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Independent student newspaper at Rhodes University
Edition 6 May 2006

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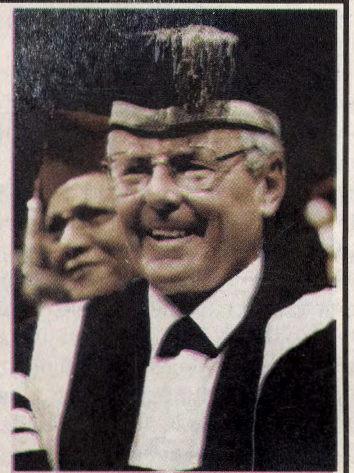
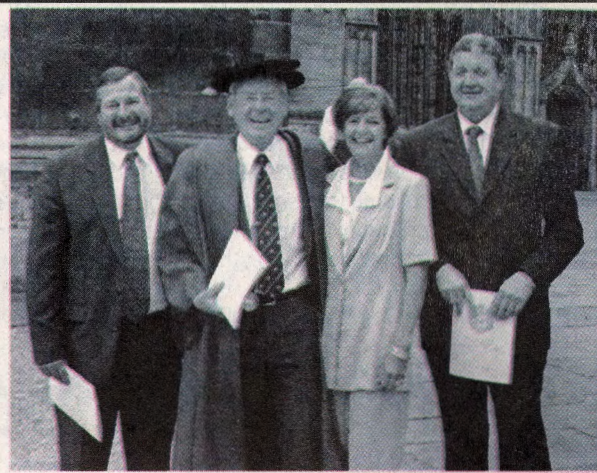
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Student activism:
then and now



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Rhodes rowers
make us proud



From left to right: Dr Woods as a young scholar, as a lecturer in 1973, at Oxford University where he received his honorary doctorate, with wife Charlotte at Oxford and finally at his inauguration as vice-chancellor

■ Pics supplied by Christine Nesbitt and Gregor Röhrig

Farewell, Dr Woods

Rhodes University's vice-chancellor of 10 years receives a spectacular farewell; a fitting end to his extraordinary term in office

■ Ross van der Linde

Dr David Woods and his wife Charlotte were given a fitting final farewell by Rhodes University staff and specially invited guests on the night of Monday, May 8 at the Guy Butler Theatre in Rhodes' 1820 Settlers' National Monument.

The 943-seat theatre was almost full to capacity in an appropriately heart-warming, nostalgic and emotional two-hour event. An array of present and former colleagues paid tribute to the outgoing vice-chancellor and his wife for their outstanding and far-reaching contributions to the university.

The format for the evening was, appropriately, rather out of the ordinary. After a short but glowing introduction of the vice-chancellor and his wife by Professor Paul Walters, the curtains on stage lifted to reveal an Oprah-style set complete with couches, coffee table and giant television screen backdrop. The crowd played studio audience and Rhodes alumnus Sherwin Bryce-Pease, co-anchor on SABC2's Weekend Live programme, played host.

"As you're all aware, this is not going to be an ordinary show," Bryce-Pease joked as proceedings got under way.

As emotional as the evening was for all concerned, Bryce-Pease's amiable and quick-witted approach allowed for a fair mix of laughter and tears.

"How are you feeling, Dr Woods – a bit nostalgic, a bit sad?" Bryce-Pease queried as the evening got under way in earnest.

"Sad, nostalgic and very nervous!" the vice-chancellor replied.

"Nice to see you too!" retorted Bryce-Pease.

To the same question Charlotte Woods replied, "Once I realised who you were I was very nervous."

"And so you should be," came a similarly sharp response from the evening's host.

The event was made especially poignant and memorable by the arrival of a number of surprise guests who entered the stage at regular intervals, each bringing their own special tales.

Long-time friend Tony Ardington recalled stories from the Woods family's times at Rhodes and Oxford, while Rhodes Chancellor Jakes Gerwel paid tribute to the vice-chancellor's leadership qualities. Amongst a number of other close friends to make an appearance was Marion Sweetnam, Dr Woods's long-serving secretary. She spoke fervently of the vice-chancellor's warm and energetic approach to day-to-day life on campus and the generosity and dedication of his wife Charlotte.

The Woods' son Bob and their granddaughter Lilu both made appearances on stage as well. Bob intimated his desire to keep his father busy during his retirement with a new business venture in Cape Town.

An already special evening briskly turned into an unforgettable one for the Woods family when their daughter, Kath, made her way on stage with her husband. The two had, unbeknown

to the rest of the family, flown in from Canada for the occasion.

Touching musical performances came throughout the evening.

The Rhodes choir sang a fitting and beautifully crafted tribute to the Woods family and an equally charming, if slightly less musically astute, performance came from a trio of Dr Woods' academic colleagues: Dean of Education Professor George Euvard, Deputy Dean of Education Hennie van der Mescht and Dean of Science Professor Pat Terry.

Dr Woods also had time to address the audience briefly, and he took the opportunity to praise the university's staff, who he said could be noted for their "commitment and natural reaction to go the extra mile".

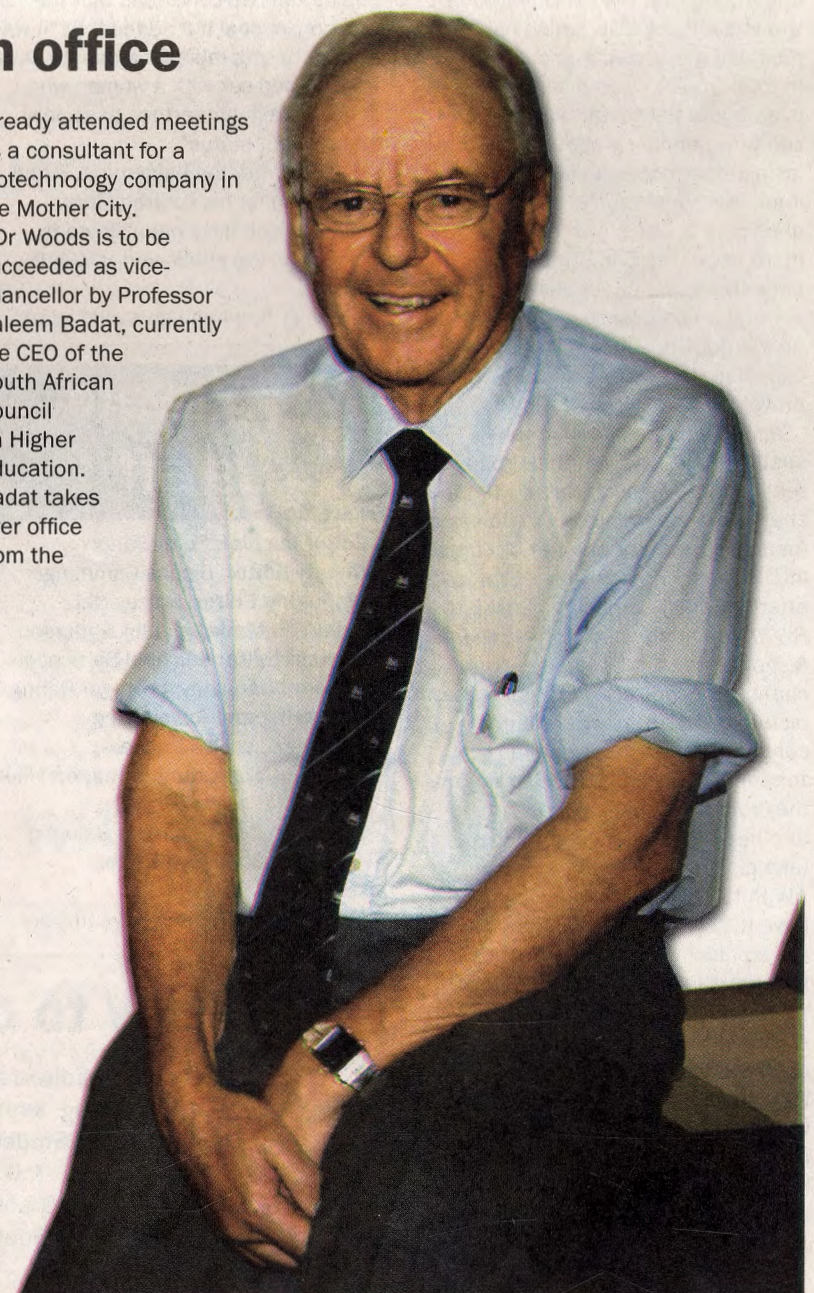
Dr Woods also paid tribute to students at the university. "Some of the brightest students in the country are at this institution," he reflected. He went on to talk with delight at having witnessed "bright minds interacting with and challenging mature scholars".

Dr Woods also said that his ten years as vice-chancellor had been an opportunity for him and his wife to give something back "for [the] years of enjoyment" that the university had given to them. Both Dr Woods and his wife are graduates of the university.

Last Friday was officially Dr Woods's last day as vice-chancellor, and he and his wife left for their new home in Cape Town on the weekend. Never happy unless he's up to something, the "retired" Dr Woods has reportedly

already attended meetings as a consultant for a biotechnology company in the Mother City.

Dr Woods is to be succeeded as vice-chancellor by Professor Saleem Badat, currently the CEO of the South African Council on Higher Education. Badat takes over office from the



Editorial Students' cars targeted

Bold thief attempts to steal car on Prince Alfred Street

■ Azwihangwisi Mufamadi and
Mkateko Mdhuli

An attempted car theft on Prince Alfred Street opposite Allan Gray House on the night of Sunday April 30 was violently interrupted when a student attempted to intervene. The would-be thief was caught, but later escaped.

Danisle Nobebe, from the university's Campus Protection Unit (CPU), said that the Hi-tec security guard who witnessed the attempted car theft did not clarify exactly what was happening when he radioed for back-up. Nobebe said: "[The Hi-tec guard] thought it was two students fighting, and when we arrived, the thief had already managed to escape."

The thief ran to the International Library of African Music (ILAM) where he managed to jump the fence.

The chasing security guards could not find the fleeing thief, saying that the area was too dark.

CPU staff believe that the people

who are trying to steal cars on campus are not from campus itself. "I saw two cars, a red Nissan Sentra with dark windows and a white Toyota Corolla," said Nobebe. He said the cars dropped off two suspicious-looking people on campus.

Nobebe said that Hi-tec Security, which supplies patrol guards to complement CPU's activities, rotates its staff frequently and brings in new people, some of whom cannot communicate fluently and are not very familiar with the campus. This makes it harder for CPU staff to build a good working relationship with their colleagues from Hi-tec.

"Our guards rotate from one place to another within the campus, and if it's a new guard who hasn't worked there before, there is a supervisor to guide him," said Gavin Stobbs, the Hi-tec guard manager.

Stobbs added that it is CPU's duty to inform them if they have a problem with their workers.

Dave Brown from CPU believes that the thieves are attracted to



CPU guards face an uphill challenge in working with constantly changing Hi-tec guards.
■ Joni Els

campus by the presence of foreign-registered cars, targetting those more often than not. "Most of the foreign cars don't have alarms or any other security system," Brown said. "Foreign students insist that insurance and security systems cost too much for

them," he added.

Thieves try and find cars without any security system as they are an easy target.

Students are advised to use any security system available to them to protect their cars from theft.

Zuma trial confuses youth

■ Mvuzo Ponono and
Bongeka Ncdangala

Jacob Zuma's rape trial has dominated the news recently.

The former deputy president was accused of raping an HIV-positive Aids activist in November last year. Last week Judge Willem van der Merwe acquitted Zuma of the charges, but he did not hesitate to pass a moral judgement, lamenting Zuma for a few issues which have raised eyebrows. Van der Merwe concluded that the sex was consensual but added that "it was totally unacceptable for a man to have unprotected sex with a woman who is not his regular partner, especially knowing her status".

The day after the judgement, Zuma apologised for his contradictory actions which have been slated by politicians, the public and HIV/Aids activists.

UN chief Stephen Lewis said in an

Eastern Cape newspaper on May 11 that "the voice of political leadership has been confused and confusing".

