

IClicker misses the mark

by Jeremy Tremblay,
The Cord Weekly
(Wilfrid Laurier University)

WATERLOO (CUP) -- Today's university classrooms simultaneously resemble and are completely different than those of the past. A glance at 1E1, Laurier's dated yet somewhat famous lecture hall, suggests not much has changed over the past few decades.

That would be a fair statement if we overlooked the impact of technology. The students of yesteryear were without computer workstations, WebCT, online slides and countless other technologies that are part of their learning experience.

As helpful as many of these technologies are, sometimes instructors are too quick to jump onto the technology bandwagon. The IClicker is a fine example.

The system uses radio frequency transmitters and a base for students to chose from five options labeled A to E. Some instructors see this as the solution to making large classes interactive.

But I didn't come to university to push buttons. No matter how much effort is placed into writing meaningful questions, they're still multiple-choice. They may provoke thought, but the question on its own would have the same effect. Pressing a button had

nothing to do with the value of the question.

Often, marks are assigned to questions. Maybe it's just me that missed the point, but where is the value in assigning marks to students' understanding before they've been given a chance to ask questions and compare readings to lecture notes?

In a 2006 interview with the CBC, University of Calgary chemistry instructor, Ashley Causton said "I know I wouldn't do too well with that system, because I have to go away, read the material on my own, think about it myself, then understand it myself."

The academic values of the IClicker system aren't even highlighted by the product's website. It goes through a number of points explaining that the system is easy to use for administrators, students and instructors alike. It also says the IClicker is the most flexible reliable classroom response system available and that it is "the only solution created for educators, by educators."

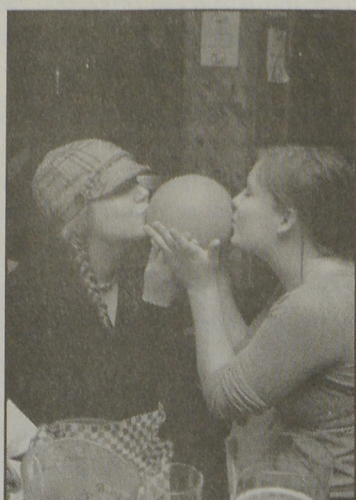
It's time for the IClickers be scaled back. Its best use is making sure students understand material being covered in a lecture so that instructors know when to slow down.

It can also save time by being used as an attendance-taking tool, though whether or not attendance should be used for marks is another argument.

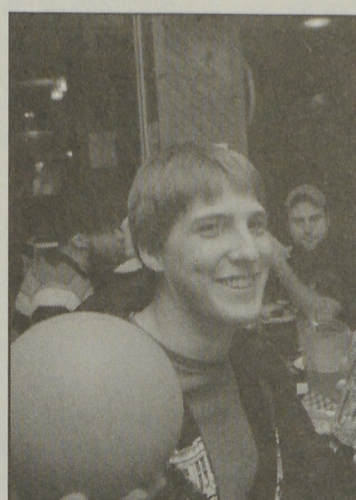
Despite the many advantages of technology, we all need to remember that it isn't always for the better. For its few advantages, the IClicker holds its share of downfalls.

THE BRUNS VIEWPOINT

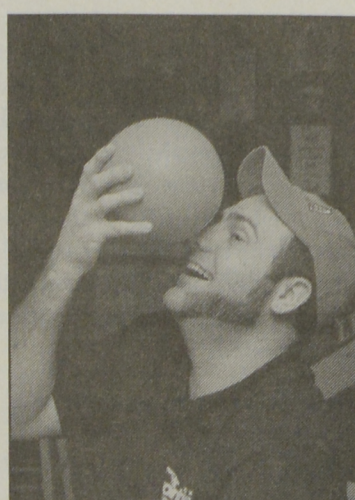
What would you do if you had a blue foam ball?



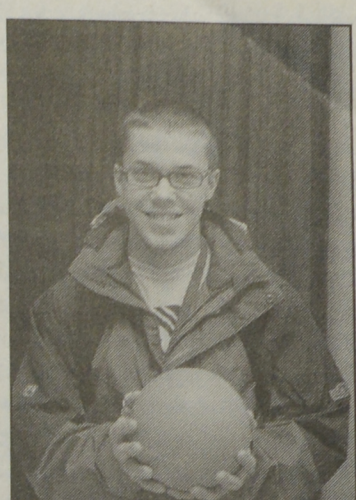
We would double cheek it
Aime Faloon and Katie Oulton



