend I also witnessed some shocking umpiring and refereeing, and to spin a cliché, we just didn't get the rub of the green. Many games were close, and that umpire's call, offside decision or booking seemed to go against us at every turn. But to be brutally honest, even all these factors do not explain a 100+ points gap at the end of the tournament. Credit it's due, we were outplayed.

Hindsight is a wonderful thing, and there are a million things I would do differently to try to alter the score, but without a magic wand or tardis, that isn't going to happen. But despite all the problems I'd faced throughout the year with the organisation of Roses, and its final outcome, I was incredibly proud to be wearing Lancaster's colours that week-

end, as I have been throughout the entire year. The number of personal messages of support I had across that weekend was incredible. I can't think of any other group on campus who would so willingly put themselves on the line for their university, in some cases on the day before their final exams. For that dedication and commitment, I cannot thank the AU and everyone involved enough.

The reactions to Roses made me think again about what the event really means. Roses is billed as the highlight of our sporting year, and this year was no exception. Despite the event being unofficially over as a contest by late Saturday, our sportsmen and women played with pride on the Sunday, and managed to claw back more points than we had gained before York had won!

Yes, we'd managed to organise a huge inter-varsity competition, get our teams there and back, compete and enjoy ourselves. On that basis at least, I think we

came out of it quite well. There were times earlier in the year when whether the competition would even go ahead was in the balance, so to come this far and pull the event off in the middle of our exam period has been an achievement in itself.

Of course, there are plenty of lessons to be learnt from Roses 2009 (though I'd never wish this devastation upon any of my successors). Hopefully this will galvanise Lancaster so it can move forward and put mechanisms in place to ensure Roses 2010 is bigger and better than ever before. Teams will train harder, preparation will be longer and support for Lancaster at home next year should be the biggest it's ever been. If this result is the shot in the arm that Lancaster needed to come back from the past few years of defeats at Roses, then so be it; I'll quite happily shoulder this year's defeat if it means that Roses and the AU receive the backing and attention they need and deserve.