ANC-affiliated student organisation the South African Students Congress (SASCO) have accepted Zuma's apology. Regional Chairperson Diphapang Mofekeng said that Zuma has responded positively by apologising to the public for misleading them. SASCO argued that it was critical for Zuma to apologise because he was setting an example.

Zuma has come under immense criticism for testifying that he took a shower after unprotected sex to reduce his risk of contracting Aids from his HIV-positive partner.

When a journalist probed him about the shower statement, Zuma replied by asking: "Do you wash your hands after peeling an onion?"

Zuma added that he did not believe that the showering was a cure, but only did it as an extra precaution.

SHARC President Lesley Odendal said it is not true that after having sexual intercourse you can reduce your chances of contracting AIDS by showering.

Odendal said: "It makes me very worried about the youth of South Africa, because some will think that it is true because it is done by an influential leader of this country." She also said Zuma's statements undermine the hard work of activists who co-ordinate Aids prevention programmes.

She highlighted that not much has been done to show that the information given by Zuma was incorrect, which negatively impacts on the fight against the virus.

The former deputy president is a firm supporter of the ANC's ABC (Abstain, Be faithful, Condomise) campaign and Zuma vowed that he would continue with his anti-Aids efforts and would even use himself as an example.

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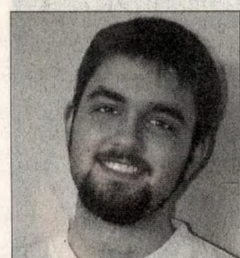
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■ Peter Barlow

Welcome to this, the sixth edition of *Activate* for the year. I would like to begin by wishing Dr David Woods a happy and restful retirement and thank him for the outstanding service he has given to this university. Dr Woods, in my experience, has always been willing to listen to students and act on their concerns. However, there is always room for improvement and I regretfully point out that other members of Rhodes's administration have not taken Dr Woods' example.

But congratulations are in order for the incoming VC, Dr Saleem Badat. I wish him well and hope that his time here is as fruitful as his predecessor's, if not more. I urge him to develop a better approach among the staff in Administration to dealing with students and responding to their demands. I hope he will help them realise that students are not just an annoying and necessary addition to the make-up of the university. I mean, if certain people in Admin actually stopped to think about it, they might even come to the conclusion that they wouldn't actually have jobs if the students were not here. We are the university.

I hope he retains the open-door policy that Dr Woods subscribed to. I also urge Dr Badat to move towards improving basic services on campus.

But moving to other matters, I recently decided to stop in at Slip Stream and try out the slot machines which were recently installed. I stayed there for about five minutes and during that time succeeded in winning around 90c, which I promptly gambled away, losing about R20 in total. To say I was disappointed is an understatement. I truly don't see how people can get addicted to losing their money so quickly. When it comes to slot machines one really does play at one's own risk. Read more about the Slip Stream slots on page three and about gambling in general on page seven. The sidebar on the odds of winning the lottery is especially interesting and thought-provoking.

Jacob Zuma has been in the spotlight a lot lately and for good reason too. The acquittal of the rape charge brought against him has by no means closed that chapter of Zuma's life. His responses to why he felt safe after knowingly exposing himself to HIV were nothing short of delusional. A shower does not decrease your chances of contracting HIV and the pictures of his supporters burning condoms in the street outside the Johannesburg High Court, saying that they ruin relationships, points to a dire need for a change of mindset to take place this country.

With the risk of sounding callous, I have to say that taking into account the conduct displayed by Zuma, formerly the person who held the second highest office in the South African government and the former chairman of the Moral Regeneration Movement, it is small wonder that we have shocking HIV/Aids infection rates in South Africa. On that note, I hope you enjoy reading this edition. Look out for the next one due out on June 1. Bye for now.

Las Vegas comes here to New Street

■ Bianca Silva & Setumo-Thebe Mohlomi

Two weeks ago Slip Stream Sportsbar on New Street became the home of Grahamstown's first legal gambling facility when it installed 25 slot machines. Slip Stream plans eventually to install 40 slot machines, five of which will be added by the end of the month.

Concerns about the impact this development may have in a largely impoverished area. General Manager Craig Whiley says that since the installation of the machines, what was predominantly a student pub has attracted more working-class clients.

Slip Stream applied for its gambling operating licence 10 months ago from the Eastern Cape Gambling Board. Vukani, a small gambling corporation, has paid the overhead costs for the slot machines, while Slip Stream is responsible for supplying and maintaining the venue and obtaining the operating licence.

Slip Stream's licence to operate forty low-payout slot machines comes



Slip Stream Sportsbar has recently installed Grahamstown's first ever official gambling facility, with plans for 40 machines in the future

■ Anwen Evans and Karolina Kamendera

with some conditions. They have to invest annually in initiatives serving previously disadvantaged individuals. Additionally, Slip Stream may not advertise the slot machines.

According to the National Gambling Board (NGB) and Eastern Cape Gambling Board (ECGB) stipulations, 10% of Slip Stream's yearly turnover must go to a black economic empowerment company, and 1% to a charity organisation operating in

the Grahamstown area. Whiley was not yet certain which project would benefit. The NGB also demands that assistance be offered to customers suspected of gambling addiction. Advice and informative pamphlets with help-line numbers are to be distributed. If people continue to show signs of addiction, Slip Stream has the right to ban them, or co-operate with the gambler's family and friends to deny the person access to the

premises. Whiley said that excessive gambling should be dealt with like any other addiction.

Those suspected of being under the legal age of 18, Whiley said, will have to produce either an ID book or a driver's licence to gain access to gambling facility. Slip Stream can be fined up to R100 000 or lose their gambling licence for admitting underage patrons.

Slip Stream is currently undergoing

renovations: a deck is being added to the upstairs area and 20 surveillance cameras and new burglar bars have been installed. Many signs around the sports bar remind patrons of the new installations, and two security guards and a doorman on busier nights will be present to ensure the security of patrons. Slip Stream will hold a formal opening night for its new additions in about three to four months' time.

See page 7 for more...



The owner of High Street's The Juice Bar is the Day Kaif's new tenant ■ Matt Middleton

Kaif rumours cleared: The Juice Bar owner to take over

■ Lauren O'Brien & Cairen Harry

A new tenant has signed an operating lease for the Day Kaif. Shafeek Sha, a Management lecturer at Rhodes University and owner of The Juice Bar on High Street, will be operating the Kaif.

The previous tenants, who ran the Dolphin Kaif, have been instructed to vacate the premises by May 15, and Sha hopes to take occupation before the end of the term.

A rumour arose that Sha had placed restrictions on students in the Postgraduate Entrepreneur Program.

Students studying for the Postgraduate Diploma in Enterprise Management (PGDEM) have to establish small businesses on campus selling consumables as part of their course.

The rumour centred around the belief that Sha would prevent the students from setting up businesses close to or in competition with the Kaif. Sha denies this allegation, saying that it "would be silly to set up conflicting businesses: the aim of the

project is to learn, not to struggle, and to find a novel business".

One of the groups in the PGDEM class is starting a smoothie company, which Sha is allowing to use part of his Kaif since they require electricity and a hygienic facility in which to operate.

The Kaif will be selling the expected cooldrinks, sandwiches, confectioneries and coffees, it will not be selling Juice Bar products, as Sha says it would be "poor business sense" to set up a business in competition with his existing business on High Street.

However, the Kaif is looking to sell "funky burgers and other modern food at a reduced price", said Sha, who has met with chefs regarding these and other trends in food.

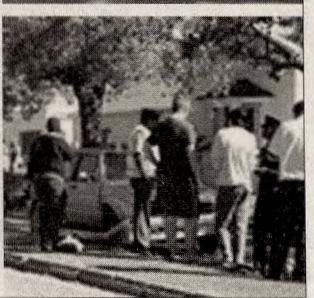
Sha has been in contact with the SRC and university officials to try to ascertain what the market wants: "I invite students to give me feedback and tell me what they would like to see in the new store," he said, adding that he is prepared to work towards meeting the student body's needs.

Car accident on Prince Alfred Street

An accident involving two Rhodes students and their vehicles occurred mid morning on Tuesday 9 May. The incident, in which no-one was injured, occurred just outside the Philosophy Department on Prince Alfred Street.

The third-year student who was driving the pictured golf said it just was a silly misunderstanding: "I was trying to make a U-turn to get a parking on the otherside of the road. I saw the other car approaching but I thought he'd slow down a bit more for the speedbump." Police and an ambulance arrived at the scene which was speedily cleared up

■ Matthew Middleton



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The HIV/Aids protest march in 2005 is proof that student activism is not dead

■ Matthew Middleton

Two eras of student activism

Ines Schumacher and Mma-tshepo Mokgoko trace the evolution of student politics at Rhodes

Student activism during apartheid has a significant history at Rhodes University. How does the fervour of the past compare with the present student body? Is the current crop of Rhodes students any more apathetic than their counterparts of 20 years ago?

Student activism at Rhodes during the 1970s and 80s was relatively small compared to institutions such as the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and the University of Cape Town (UCT). "For our size we did what we could," says Sean Greyling, a History Masters student. Greyling is currently writing his thesis on Rhodes University during apartheid.

Rhodes was a small and conservative university. However, the cultural life on campus was more vibrant than it is now. The university did not openly oppose apartheid policies but it experienced various spates of activism from students who did. Before the 1970s, all Rhodes students formed part of the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS). The union was multi-racial and automatically registered new students that came to study at Rhodes. In 1967 NUSAS split when the South African Students' Organisation (SASO) broke away.

Two years later there was an outcry at Rhodes when Basil Moore's application for a lecturing post in Systematic Theology was unsuccessful. Moore was the founder of the anti-apartheid United Christian Movement (UCM). Students stormed the university council's chambers.

The focus of Rhodes' student activism was not only political. In 1971 the SRC led students in the May Civil Disobedience Campaign. Students were fed up with the university's residence rules which, among other things, forced them to dress in a certain way and dictated the times at which they were to return to res. The vice-chancellor at the time, Dr Hyslop, was given an ultimatum by the SRC that the rules be reviewed or the students would organise appropriate action. He did not respond to this ultimatum quickly enough and students broke the rules that they were not satisfied with. Aside from these activities, students held small demonstrations. One such demonstration was for the unbanning

of Cosmos Desmond, a Catholic priest who went into the townships to help black people. Among other things, Desmond wrote a book exposing the terrible living conditions that were a result of forced removals. His actions were in direct contravention of the segregationist laws of the time.

In the 1980s Rhodes integrated black people into the residences, which led to increased political awareness. Students began disappearing and allegedly being murdered. Michelle Ruiters, a lecturer in the Department of Political and International Studies, was a first-year student in 1984 and had never been exposed to black consciousness until she got to Rhodes: "I stayed in Lillian Britten [House]. That was my first experience of living with whites and blacks." Ruiters arrived at Rhodes at a time when the apartheid cauldron was bubbling over. The campus was very busy and there was increased police presence. The Black Students' Movement (BSM), which Ruiters was part of, was closely affiliated with the Grahamstown Youth Movement (GYM). "I was seeing a guy in GYM at the time and through my knowing him, the cops automatically knew who I was. So when I was walking down the street they would drive past and point a finger at me," says Ruiters. During a state of emergency, Ruiters was jailed for two

weeks. "It was a period of intimidation," she recalls. "I came here a child. That period made me into the adult I am."

South African universities today have become more tolerant. The racial issue is blanketed by democracy and a new Constitution. For the most part, students appear to have become apathetic. They only become involved when the issue at hand affects them directly. "Student activism now is very shallow," says Professor Peter Vale of the Politics department. "Students act around the question of Aids," he said.

Ruiters agrees that student activism has changed over the years. "It feels like there's no political action on campus. I'm glad I was here at that time: I'm glad I was at Rhodes University."

Are students more apathetic now that South Africa has become a democracy? Diphapang Mofokeng, chairperson of the South African Students' Congress (SASCO) at Rhodes, believes students are no longer as politically involved. "South Africa has changed.

Students used to concentrate on forwarding their political interests.