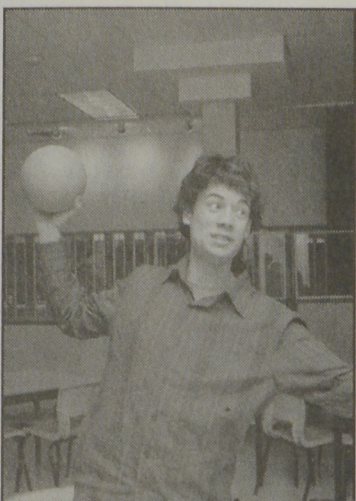
What wouldn't I do
Andrew Clarke



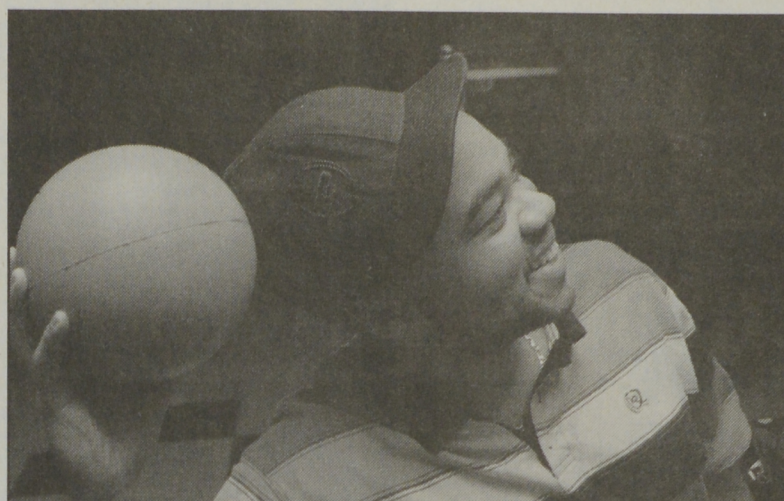
Bark like a seal
Graham Loungborough



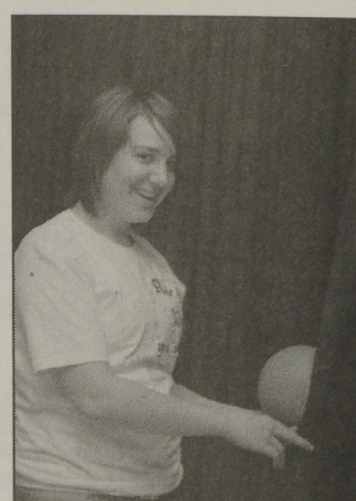
Make friends with it
Jeff Shaw



Throw it at someone's head
Justin Chan



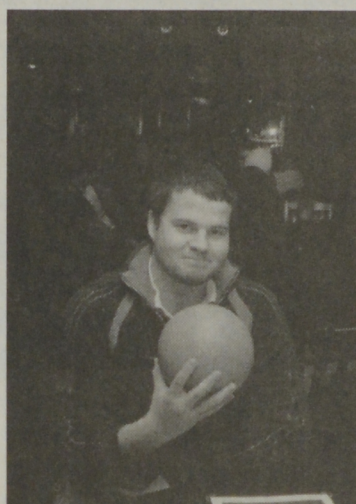
Throw it
Eric "HiC" Dunning



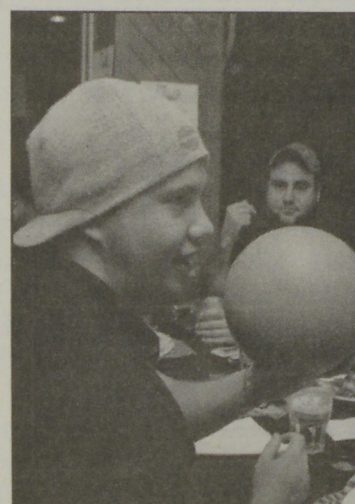
I'd hide it
Krista Carney



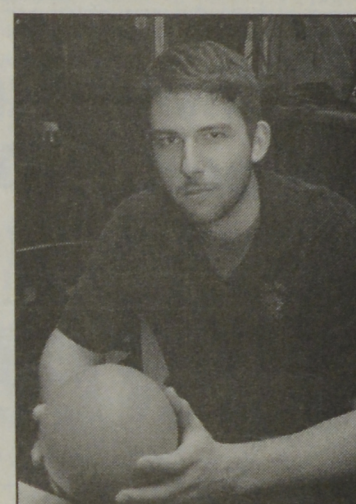
Tell my mom I'm pregnant
Laura Legere



I'd throw it at my picketing profs
Mark Brown



I'd make it disappear
Kris Gohn



Play dodgeball with it
Mark Fraser

be a pal. come meet us.



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sub rm. 35

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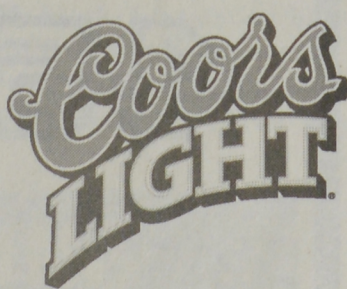
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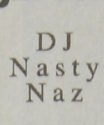
Ladies Night Too (must pay cover to receive Zee Cash)
www.myspace.com/nickyzees

WEDNESDAY
Molson Midweek Mayhem

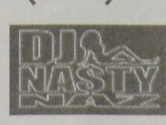
\$2.00 Canadian, Canadian Light, Cold Shots
\$2.25 Rum, Rye, Gin, Vodka
\$2.00 Coors Light Draft (16oz)



DJ Fuji



DJ Nasty Naz



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Thursday Feb 7th Classified with Chad Hatcher, J-Bru, and Mike Boyd
Valentines Day night--Thursday Feb.14th special Charity Show with mystery DJ...
Sunday Feb 17th illScarlett with Age of Daze. Tix avail Jan.23rd

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