Now that we have democracy, we need to advance on other issues," says Mofokeng.

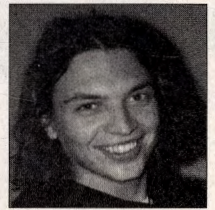
SASCO has deep political roots. It was launched at Rhodes University in 1991 by 600 black and white tertiary students from 129 education institutions. SASCO is the result of a merger between South African

National Students Congress (SANSO) and NUSAS. Mofokeng realises the implications that democracy has for SASCO. "These are new political times. We need to represent all students, not specific groups," he says. Mofokeng admits that SASCO no longer confines itself to politics, but also tackles gender and cultural issues: "We need to be a united student body. SASCO mobilises students for a common cause, be it political or not." Mofokeng believes that organisations such as SASCO are necessary. "Just like the SRC is held accountable by students, the government needs to be held accountable by the people [of South Africa]. Organisations like SASCO ensure it moves in the right direction," he says.

Kwezilomso Mbandazayo, a second-year BSocSci student, is a member of the Student HIV/Aids Resistance Campaign (SHARC) and a recruitment officer on the executive committee of the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC). She believes that all student activism that goes on at Rhodes is political. "Politics is about power," Mbandazayo says. She gives rape as an example. "This society is patriarchal. It isn't conducive to empowering women," she says. Mbandazayo believes that only one in nine rape cases are reported in South Africa and this statistic indicates that there is something wrong with our society. She says that activism is about making people aware on a national scale. "But it's good to start locally," she adds. Projects that SHARC and the TAC work together on include the HIV/Aids Vigil and March on Human Rights Day and the One in Nine campaign, which was launched in February this year to coincide with Jacob Zuma's rape trial. The campaign aims to raise awareness of sexual violence. "The Zuma trial awakened the campaign, but it will go on irrespective of the end of the trial," says Mbandazayo.

Other student activist societies on campus include ROAR, Habitat for Humanity, OutRhodes, Amnesty International, Rotaract and GAIA. These societies give students the opportunity to become involved in issues such as environmental preservation, animal rights and humanitarian concerns. There's nothing stopping students from getting more involved in issues that affect contemporary South Africa.

Confessions of a fierce invalid



■ Harry Haddon

You know what really pisses me off? Intolerance and stupidity. I am all for questioning others' beliefs. But when it comes to being rude because of another's choice and not taking the time to think about what the other person is saying, it makes me want to strap a huge boulder to the back of the offender and throw them into Settler's Dam. OK, that was a bit extreme, but as you can see, it really bugs me.

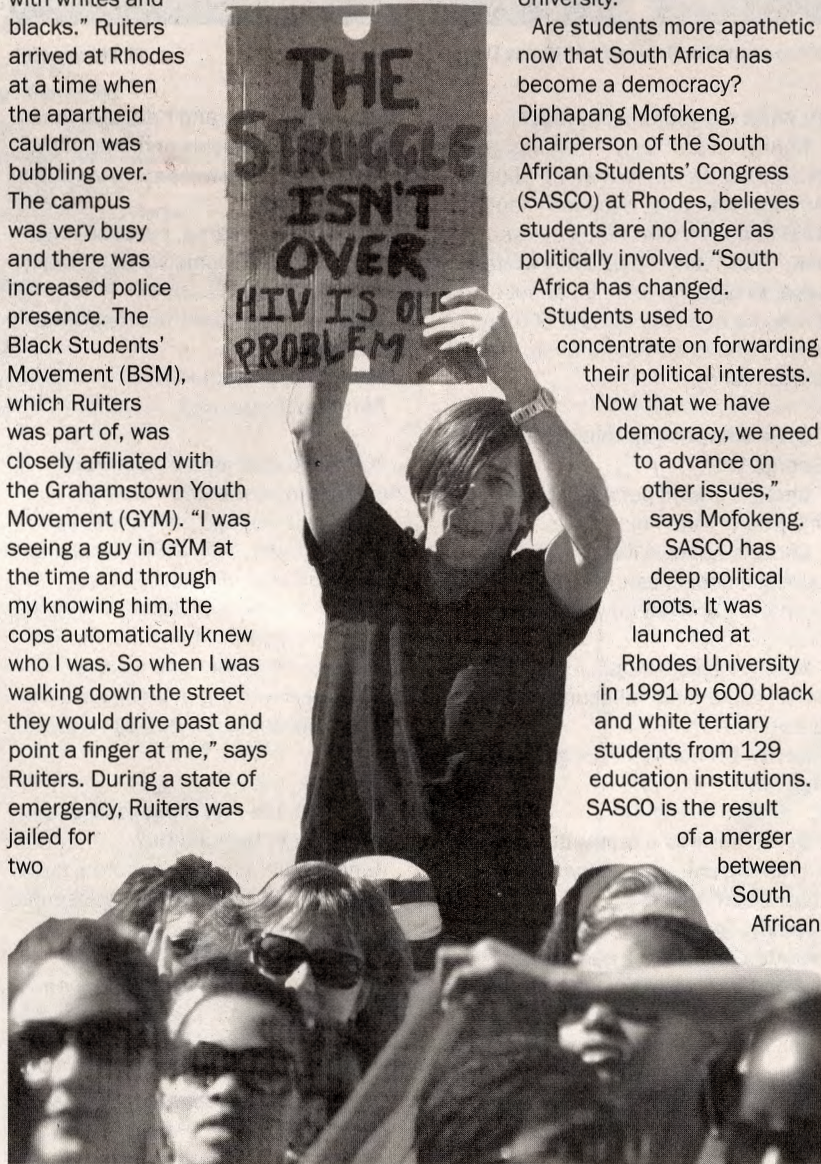
Let me be specific. Last week I was chatting to an acquaintance, someone I have said hello to over the years but have never really spoken to. The topic of smoking pot came up. I cannot remember how, but it came up. When I mentioned I had smoked some really good stuff over the vac, the response I got was astounding. I have never heard such complete nonsense from a supposedly educated university student. He started telling me how bad it was for me, that it was destroying my brain, that it was a gateway drug and spouting other similar propaganda. I asked him if he could source his vehement diatribe on the evils of marijuana. There was some umms and ahhs followed by a mumbled, "everyone knows".

The truth is that yes, pot is bad for your health, but no more than smoking (which that guy did). There is no basis for the myth that smoking pot destroys your brain, and the gateway thing does not even deserve a response.

I have used this as an example; I am not trying to defend pot (even though I would). I am trying to show how people will shout and scream about things they know nothing about. Another typical example is His People. I cannot tell you how many times I have been in a conversation where somebody starts ripping into the church. I have heard the most bizarre things. I remember being told once that if you were part of His People you had a midnight curfew! How many stupid, gullible people are there at this university that let these kinds of ridiculous rumours circulate?

When I see these people in action it really makes me wonder what university is doing for them. They have obviously missed a few lectures on analytic thinking, never got the reader on tolerance, and completely missed the being-able-to-back-up-what-you-say seminar series. What is weird, though, is that I have read some of these people's essays, and they are good. So when does the separation occur between the brain they use for academic work and the one that issues forth grunts as a means of communication?

This the strangest part of university that I have encountered in my two and a half years here. I always had this picture of a university being a place where everyone rode on bicycles and sat in coffee shops and discussed literature, politics, physics, maths, or whatever it was that people studied. I was shocked when I came across more of what I have described above. I guess I need to start practising what I preach. Here I am claiming at the beginning of this column that we should be tolerant, and for the rest of the 500 words I rant and rave at these horrible people who behave with such little intelligence. Rest your minds, I am very tolerant of them. I am just trying to campaign for a university where students use what they have been taught.



To the point with...

four exchange students

Jenna Berndt and Filipa de Oliveira chat to exchange students about Rhodes life, South African students, res food, Crackling and bushdiving...

It seemed like any normal Saturday afternoon varsity get-together: one res room, six students, lots of coffee and biscuits and loads of laughter. But this wasn't just any random chat.

We caught up with exchange students Katriina Hankela from Finland and Becky Holtzer, Kenny Dann and Chris Redding from the USA, a few weeks before they return to their respective homes.

Q: Why did you choose to come to South Africa?

Kenny: I wanted to do an exchange and this was the only programme available.

Chris: The specific programme I did was only through Rhodes. In the US there are tons of different programmes and I just happened to choose this one. A lot of people just go to Europe, but it's not really a change. South Africa is a new experience.

Becky: I'm doing International Studies and we're looking at Europe and sub-Saharan Africa so we have to come here.

Q: What was the first thing you noticed about South Africa when you landed?

Katriina: I thought it was really pretty as I was flying in.

Chris: I was too tired from all the travelling to notice anything when I landed.

Q: Were South Africans, in particular the students, welcoming?

Everyone: Yes.

Chris: They were actually a lot more welcoming than I expected. We were involved right away.

Q: Have you done any travelling in and around South Africa?

Everyone: Yeah.

Becky: Table Mountain was awesome.

Chris: I went to Mozambique over the vac.

Q: What do you think of Rhodes campus life? Is it very different from back home?

Everyone: (Laughing) Yes.

Katriina: In Finland our campus is not so small and unified, but more spread out. We don't have residences either. When I came here I was like, "Woah, it is so beautiful."

Q: What do you have in place of residences then?

Katriina: We have an organisation that rents out apartments for cheaper rates to students.

Q: Do you find the res rules here restricting?

Everyone: Yes.

Becky: Especially the curfews. We don't have anything like that.

Kenny: Guys and girls live in the same building in the States. The other weird thing for me is that you're split up by hall here and you have to go to that specific one to eat. At home you can eat wherever you want.

Q: What do you think of res food?

Katriina: It's really greasy.



Clockwise from top left: Chris Redding, Becky Holtzer, Katriina Hankela and Kenny Dann

■ Stacey Nel

Kenny: They serve chips with everything.

Becky: We have a large variety [in the States]. There's a salad bar, sandwich bar and ice cream bar which they have with every meal, over and above the hot meal.

Kenny: You don't have to book it. You just come in.

Katriina: We don't have dining halls back home; just student cafeterias, so there are more options.

Q: Does Rhodes provide a platform for exchange students to meet and have get-togethers?

Kenny: No, I think it would be cool to have some sort of bonding get-together. My college back home has an international society and the exchange students use that on campus to learn about different cultures.

Q: Are there any funny incidents you will remember from your time here?

Kenny: My alarm clock caught on fire when I plugged it in! I ripped it out of the wall and threw it into the garbage can. I didn't want to plug in anything after that because I wasn't sure if it would catch alight.

Q: What do you do here for recreation or leisure?

Kenny: I went to go watch *The Most Amazing Show*.

Q: What did you think of that?

Kenny: I didn't know what was going on. I know they were making South African references because I could kind of understand that. I enjoyed the "Dear Chuck" part. They wrote a letter to him and told him about all the things he needs to fix. One of them was to get rid of George Bush. I found that so funny.

Q: So what do you think of good old George W?

Becky: I always get asked, "Do you like Bush?" And I'm like "No... duh."

Chris: It's always like the second question people ask: "Oh, you come from the US. What do you think of George Bush?"

Kenny: I guess people just assume we all voted for him because he's the president.

Becky: Oh no, we're not getting into that now!

Q: Rhodes has a reputation for being a drinking university. What do you think about that?

Kenny: Friar's is just usually really crowded. It's weird 'cause people go out pretty much every night here. In the USA more people just stay in and drink in their rooms, even though you're not allowed to.

Becky: I find the way you go out here is different. At home when you go out with your friends it's casual. You don't

dress up so much and here everyone goes out in high heels and little skirts and I'm like "No, sweetie, it's cold. Put some pants on."

Kenny: Yeah, I agree, because if we go out to bars at home we don't really get dressed up...

Katriina: (Interrupts) You mean you go naked?

Kenny: (Confused) Huh?

Katriina: Just joking!

Q: What's your idea of a perfect night out in your home country?

Katriina: I don't go out to bars and stuff that much. I stay in my apartment and spend time with my friends.

Chris: At home it's a lot more of girls and guys together. Here it seems like guys go out together and go meet somewhere with a group of girls. Back home, girls and guys are just one group.

Q: What's the first thing you will do when you get back home?

Kenny: Order a large pepperoni pizza.

Katriina: I'm going to go to the sauna and then I'm going to eat dark rye bread and drink cold milk.

Becky: Hug my boyfriend and then definitely get pizza. The pizza's good here, but it's not the same.

Q: What are your long-term plans?

Chris: I still have a year left on my course. Then I don't know after that.

Who are they?

Name: Becky Holtzer

Age: 20

Year of study: Third

Degree: International

Studies and German

From: Maryland, USA

Name: Chris Redding

Age: 21

Year of study: Third

Degree: BA in Religious

Studies

From: New Mexico, USA

Name: Katriina Hankela

Age: 22

Year of study: Third

Degree: Majoring in

Special Education

From: Turku, Finland

Name: Kenny Dann

Age: 21

Year of study: Fourth

Degree: Information

Technology

From: New York, USA

Kenny: I've got one more semester. Then I go on an internship.

Q: What has Rhodes taught you?

Becky: I've learnt a lot. We don't learn about Africa at all back home.

Kenny: It definitely made me more aware about AIDS.

Chris: Yeah.

Q: What's the first thing that comes to mind when we say: Bushdiving?

(Lots of embarrassed laughter and we suddenly realise that we are all on very different wavelengths...)

Q: OK, moving along...Crackling?

Chris: (Pulling a face) Nasty.

Becky: Is it even made of grapes?

Q: South African girls?

(Lots of laughter)

Kenny: I have no comment.

Chris: They're really different.

Kenny: They're just really friendly.

Q: South African boys?

Katriina: They are very diverse and there is lots of variety.

Q: Do you have any last words about your time here?

Katriina: It has been a great cultural experience.

Becky: It's going to be cool to be back home and watch South Africa progress politically, socially and economically. It's interesting to see where the country is going.



Patrons try their luck on Slip Stream Sportsbar's 25 new slot machines

■ Anwen Evans and Karolina Kamendera

Booze, smokes and slots

Grahamstown's brand-new mini-casino has tongues wagging.

Justin Stephenson and Jessica McCarthy find out more...

New Street may be regarded by many students as the place to go after dark to drink and party, but a closer inspection of the street in the sobering reality of daylight reveals that New Street has a lot more for you to do than get drunk. The recent addition of 25 slot machines to Slip Stream Sportsbar has created Grahamstown's first mini-casino. The former pool table area now twinkles with neon lights as an older crowd sits spinning the wheels of fortune in the hope of a win.

Willem Stymberg, co-owner of Slip Stream Sportsbar, feels that although the slots have only been operational for a couple of weeks, Slip Stream has already been misrepresented in the local press. He defends the shock introduction of casino-style gambling to Grahamstown, saying, "It has always been Slip Stream's intention to introduce the slot machines. We were just waiting for the licence to be approved." He adds that responsible gambling is strongly encouraged at Slip Stream. Stymberg is proud of the fact that 10% of the profit made from the slots goes towards community upliftment programmes.

Kat Pugh, a bartender at Slip Stream, feels that the stigma attached to the new gambling venue is undeserved, as the gamblers are closely monitored by both the staff and 24 closed-circuit cameras on the premises. So much so that a regular who seemed to be taking the game too far has already been banned from the slots. When asked about the number of students using the slots, Pugh says, "The slots seem to be bringing in an older, middle-class crowd." She has only occasionally seen students playing on the machines.

Stymberg is pleased that the machines have brought in different clientele: "Slip Stream is designed to be a place of entertainment for Grahamstown and not only students." Stymberg reveals that an expansion is planned for the building to include an upper deck, but will not be used for gambling. The upper deck will fit in more with the sports bar idea of Slip Stream, with TVs, pool tables and foosball tables.

The slot machines are low-payout machines, meaning that no large sums of money are lost or gained. The machines deal out credit based on 10c, 5c and 2c coins and the maximum one can win on one spin is R500. To date the highest win at Slip Stream is R1 300. Stymberg also states that the machines pay out 80% of what they take in and that the machines are for entertainment and not for serious gambling. A patron of the slots, Charlie Reilly, expressed

delight with the machines: "I enjoy coming here, having a few drinks, winning or losing a bit of money, and going home. I don't have to drive all the way to Fish River anymore." Reilly, who has enjoyed gambling in the past, does not see the slot machines as a bad thing. The patrons at Slip Stream all expressed similar feelings about the machines. They gamble with amounts of between R50 and R100. Elize Bantam, another patron, describes the slot machines as "something to do in Grahamstown".

Speaking to students about the Slip Stream slots, *Activate* found that many students are unaware of the machines. Those that are aware of them expressed a positive response. According to Elethu Pambo, a second-year BCom LLB student, "The gambling at Slip Stream is a refreshing alternative source of entertainment in Grahamstown." Natalie Burford, second-year BA, was interested to hear about the new machines. "I think that it's exciting. It gives us something new to do in G-town."

While Slip Stream may have Grahamstown's first legal slot machines, gambling is not new to the town. The national lottery is well-supported in the greater Grahamstown area. Sylvia Mkolo, an employee at the BP Kwikspaar on African Street, says that Saturday nights are the busiest time for buying Lotto tickets. An average of one hundred people purchase tickets every Saturday night. Mkolo added that, to her knowledge, no students buy Lotto tickets from the Kwikspaar. The highest payout at the store has been R700, with other smaller payouts happening each week.

Slot machine gambling may be a new concept to Grahamstown, but South Africa is also a relative newcomer to the gambling world. Legalisation of gambling happened only 10 years ago and since then casinos have sprung up at a surprising rate around the country. In 2005, South African casinos recorded a profit of R9 981 million; eight percent of that total was generated in the Eastern Cape. There are presently three casinos in the Eastern Cape and a further two are being developed for 2007.

During apartheid, citizens of South Africa who wanted to gamble had to travel to the independent homelands, where gambling was legal. It was only in 1996 after the collapse of the apartheid government that gambling was legalised. The introduction of casinos

into the bigger cities of South Africa led to citizens being exposed to gambling on a much wider scale.

While the general opinion is that one gambles to win money, psychologist Michael Walker from the University of Sydney argues in his book *The Psychology of Gambling* that people usually gamble for amusement or excitement. Linked to the excitement factor is the way in which casinos are designed and laid out. Most casinos revolve around the gambling pit. The restaurants, toilets and children's amusement areas are all placed in close proximity to the pit. Casinos are often themed to give the illusion of a fantasy realm where reality does not apply. Casinos use the allure of jingling sounds and flashy lights to encourage gambling. The result of this is that the gambler is prepared to suspend his beliefs and values while playing. It is for this same reason that most casinos do not have clocks, so that people are less aware of how much time they spend gambling. Windows are not found in the pit for the same reason; they act as natural clocks. Casino means "little house" in Italian, which perhaps betrays the fact that it is in the proprietor's best interests to make gamblers feel at home.

In the same way that casino layout affects the way people gamble, so do gamblers' own superstitions and myths. Some well-known superstitions include blowing the dice before a roll, wearing "lucky" clothing, and making sure that everything is exactly the same as the last time you won. The colour black is synonymous with bad luck. While these superstitions are harmless, some others are slightly more extreme. Pouring holy water into the coin slot of a machine, as gamblers have been known to do, is a likely sign that gambling is

becoming a problem in an individual's life. These superstitions go hand in hand with the emergence of the modern professional gambler. These individuals travel the world, gambling large amounts of money, and are often hosted, wined and dined by hotel-casinos for free. The pros go to great lengths to seek out inside information on new machines, races and fights. Professional gamblers may start off being extremely wealthy, but it is well worth remembering that the casino always wins. Put it this way: have you ever heard of a casino going bankrupt?

Gambling addictions are just like any other addiction. They can be as harmful to an individual and their relationships as a drug addiction. While many people are able to gamble once or twice on a social basis, it can become a huge problem for others. Visit www.responsiblegambling.co.za to find support and information for those suffering from gambling-related problems.

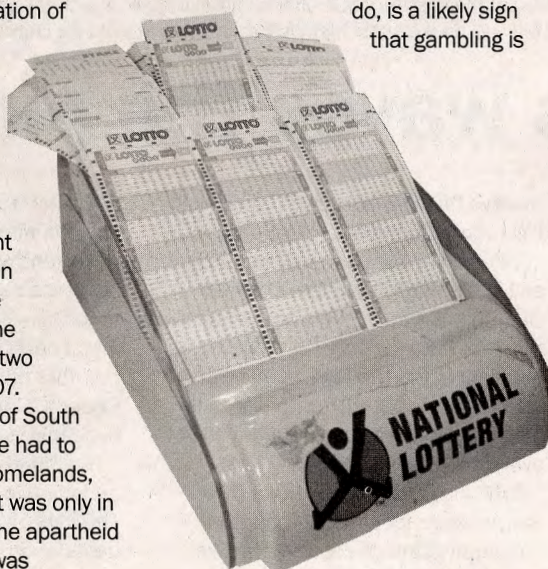
What are your chances?

Playing the Lotto may seem like a good idea, but with a 1 in 14 million chance of winning with all six numbers, you have a better chance of:

- Being hit by lightning twice - 1 in 9 million
- Giving birth to identical quadruplets - 1 in 11 million
- Dating a super model - 1 in 88 000
- Being considered possessed by Satan - 1 in 7 000
- Being in a plane with a drunken pilot - 1 in 117
- Having your identity stolen - 1 in 200
- Dating a millionaire - 1 in 215
- Finding out your child is a genius - 1 in 250
- Finding a four leaf clover on your first try - 1 in 10 000
- Spotting a UFO today - 1 in 3 million

On the other hand, you are more likely to win the Lotto than have a meteor fall on your house - 1 in 182 138 880 000 000.

■ Joni Els



What you said:

■ Karen Crouch and Paige Knight

Do you think gambling is positive or negative and why?



Filipa de Oliveira

First-year BJourn

"Negative: it can easily become an addiction and before you know it, you've blown all your money!"



Norah Ejumu

Second-year BCom

"It depends on how far you take it"



Brad Marais

First-year BSS LLB

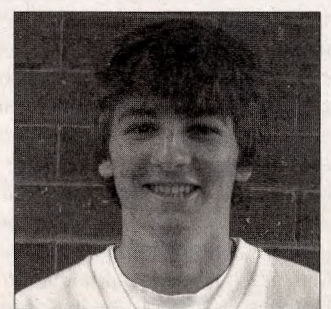
"It's socially irresponsible, but it's fun."



Emma Holland

Third-year BA

"You need to know your character: it's negative if you have obsessive compulsive problems."

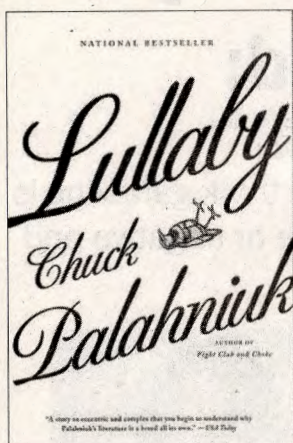


Wayne Arguile

Second-year BAcc

"It's positive because gambling lets you learn from your mistakes."

Reviews

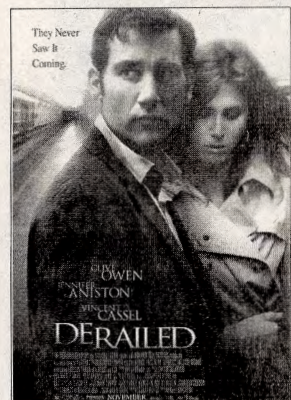


Book review:

Lullaby
by Chuck Palahniuk

■ David Querido

Carl Streater investigates the story every parent is afraid to comprehend: Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. He discovers the unlikely cause in the form of an ancient African 'culling poem', used to euthanase in desperate circumstances. After he proves that the poem really works, his newfound ability grants him free reign to kill. His foul temper and acute intolerance to noise further appears to justify his deeds. Along with three others with mixed motives, Carl embarks on a journey to uncover and destroy every existing copy of the poem. *Lullaby* examines the pure, unbridled power of words and the pursuit of this power by any means necessary. The idea is stretched to the absolute by pondering society's reaction to other weapons of mass destruction. Concise yet dense, Palahniuk's work resonates with unfathomable depth. This author, famous for his novel *Fight Club*, has mastered the craft of invigorating and completely capturing his audience. If words could kill, Chuck Palahniuk would be liable for genocide.

Movie review:
Derailed

■ Lindy Timm

A great change from the usual bland, comedic work of Jennifer Aniston, *Derailed* is a riveting suspense story of betrayal. Bored with the monotony of family and work life, Charlie Schine (Clive Owen) cannot believe his luck when he meets the beautiful and charming Lucinda Harris (Jennifer Aniston) on a train. Their magnetic attraction leads to lunch dates, cocktails, and eventually a hotel room. Their raunchy affair turns sour when LaRoche, a violent gunman, breaks into their room. The seemingly perfect liaison turns into a web of blackmail, deception and violence. Charlie is helplessly trapped in the middle until he decides to take matters into his own hands. An innovative thriller, *Derailed* has enough twists and turns to keep you guessing. The chemistry between Aniston and Owen is surprisingly hot and well-staged. It gets a nod of approval for its enthralling ensemble.

Up close and personal

Ripping up the decks with DJ Peewee

■ Matt Edwards

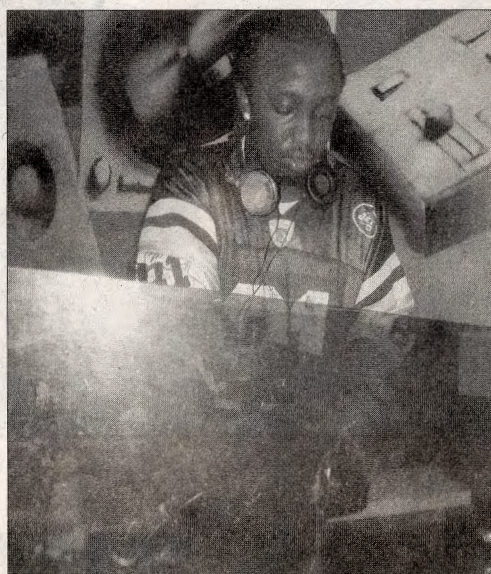
"I'm just who I am; there's no use in pretending." This is exactly how DJ Peewee comes across.

As clichéd as it is, what you see is what you get. This Economics honours student sits confidently and speaks with a chilled but friendly tone. His eyes are reassuring and one battles to look away from his gaze. He is definitely comfortable with being himself and doesn't hold anything back.

As a regular DJ at both Equilibrium and The Suite, Mpangwe Mutwale has always been a huge music fan. His music career began only three years ago when he helped out a friend who was a DJ. The bug bit Mutwale and he's never looked back. "I have long been fascinated by mix tapes, and this, as well as listening to other DJs in action has helped me develop a sound that is distinctly mine," he says.

When describing his type of music, he replies: "I play a mix of R 'n B, hip hop and dance hall music. That's the only way to put it." This frank outlook on his music has not only made him a veteran in Grahamstown, but has taken him as far as Johannesburg as well. A few months back, when the Naked DJ played at The Suite, Peewee was lucky enough to play as well. "He must have liked what he heard because he quickly invited me to play twice with him in Jo'burg at the Rhinobar; that was the highlight of my career," he laughs.

The name Peewee comes from his childhood friend's mother, who gave



DJ Peewee entertains the masses with his smooth mixes and music grooves



■ pics supplied

him the nickname because he was "very tiny, almost a midget".

Zambian by birth, and schooled in Zimbabwe, Botswana is now where he calls home. At school Peewee says he was quite a diverse person. He received his colours for basketball, soccer and culture. When not on the decks, Peewee's ideal night is just chillin' with friends or his girlfriend. He has enjoyed his time at Rhodes so far, but graduating earlier this year was definitely the best part of his varsity life. "It's not even 10 seconds of fame, but it's worth it," he says.

As far as his music career is concerned, he loves the student crowd because they're appreciative and not shy to tell him how much they enjoy his

music, although he says they can get a tad arrogant: "They expect the party to be happening when they get there; they don't realise that they are the ones that make the party happen."

Regulars at Equilibrium and The Suite know only too well that when Peewee DJs the party definitely gets started.

Peewee isn't too fazed about the future either. Hoping to first secure a stable job, he wants to give his career some time. He says: "When I'm at the right age, say 26 or 27, then I'll break into mainstream DJing." The most surprising aspect of Peewee is he's not afraid to embrace other types of music. He is good friends with members of local rock band, The

Super Agents. To him, "good music is good music."

"If you want people to support you, then you have to support them," he says.

DJ Peewee sees the local music scene as stagnant. "There's just not enough competition," he says, although his opinion is that DJs Match and RS should be watched, because "they're well on their way." He says that to make a good DJ you need dedication. "I know it's corny, but it's true," he says.

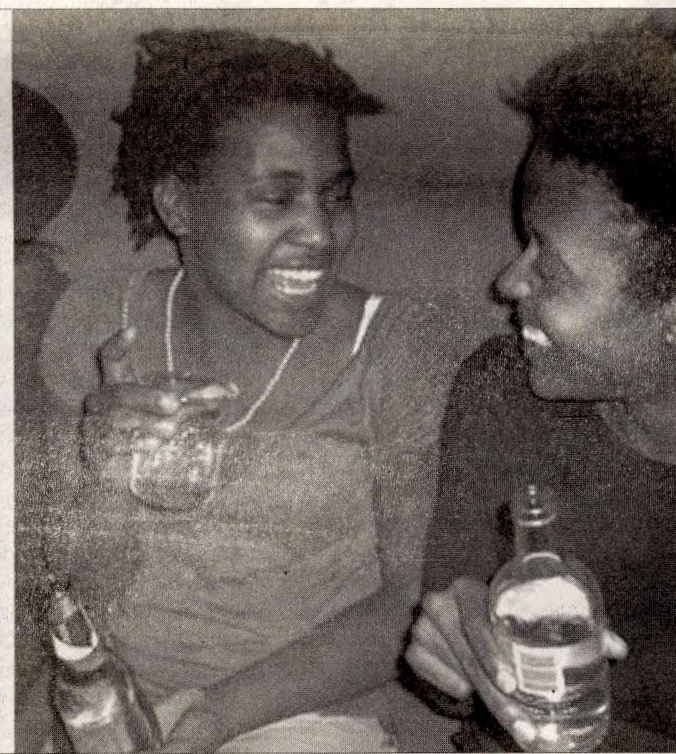
This guy oozes self-confidence. His name might not suggest it, but Peewee is big. Big in heart and big on the decks. One can only see him getting bigger.

Friday night: so much to do, so little time



Soma rocked the crowd at the Old Gaol last Friday at the Legs for Lizzie charity music concert, which raised funds for Lizzie White, a cancer patient. The Students Arts Festival after-party at The Suite and the Rafsoc party at the Drill Hall on the same night left party-goers spoiled for choice

■ Anwen Evans and Sean Messhan



OutRhodes waves the pink flag in Knysna

■ Ilana Koegelenberg

Searching your cupboard for pink clothes is the order of the month. From May 24 to 28, an annual celebration of gay pride, the Pink Loerie, will take place in Knysna. A four-day celebration of sexual diversity and tolerance is expected once more as this popular carnival draws closer.

This year, another exciting line-up awaits carnival-goers. The Zanzibar Outrageous Party kicks off events on Thursday, May 25 (Wednesday is

reserved for pre-parties). The weekend will rush by in a blur of float parades, sundowners, live shows by artists such as Liz Meiring, Dainty Delisha and Deon Bischoff and themed parties like the Pink Party and the Gat Party. The highlight is the the Pink Jungle Party on Saturday. It winds down with a few more relaxed events on Sunday to get everyone ready to face the world.

OutRhodes has organised a three-day package for students to attend the carnival and express themselves in any way they choose. The proposed price is R400 and can be paid to the

SRC secretary by May 19. Streaming down in masses, many Rhodents will attend Pink Loerie this year to show their support and have a good time while doing it. Organised by Pink Loerie committee member and member of OutRhodes, Tony East, Rhodes is determined to be part of the hype this year.

The Pink Loerie Carnival came from an initiative born in Knysna in 2000. The idea was to promote the town as a destination and to give its economy a boost in the slowest, most depressing month of the year. May is sometimes

referred to as "suicide month". Today, Pink Loerie is one of the biggest gay pride events in the world. A whole lot of pink money and business is invested in the carnival and it's a great excuse to party. One of its founders, Juan Alan Sass, says: "The idea was to establish a gay carnival to celebrate the diversity of gay culture in a scenically magnificent environment, thereby attracting visitors to the area in an otherwise very quiet month."

For more information, log on to www.pinkloerie.com or www.outrhodes.soc.ru.ac.za.

A fashionation with individuality

Whether it's wearing make-up, linen pants or beads and brooches, Rhodes students embrace a sense of individuality and expression through fashion. With SA Fashion Week approaching, the self-proclaimed *Activate* fashion mafia, Lindy Timm, Nqobile Shoba and Bronwyn Seaborne, hit campus to find out about the latest trends.

University is a place for many forms of experimentation, and fashion is one such form. Being a student allows one to break away from the traditional conventions of school uniform and corporate outfits.

In previous years hippie and gothic trends have dominated student fashion, but the current fashion realm at Rhodes seems to be more individualised, posing the question of whether fashion has become a reflection of personality.

Preying on unsuspecting quirky dressers, we set out to interrogate a few students who we saw as having distinctive style. Lilian Kaplan, easily recognised by her blue hair and catchy slogan T-shirts, describes her style as being "non-conformist". She prefers not to be known as another sheep, "because it's so much more fun to be a wolf". Ricardo Pillay, another unsuspecting victim, often includes unusual accessories, like bright brooches, in his outfits. His style declares "I'm here and I've arrived." With her well-coordinated and accessorised style, Celeste Kriel is closer to common conceptions of "fashionable". She says she prefers to set trends rather than follow them.

But what underlies this need to be different? Werner Bohmke, junior Psychology lecturer at Rhodes, says: "I believe that people want to distinguish



Rhodes campus lawns are a popular space for the fashion-conscious. ■ Joni Els

themselves from the mainstream but be normal and different at the same time." However, he thinks that even individual style is predetermined by ideas sold by the media.

Kaplan's idea that "mass fashion is lame" is common throughout campus. Rhodes, in particular, seems to be the ideal environment for expression through fashion. Bohmke notes the changes in the Rhodes fashion scene over the years: "In the late 90s there were clear fashion influences within different academic departments.

This evolved into a more uniform and informal sense of fashion with the emergence of groups, such as skater-punk and hippie." He adds that now the trend seems to be more individualistic and image- and identity-conscious.

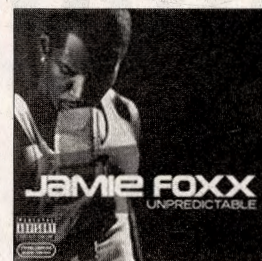
Pillay believes the vibe at Rhodes enhanced his style, rather than changed it, and that being here is a great experience because it gives him ultimate freedom with regards to his style. Kaplan, however, found that at Rhodes she was able to reinvent

herself. Initially a hippie with long blonde hair, she cut off her hair and dyed it blue.

Rhodes, of course, is not without its fashion cliques. How could one not notice the large collection of Durban beach boys who wear shorts come rain or shine, the poppies with their pink tank-tops and mini-skirts, and the ever increasing number of shoeless wanderers. Who can forget the dress up parties at Rhodes like the "dress to get laid party", the "heat party" and the "jailbird party"? There's always an opportunity to experiment, go wild and be quirky and outrageous, and the time is definitely now before suits and ties rule our world.



Reviews



CD review:

Jamie Foxx – Unpredictable

■ Lula Hlatshwayo

He won an Oscar for his portrayal of Ray Charles and one would think that this success would redeem him from his disappointing last album, *Peep This*, in 1994. However, Jamie Foxx has not completely retired from producing CDs. There's no doubt that he has a rich voice, which has made him a worthy contributor to hits like Kanye West's "Slow Jamz" and "Gold Digger". *Unpredictable* is less impressive. Its lyrics are unoriginal and centre on nothing but sex, since Foxx appears to "know what the ladies want". It's an hour of audio foreplay featuring big names like Common, Kanye West, Ludacris, Snoop Dogg, and Twista, which creates a hyped mix of the same old sounds. Foxx has also claimed he is the "saviour of R 'n B". The album sounds like a diluted R. Kelly. The billboard number 1 hit single "Unpredictable" is a vibey party song but this album is sadly yet another predictable R 'n B serenade.

Realism and fanaticism, both on one stage

■ Danielle Bosch

As Shakespeare said, "All the world's a stage." With that in mind, perhaps the only way to experience the excitement of the drama world is to witness it for oneself. To entice all *Activate* readers to come into this world, here is a brief rundown of the riveting drama pieces on show this term.

The third-year and Honours drama students will be presenting their director's pieces for this term. The Honours students are required to do a process-based devised piece for their second term directing assignment while the third-years are assigned to

explore realist plays.

Terri Elliot, a Master's student, describes her project as a "Christian piece" and says that it is based loosely on Matthew 6:20. She says that it follows the lives of five people and shows how what the characters spend their time on becomes monuments in their lives. Ultimately she hopes to uncover the effects on the characters when they realise the triviality of the finite treasures and idols they have built in their lives.

Wesley Deintje says his piece is on the "questioning and culmination of religious texts". It is a reworking of the story of Cain and Abel, following the story of two brothers and how

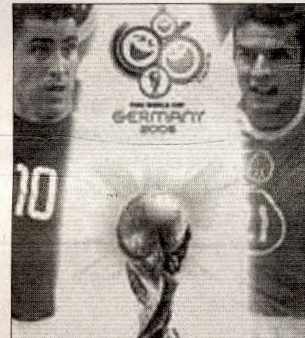
religion becomes fanaticism for one of them, ultimately leading to murderous violence. Deintje says that the play deals with his own problems with violence and religion and questions what it is to have faith. His piece is called *The 21st Revelation*.

Amélie Gellé has focused her piece around a female protagonist's young adult life and the romantic connections she makes. The piece is structured around snippets of the character's life and is done in the style of realism. According to Gellé, the piece is inspired by her own "grappling with the complexity of relationships" and also comments on how love can be simultaneously selfish and

unselfish.

Other fourth-year directors who are staging pieces this term are Ayolani Moya and Zanne Solomon, who is doing a segment from the musical *Les Misérables*. This musical should excite the audience and bring in a fresh new direction to the popular piece.

To experience all aspects of life from love to religion and to be part of the cultural hub at Rhodes before heading off to the exam venues, keep an eye out for adverts telling when these director's pieces will take place. These will be posted around campus at a later date. The Honours director's pieces will be performed on May 25 at the Rhodes Theatre.



Games review:

FIFA '06

■ Ciro De Siena

With just four weeks left until kick-off of the 2006 FIFA World Cup, soccer mania is on the rise and even the most soft-core football fan is beginning to feel the excitement.

Sometimes, however, watching all the action just isn't enough, and if actually playing the game doesn't scratch the football itch, then enter EA Sport's *FIFA 2006*.

Released last month on PC DVD, the latest incarnation of the iconic title is undoubtedly the most complete yet, with EA spitting out the clichéd marketing phrases like never before: "You'll see and feel the joy, anguish and pain of 90 minutes of football in a video game," says EA. The thing is, they're right.

Playability is smooth and responsive, and the tackles, passes and shots are accurate and weirdly realistic. The between-game videos are magic, with some gloriously capturing memorable moments in football history.

The game has a plethora of unlockable in-game features and secrets, including the ability to unlock classic players who have long since hung up their boots. The likeness to at least 100 of the world's top soccer stars is uncanny, and so is their ability. The game also includes exceptional renderings of the 12 stadiums to be used in the World Cup this year.

Tid bits – your guide to happenings in and around G-Town

■ Siya Ngcobo

Student Arts Festival report back

Innovations and the Student Arts Festival stepped up a notch last week showcasing some of the most entertaining acts in Grahamstown. The festival opened with engaging art exhibitions at St Aiden's Conference centre and later moved crowds with plays, skits and riveting dances at the Rhodes Theatre.

All the works were written and acted by students. Although the Soweto band Dikwa couldn't make it to the festival, the opening party still rocked and the organisation of the festival is to be commended.

Swart Gevaar and other acts closed off the festival with a bang and one can only wait with anticipation for next year's student fest.

Friday May 19 – Saturday May 20

The Rhodes University Drama department pays tribute to the latest winner of the Nobel Prize for

Literature, Harold Pinter, in a season of Pinter's *Interiors*, a collage of several plays.

Acting coach Lindsay Reardon and Aylwyn Walsh of Ubom! direct extracts from three of Pinter's plays.

Pinter's work is highly theatrical, always humorous, thought-provoking and evocative.

The Hothouse is an absurdist piece, where characters represent the meaning of the play rather than real people. These meanings are subjective to the individual audience member.

The collection explores this adult world we live in and looks at the metaphysical rather than the physical connections between two people. The extract from *The Birthday Party* showcases the third scene from the play where a couple's mundane existence is disrupted by two other guests.

Pinter's works are highly entertaining and worth seeing. Tickets are available from the Theatre Café daily (between 9am and 5pm) at R20 for students/

scholars and R25 for everyone else. The shows start at 7pm.

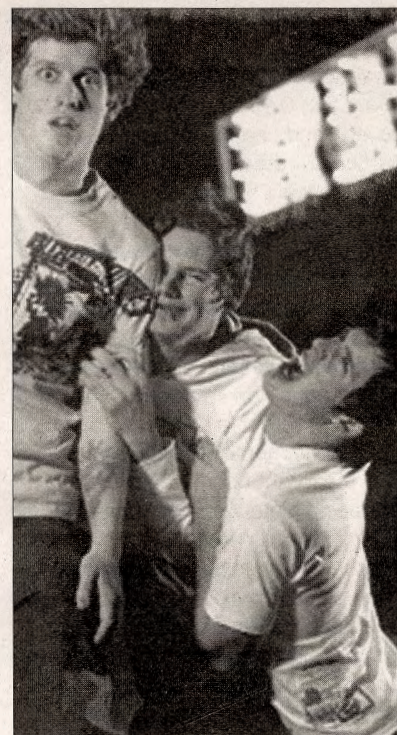
Friday May 19

The Finkelstiens, Parlotones and other Mzansi bands are playing in Grahamstown tomorrow night at Victoria Girls' High School. These bands are no strangers to our hub of entertainment and culture and will rock the stage and shake up the night from 7pm till 11.45pm. This concert is one last chance to experience live action before most people head off to the exam venues a week later. R60 gets you in and tickets are available from the school hall and at the door. For more information, visit: www.powerzone.co.za

Saturday May 20

Jagged, a band from East London, are playing a gig at Olde 65 at 9pm this Saturday night.

Entrance is free and the night promises to be a chilled but entertaining one.



The Finkelstiens

■ pic supplied

Rhodes and the brain drain

■ Kirsten Mawdsley, Nosipho Mngomezulu and Paula Gilbert

In South Africa the phrase “brain drain” has become synonymous with graduation. There is an increasing number of South African university graduates leaving the country to seek employment abroad. Will Rhodes students follow the same trend? *Activate* decided to find out.

At least 20 000 highly qualified Africans are leaving the continent every year. The brain drain has placed Africa in a difficult situation. Sectors such as medicine and education are suffering the most.

At any one time, up to 5 000 South Africans are teaching in London alone. The cost of training one doctor is more than R1 million. When doctors leave the country, the state receives no return on this enormous investment. This has an adverse impact on the economy.

But what does all this mean for a campus where medicine and teaching are not the most prominent faculties? Does Rhodes contribute to the brain drain in a similar way to other universities in South Africa?

Affirmative action seems to be one of the main reasons why white students across the country are leaving. At Rhodes there seems to be a different view of the opportunities available to graduates. “Being a white male makes it more difficult to access the opportunity, but it is still there if you position yourself correctly,” said Evan Ford, a second-year BSc student. Many white students agreed there are still opportunities for them here. But the reality is, as Ford said, that white males “know they are last on the employment list”.

For many, the reasons to go overseas are simply to travel and see the world. The general consensus at Rhodes is that most students intend to return and bring back expertise gained while overseas.

First-year drama student Nicolette Floris believes that she “would benefit from having international experience” but would return to our shores. Laura Sheppard, a first-year BA student who intends to go overseas for a while, said: “There are probably more opportunities overseas, but I still want to come back.”

However, not everyone shares these

sentiments. Chané Baasden, a first-year BA student, intends to leave and never return. She stated, “This country is going to the dogs; there is no future here.” She doesn’t see much opportunity here for herself. “Who wants to live in a place where six-month-old kids get raped? Sure, the weather is good and we have pretty animals but not much else,” she said.

Factors making people like Baasden wanting to leave South Africa include high unemployment rates, crime and inadequate social services such as health and education. However, not all South African students plan to leave.

Bongeka Nodangala, a first-year BJourn student who is at Rhodes on a scholarship said she would definitely stay in the country. “It is South African money that is paying for my studies,” she says, and so she feels it is her duty to give back to South Africa.

Angel Jones, the founder of the non-profit organisation Homecoming Revolution, encourages expatriates to return to the country. She says South Africa is “the land of opportunity”. The question, then, is whether this sentiment is shared by the general population. When questioning foreign



■ Matthew Ackermann

students from around Africa we found that there was a consensus that South Africa holds many possibilities.

Mutuero Chimedu, a second-year BAcc student from Zimbabwe stated that he would “definitely consider a future here; the economy is strong and business confidence is high, which means there is money to be made”. He also cited the strength of the rand as a factor that will not only bring illegal immigrants across the border but educated young professionals as

well.

With varying responses to this question from Rhodes students, the question remains: What will you do? Although Jones admits the country is not perfect she is still optimistic about South Africa’s future and says it is something that has to be worked on. “Don’t wait until it gets better, come home and make it better.”

Will you join the brain drain or stay and make South Africa the country we all want it to be? It’s up to you.

Dolphin deaths raise conservation concern

■ Leila Hall

On April 28, 400 dead bottlenose dolphins washed up on the northern coast of Zanzibar. The cause of their death is still a mystery. The dolphins, which usually live in deep offshore waters, were disturbed by an unknown cause and were stranded in shallow waters. Experts have ruled out poisoning, although there are plans to examine the dolphins’ stomachs for possible traces of toxic algae.

The dolphins were in a healthy condition and did not appear to have starved to death. An examination of their stomachs, however, indicated that they had either vomited severely

or had not eaten for a while. There were no bruises to indicate tangling in fishing nets. A strong possibility is that sonar from US submarines affected the dolphins’ behaviour.

US Navy task forces patrol the East African coast and it is suspected that bursts of sonar may have scared or disorientated the dolphins. This is not the first incident in which military sonar has been linked to the injury of marine animals. Sonar activities are believed to be the cause of at least six incidents of mass fatality and unusual behaviour in whales in the last ten years. In 2004, 200 melon-headed whales were stranded off Kauai Island, Hawaii. The most likely

cause was the American–Japanese sonar training exercises which were taking place in the area at the time. Similarly, in March 2005, 68 deep-water dolphins washed up onto the coast of Marathon, Florida, a day after a series of naval exercises were carried out approximately 72km away. This recent incident is the largest number of deaths that military sonar has been associated with.

A number of other concerns have been raised. Many people fear that Zanzibar’s tourist industry may suffer – thousands of visitors come to watch and swim with the dolphins every year. There have also been questions surrounding the health risks posed by

the dead mammals. A public warning advised people to not eat the dolphin meat as the cause of death has not yet been determined.

The incident also raises important questions on the effect of human behaviour on marine life and may provide a new ground for interest and awareness of marine conservation in Africa. On April 18, just 10 days before the dolphin strandings, Zanzibar designated the Pemba Channel a marine conservation area. Meanwhile, the Zanzibar Commission for Tourism has started an awareness campaign as part of the Marine and Coastal Environmental Management Project. Over R2 million has been made

available for training, education, information centres and awareness campaigns.

Also of interest to recent conservation issues is the 2006 IUCN (World Conservation Union) Red List of Threatened Species, which was published last week. Twenty percent of the 547 species of sharks listed are threatened with extinction. The Red List is an important measure of our progress in achieving the global target to reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010 significantly. Biodiversity loss such as the dolphin deaths seems to be on the increase and only the careful monitoring of human activities will slow it down.

Rhodes student attends International Youth Parliament

■ Staff reporter

Twenty-three African youth activists met in Lusaka, Zambia from April 24 to 28, 2006. These activists previously represented their countries at the Oxfam International Youth Parliament (OIYP) in Sydney, Australia in 2004. They actively promote positive social change in their communities.

The Lusaka workshop was a reunion for the participants and an opportunity for them to learn a variety of skills that could make their individual projects more effective. It was also a forum of discussion on issues affecting the continent and an opportunity to respond to these issues.

In an exercise where the young activists were required to predict newspaper headlines for Africa in 2020, some of the ideas that emerged were: “No famine in Africa: what went right?”, “Average life expectancy in Africa now 85 years” and “African leadership leaves office at the completion of their terms.” These young people are certainly not just paying lip service to their ideals. All of them are working to achieve their visions for Africa at community level. For example, Chukwumanya Igboekwu from Nigeria is a young

medical doctor volunteering at a rural hospital where he established an HIV/Aids treatment centre. He is also campaigning for the Nigerian state government to increase the amount it spends on health and HIV/Aids treatment so that the poor have better access to antiretrovirals. Emmanuel Gasana from Rwanda formed the Rwandan Youth Entrepreneurship Promotion Organisation to combat poverty and unemployment, particularly among youth in the city. Gasana’s organisation does this through teaching IT and entrepreneurship skills. Myra Maria from Seychelles is involved in a group that warns young people of drug and alcohol abuse through debates and workshops. Bongani Simelane from Swaziland is working towards the establishment of a Swaziland national youth parliament. Samantha Mundeta is at the forefront of a regional campaign aimed at promoting unity among African people to try to achieve sustainable peace on the continent.

The Zambian workshop gave delegates the opportunity to network with people involved in similar areas of work. It also provided training in skills essential to project management, such as organisational management, leadership, partnership, monitoring

and evaluation.

The topics of discussion at the workshop included gender dynamics in Africa, the definition of ‘youth’ in Africa, unemployment, millennium development goals and youth participation in mainstream decision-making bodies such as governments and the African Union (AU). A particularly thorny issue was that the African Union has been described as a “people’s union” but Africa’s youth (who make up 60% of the continent) do not feel as if they are a part of it. The AU has recently drafted the Pan-African Youth Charter, and intends to convene a youth forum at its next meeting. A question arose as to why the AU did not consult youth in the process of drafting this charter. Perhaps what youth want is not to have a separate forum, but to be involved in the main AU structures such as the Peace and Security Council. Some argue that youth are often involved in stirring up violence and so ought to be involved in finding peaceful solutions to Africa’s conflicts.

The Lusaka workshop was not all work, however. Participants shared games and songs from their countries, and the highlight of the workshop was a cultural evening, where the young activists paraded their traditional



Samantha Mundeta recently attended the Oxfam International Youth Parliament workshop in Zambia
■ Joni Els

outfits, taught each other to dance to their traditional music and shared aspects of their culture.

Movements like this workshop and the International Youth Parliament remind us that there is hope for

Africa. There are young visionaries who believe in the continent and are committed to seeing its restoration in their lifetime, and this should serve as inspiration for others to join the cause to forge a better future for Africa.

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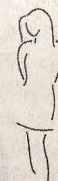
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SRC Update

2006

News From the SRC 2006

SRC News in Brief By Bryony Green

- The SRC would like to express their thanks to Dr. Woods for all his help this year and wish him and his wife all the best on their retirement.
- Congratulations to Kimberley Hall on their Volley Tournament held last weekend. The SRC team was present in purple, but we must admit that our student governance far exceeds our volley ball playing abilities!
- Congratulations, too, to the Innovations team on a very well organized project. We hope you had fun at the "SRC House of Horns Party" at The Suite this weekend.
- We have had a number of enquiries about SASCO's student parliament. The SRC hopes to meet with SASCO this week and we welcome any more feedback from our societies.

Just a reminder, coming up to exams, that the Counselling Centre is open in the Student Union Building next to the SRC Offices. Please take full advantage of this facility



with enough information so that if they are raped, they will be able to deal with it adequately.

Various events have been planned in conjunction with societies like Out Rhodes, SHARC, TAC and debating. Carrie Shelper, the head of POWA a body which defended the complainant in the Zuma trial, will be hosting various seminars throughout the week. A seminar will be held by the law department to discuss where legislation stands on the issue and how bodies like POWA are attempting to change it. There will be a movie evening where a film which focuses on rape-related issues will be screened. Ribbons and pepper spray will be sold. Students are also encouraged to add their voice, for a small price, to the SRC's Rape Awareness graffiti wall which will be organized for the week. All the money raised will be donated to a rape-related centre in Grahamstown. The SRC would like to use some of the money raised to make after-rape survival kits to be donated to the SAN and Settler's hospital.

Can you get ARVs from the SAN? If you, in a drunken state, say yes but wake up feeling no is that rape? Can a man be raped? What is rape? How informed are you? The SRC's Rape Awareness week hopes to undress these cloistered, closeted misconceptions.

SRC Academic Support

Coming up to exams, the SRC has been focusing on academic related issues at the University. From the retrieval of lost DPs to queries about the timetable, we have been working hard to ensure that your academic life is as stress free as we could possibly make it!

The SRC (thanks to your e-mails and feedback) have noticed a gap in the formal structures of the University with respect to student mentoring and academic facilitation. We believe that student-to-student academic initiatives can be really beneficial and so have developed the following 2 programs: the "Not Home Alone Project" and "Student-to-Student". Brief descriptions of both proposals are below, and if you would like a copy of the entire thing, please do not hesitate to e-mail academic@src.ru.ac.za. We will be happy to e-mail you a copy.

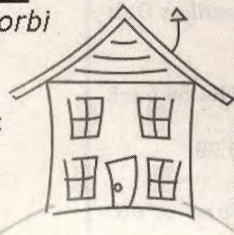
Not Home Alone Project

By Nadine Dzambo & Fatema Morbi

Currently, there are no formal structures in place for academic support in most residences at Rhodes. In residences which do have some sort of existing support structure, in the form of mentoring representatives, there is inadequate accountability for these portfolios.

Many students experience anxiety due to academic workload. The counselling facilities are available to students however, they are underutilized for this purpose. In an attempt to establish a foundation for the promotion of academic development through peer support, the SRC Academic and Residence councillors would like to propose the "Not Home Alone" project.

The SRC proposes a pilot project to be implemented in residences to provide an academic support structure for students living in residence. The program is intended to run throughout the year, with particular emphasis on the period before the examinations, excluding swot week. Through this project, we hope to make a positive contribution to academic performance in residences. In addition, we would like to encourage students to use the counselling facilities available to deal with any emotional and psychological stress that may be experienced. All requiring the close cooperation of the house wardens, students and the SRC.



Student 2 Student Program

By Mike Winn, Fatema Morbi & Evan Ford

At present, there are no specific examination preparation facilities available to students within the University. We, as the SRC, feel that there is not only a need for this, but that a realisable opportunity also exists. This will involve the identification of student leaders capable of effectively communicating to their peers, to conduct a series of lectures summarising relevant examination material. This program will result in better prepared students and the development of future tutors.

The SRC proposes a pilot project, which will result in the formulation of a student initiated structure, supplying academic assistance to their peers. Due to the novelty of this program, the task team believes it necessary to focus on a selected range of subjects, leaving room for future expansion.



SRC Rape Awareness Week: Affirming Your Right to Say No!

By Nicole Hyman

JZ's contribution to South Africa's score of HIV-AIDS related talismans belongs in Manto Tshabalala-Msimang's cabinet alongside her African potato and garlic. Yet maybe it is time to see such traditionalistic politics as the spoon full of sugar which helps the message go down. For it cannot be disputed that Zuma's safe-sex shower argument and the trial in its entirety has brought the issue of rape to the fore.



The trial has placed focus on one's rights where rape is concerned. It has also made people question why the victim is the one who is a sheep in a wolf-crying kanga.

The SRC will be hosting the rape awareness week from 21st to 26th May.

The week lacks the preachy undertones of scorched-earth advertising and other awareness weeks which aim to shock and reform rapists. Education and the old truism, knowledge is power, are the aims of the week. The SRC hopes that this week will provide students

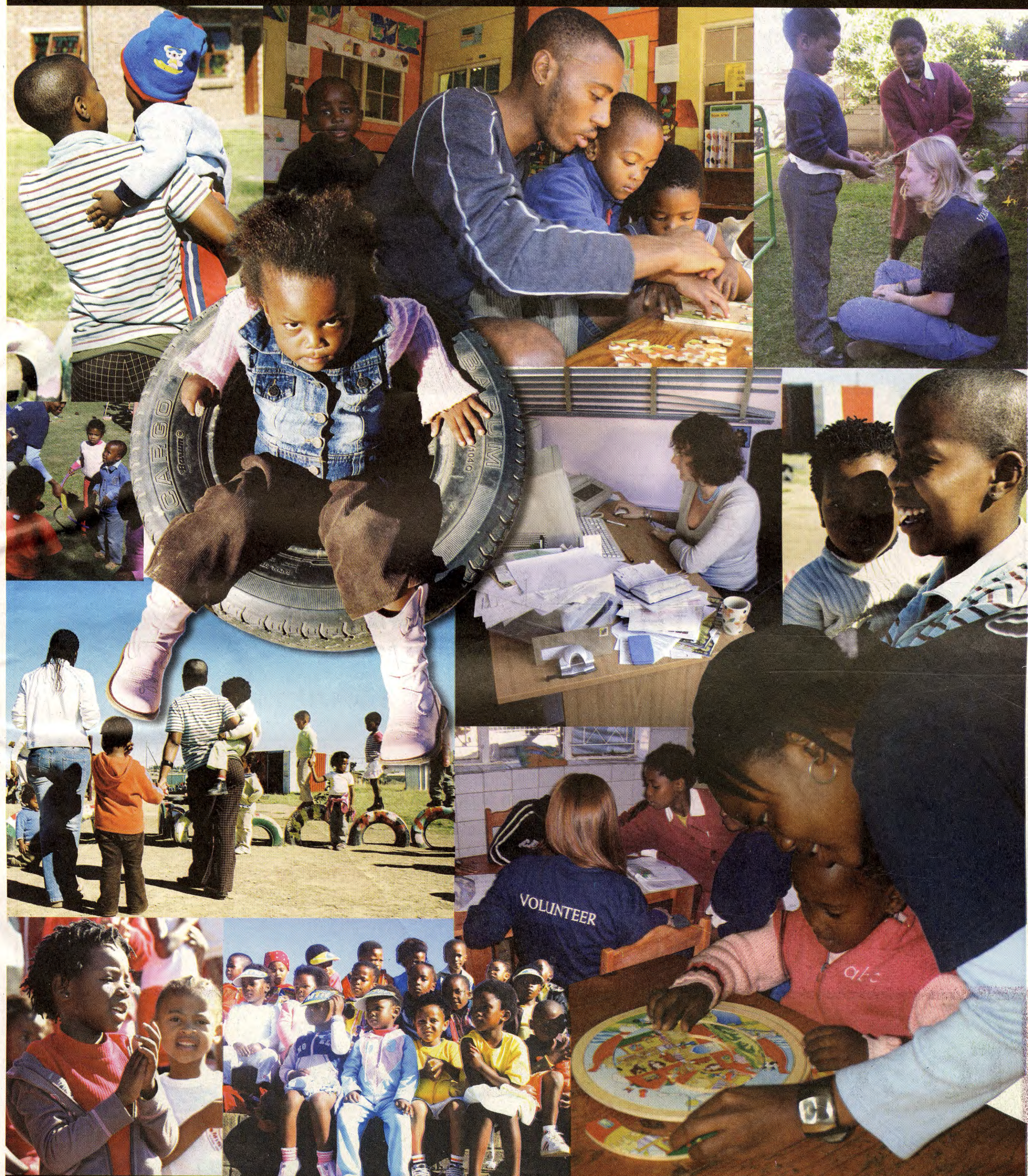
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Oarsome success for rowers

■ Fleur Rollason and Charlotte Songatshu

Known for their tight trisuits and mad boatrace parties, the Rhodes rowers have got the year off to a good start. Rhodes took part in the SASSUR (South African Student Sports Union for Rowing) regatta in the April vac, at Vanderkloof Dam in the Free State.

The men's and women's A and B crews took part in the event. Rhodes rowed against universities including Wits, Tuks and UCT. Despite the windy weather our crews occupied many of the first and second places, coming second overall out of the nine universities that competed.

Some members of the men's and women's A crews received SASSU colours and were selected for the Blues and Grudge crews – the national student crews. The women's Blues four crew was made up entirely of Rhodes women.

The rowing did not end at SASSUR.

Next on the list was the South African Championships, which took place at Roodeplaat Dam near Pretoria on May 6 and 7.

Once again the Rhodents outdid themselves, taking some of the top positions in the regatta with the men's B quad and women's B quad winning gold.

The women's A eight came second after the Mixed Boat Clubs crew and the men's A eight came third after Old Eds (first) and Ravens/Victoria Lake Club.

Philip Brierley, president of the South African Student Sports Union for Rowing and Rhodes rower who took part in the regattas said, "Rhodes rowing in 2006 is once again strong. We've lost some numbers on the men's side but the women's side has grown enormously and there are lots of promising novices."

"We fielded four full 8+es at the SASSU Sprints regatta held recently. In terms of results, both the men and



The men's second eight (left) carry their boat to the water at SA Champs. The women's first eight (right) prepare to dominate SA Champs

■ Murray Chandler



women are doing well."

Brierley has been rowing since 1998, when he started at St Stithians in Johannesburg and rowed in the A 8+ for four years.

He was awarded honours for rowing in 2002 and 2003. He rowed for

Gauteng in 2002 and 2003, and was selected for the junior SA national side in 2003 for the World Champs held in Athens. He was awarded the Old Rhodian Bursary to Rhodes in 2004. Brierley has rowed in the A 8+ for the past two years and was

selected for the SASSUR Grudge Crew in 2005.

While the sprint season (2km races or less) has ended, training will soon begin for Boatrace in September. Men's crews row 6km and the women's crews row 4km.

Rhodents cycle in le tour de Grahamstown

■ Ian Siebörger

Adam Cripwell from Rhodes came third in the One Life 80.4 cycle race held on May 6. He finished just under 10 minutes behind Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University's Conrad Viljoen, who won the race. Anriette Schoeman from Port Elizabeth came second.

The race started and finished at the Grahamstown Golf Club.

The 80.4km main race ran down towards Bedford as far as Carlisle Bridge, where riders turned around and took the same road up Hespooort Pass (which lived up to its name) and back to Grahamstown. A shorter 34km race was also held.

Extreme weather made the race tougher: the temperature varied

between 9 and 12°C and a chilly wind blew against the riders on their way back up Hespooort. Cripwell says the wind led to finishing times five to ten minutes slower than he had expected.

Viljoen broke away from the leading bunch about five kilometres after the halfway mark, and Schoeman also rode ahead after the ascent of Hespooort.

Cripwell says, "This left us without a decent group, making it really difficult to close the gap [between him and the leaders]."

Other Rhodes students featuring in the race included Michael Baillie, who came ninth overall; Katherine Thorneycroft, who was the third woman to finish the main race; and Sarah-Faye Johnson, who was the second woman and fourth overall

finisher in the 34km race.

At the finish line, freezing cyclists and spectators warmed themselves around braai fires while listening to live music from River of Life Church's worship band. All finishers were given a medal and a cup of Powerade.

Race organisers Debbie and Susie Radloff said River of Life hosted the race to raise funds for the recording of the band's latest CD.

Cripwell summed up most riders' attitude by saying, "To have a race in G-town is awesome!"

"The organisation was great, and it really is a pity the weather scared people away."

"It was also very impressive to see how many of the local companies and businesses got behind the initiative with prizes and donations."



A lone rider heads towards the finish line on the cold morning

■ Matthew Middleton

Using your head



Matt Esf smashes a tile with his head during the breakathon at the Old Gaol on Friday 12 May. This charity event was in aid of Lizzy White, who is living with cancer. Tiles could be purchased and broken with either weapons or body parts, as demonstrated by members of the taekwon-do Club

■ Anwen Evans

Underwater Club's popularity surfaces

■ Adam Wakefield and Duncan Collins

"The Underwater Club is going from strength to strength every year." These were the words of Valerie Clark, chairperson of the Rhodes University Underwater Club. This year the club has 110 registered members.

The Underwater Club's main activities are underwater hockey and scuba diving courses. Clark explained that the scuba course is run by fully qualified instructors and is approximately two to three times cheaper than commercial diving courses. The instructors are

Phanor Montoya, Niall Vine and Mike Markovina. The price of the course is currently R1 500.

Matthew Stroucken, a second-year student who has just completed the scuba diving course says, "For what you pay and the fact that you earn a lifetime qualification, the diving course is definitely worth it." First-year Nicholas Stroucken agrees. "We went to Kenton for an open-water dive. I've never been so cold in my life but it was an awesome experience."

Apart from the scuba course, underwater hockey is also gaining momentum. This year there are around 30 regular players taking part. These players form the basis of

the first women's and men's Rhodes sides. Even though both team's results wouldn't set the world alight, Clark did say that for a first attendance, both teams performed extremely well. Clark said the most encouraging sign of improvement in underwater hockey at Rhodes was the great reception that the first inter-res underwater hockey tournament received when held at the end of last term. The atmosphere was festive, and both the women's and men's events were competitive.

Whether it's scuba diving in freezing sea-water or starting a whole new inter-res tournament, it seems that the Underwater Club is making a splash on campus.

Running away with Rhodes athletics

■ Warrick Smith

The second Saturday of the new term had the road-runners at it with the Settlers Half-Marathon and Ultra-Marathon. Five Rhodents found the willpower to enter the half-marathon and two of them, Mike Irwin and Matt Gibb, participated in the ultra-marathon.

Unlike the Two Oceans or Comrades, this race fields less than 200 runners. Irwin jokingly claimed, "It can become very lonely."

For the half-marathon Eric Mapara, Christy Budler, Tim Stones, Layle Henderson and Nicola Craig finished in good times but the absence of Captain Garyn Rapson was felt. Rapson sustained an injury from the Two Oceans Half-Marathon in April.

This past weekend saw many of our women athletes running the most popular race in the province, the Spar Ladies' 10km Challenge.

The race fielded more than 1 000 women, with our ladies doing exceptionally well. Emma Dempster

was the first Rhodent home, coming 17th overall in a time of 43min 44sec, closely followed by Christy Budler who came 21st.

Other entrants from Rhodes were Eloise Marais, Briar Ingram, Faye Harrison, Lauren Higgs, Suzanne Delport, Ceileigh McKersie, Helen Kean and Kate Selwood.

The Spar Ladies' Race holds the record for the most entrants for a race series in South Africa, even larger than the number of entrants for the Comrades.

From left field



■ Tim Hancox

Dedicated football fans are preparing to face their fears as we await the clash of the FIFA World Cup with Rhodes University exams. This sporting showcase kicks off in Germany on June 9 and fans are frantically working their study time-tables around the fixtures. This year the same old suspects are favourites. Brazil heads the charge with their inspirational playmaker, Ronaldinho.

On Rhodes campus there is a lot of support for the English side that contains a few surprises from their manager, the ever-charismatic Sven-Goran Eriksson. The trend of introducing teenage strikers is back with the shock inclusion of Theo Walcott who has yet to make his first team debut for Arsenal. The World Cup will also give South Africans an indication of what the tournament should look like, before the 2010 embarrassment arrives. No doubt it will resemble the disappointment of the Athens Olympics in comparison with the spectacular Sydney event.

On the footballing note, let me add that the mighty Reds reclaimed the FA Cup from a resilient West Ham side. Following recent tradition, the Liverpool side came back from behind in a cup final to level the scores at 3-3 with the Hammers. This was after a last-minute 30-metre screamer of a goal from Steven Gerrard. Then, as they did in last year's Champions League final against AC Milan, the Liverpool men won in an exciting penalty shoot-out. As a Liverpool fan myself, is this column a biased review of a victory by the greatest club in the world? No, I hear you all cry!

Moving swiftly to the rugby front, the Super 14 is heading towards its conclusion, with the semifinalists decided. The Bulls snuck through the back door to rain on the Sharks' parade. Sharks supporters would only just have recovered from their hangovers after celebrating the Sharks' victory over Western Force (I speak from experience on this point), when the Bulls did the seemingly impossible and beat the Stormers by the 32-point margin required to earn them the final spot in the semis.



Marli Vlok fires off a few rounds, honing her impressive skills with a rifle (left) and proudly sports her South African blazer (right)

■ Pic supplied, portrait Joni Els

Local shottist aims global

2006 is a year Rhodes' top woman rifle shooter and Commonwealth Games competitor, Marli Vlok, will always remember.

■ Siobhan Louw

In March, Marli Vlok represented South Africa as one of the country's top two woman rifle shooters at the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, Australia.

The selection process for the Commonwealth Games included three trials, held in three different locations over eight months. The top two men and women were selected to represent South Africa in Melbourne.

Vlok was given three weeks off her academic course to compete in the Commonwealth Games where she, along with friend and teammate Esmari van Reenen, competed in the women's 50m prone event. "The experience was incredible. It was an honour to be surrounded by the best international shooters at such a well-organised event."

The South African team did not do as well as hoped. "My rifle packed up without me really realising," said Vlok. The women's team came seventh overall: "We should have done better, but hopefully we will get to go again and improve on our performance."

The Commonwealth Games was the biggest competition Vlok has yet competed in and it made a lasting impression on her: "I realised that I'm a really, really small fish in an extremely big ocean. It was quite an overwhelming experience and it showed me that I still have a lot to learn."

For Vlok, what really made the experience one she will always remember was the incredible spirit she experienced. "There's a reason they are called the Friendly Games. The spirit was phenomenal and the competitiveness was always friendly."

Together with winning Rhodes Sportswoman of the Year in 2004, Vlok's previous achievements include her selection in the SA junior women's team. She was selected as a member of the senior Protea team and was 2005's number one woman shottist in SA. She is the top shooter in the Eastern Cape and has also travelled to India for the Afro-Asia Games. Vlok has also received her Rhodes honours for smallbone rifle shooting.

Vlok first started shooting in her Grade Eight year, when her father was the shooting coach at her high school, PJ Olivier. Being an only child with no brothers, Vlok followed her father's lead and discovered her strong shooting interest.

Her passion for shooting is inspired by her father who has supported her interest and success. Vlok is driven by the support she receives from her

family and friends, but also by herself and her ambition always to strive to achieve her best. "I don't like not being good at something and there is always the drive to do better. I guess I'm searching for the perfect score."

Vlok trains at least three times a week. "The new facilities allow me to practice after dark, which means it's all after hours." She also does as much shooting as possible over weekends. Vlok tries not to let her shooting interrupt her academic time and commitments.

"The Commonwealth Games was a personal lifetime achievement; it's always been something I've wanted to do." With the Games behind her, Vlok will be slowing down for the remainder of 2006. "The University and SA Champs are opportunities that will come around again. I need to focus on my Microbiology Honours course."

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