

● A few more hours and I could have died

● Jones defies doctor's orders

# SU President blood clot scare

By James Doughty  
NEWS EDITOR

SU PRESIDENT, Chris Jones is recovering after suffering a "near fatal" blood clot over Christmas.

Jones was rushed to hospital after feeling unwell and then losing the use of one of his legs before being diagnosed with Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT).

"I started feeling ill towards the end of last term, and then began having pains down the side of my body. I thought it was just a pulled muscle but I finally decided to go to the doctor after I completely lost the feeling in one of my legs."

Jones underwent an urgent operation to remove the clot lodged in his leg vein. Surgeons

were able to successfully remove it before the clot had chance to break off and travel through the body where it could have lodged in the lungs or even the brain and caused a stroke in the 21 year old.

DVT resulting from any prolonged travel in a confined space, or so called 'economy class syndrome' hit the headlines last year, after customers brought compensation claims against major air carriers. However, the embolism in Jones' leg is not thought to have been brought about by travelling.

DVTs are rare in young people, usually occurring in those aged over 40 and if left untreated, up to one in ten people who suffer a pulmonary embolism like this die as a result.

"I couldn't believe this was

happening to me, I'm 21 for God sake." "I could have died it was that serious". "I am just thankful to be alive, it could have been so different."

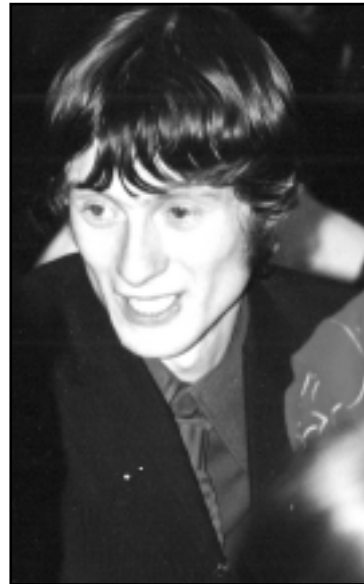
Jones was reunited with his family on Christmas Eve, after being conditionally released from hospital. "They said they would let me out if I learned to administer injections into my stomach. It didn't take long to decide. I grabbed the needles and ran." "It was the best Christmas present I could have given to my family. Simply to get out of hospital and return home" he said.

Jones says he is determined not to let the health scare interfere with his gruelling Presidential timetable and has defied the medical advice of doctors to stay off work. "I worked

until ten every night last week."

Jones' health worries have come at a difficult time for the popular president. He together with key members of the SU team are attempting to revolutionise the archaic system of voting in UGM's through an electronic vote. However, a quorate UGM is needed to pass the proposals through. Jones despite his injuries has been aggressively promoting the event which takes place on Tuesday week 3. "All this stress and moving from place to place is against doctors orders but I just want to forget about my problems and get on with my job" he added.

Jones will need the support of crutches and regular check-ups for up to several months.



Pained: SU President Chris Jones

# Clarke tells *nouse*: We must succeed on fees

By Toby Hall  
EDITOR

TONY BLAIR'S premiership hangs in the balance this week as Charles Clarke's controversial top-up fees scheme becomes a vote of confidence for Downing Street. However, Clarke managed to keep the central issues in sight as he briefed a select group of student representatives and journalists at the London Labour HQ in an attempt to gain support for the new Higher Education Bill.

Admitting that "the current system is failing students" and that university funding in Britain is in a dire state, he said that radical reform was inevitable to prevent our higher education system from collapsing. However, despite pressure from students and

backbenchers alike Clarke told *nouse* that the Government's top-up fees scheme was the only option. "I believe that people should pay their way through life" he said, outlining the new post-graduation repayment plan of up to 25 years, after which the debt would be written off.

This clear message was aimed at those within the student movement and his own party who were hoping to see the return of grants to counteract the £30,000 of debt Barclays Bank estimate each student will graduate with.

NUS president Mandy Telford responded angrily after the meeting, claiming that the proposals were "disastorous and would deter thousands from higher education". Clarke has admitted that "the disincentive effect of course price is real", but main-

tained his bullish mood. "We're living in a different world now" adding that this was a "period of transition, the reforms are not completed yet".

Despite fears that the initial £3,000 fee would open the gates for American style rises in the future Clarke emphasised that there was no "hidden agenda" to allow this.

However, the Government's refusal to admit to breaking a manifesto pledge by introducing the bill has led many to distrust the claim. "I doubt if anyone here has been convinced" said Telford, accepting that while many of the proposals such as deferred payment would benefit students, variable fees will always leave students choosing education by price.

## Student discovers unique York beetle



YORK UNIVERSITY student Duncan Sivell has been invited to the Royal Entomological Society in London to present his findings on York's very own insect - the tansy beetle.

Following his presentation at the RES's northern postgraduate forum, Duncan will be presenting his findings at a meeting at the Society's Kensington headquarters on Wednesday 4 February.

The tansy beetle is similar to a large ladybird, except it is bright iridescent green, and it lives on tansy, a wild herb common to riverbanks all over the country. Everywhere else the beetle is teetering on the verge of extinction. But in York it is remarkably increasing.

Through his studies, Duncan has been trying to find out why the beetle is thriving

in York and yet elsewhere in the country numbers are plummeting.

"We think it may be something to do with York's riverbanks flooding," suggests Duncan. "It's not that the beetle likes water - it's a leaf beetle - but that flooding disturbs the ground which encourages the plant. We also think flooding may discourage the beetles' predators."

Duncan has now completed his PhD, but luckily another post-graduate student is going to take over the quest for the solution to the anomaly.

### Links

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## The fees proposals broken down

- **Deferred payment**  
Upfront fees to be abolished for all students
- **25 year cap on debt**  
all outstanding debts written off 25 years after graduation
- **Student loan to cover some living costs**  
loan increases for all students to help cover the basic cost of university life
- **Loans, fees and living rolled together**  
graduate pays one contribution based on money earned, not money owed, all interest free
- **Variable fees**  
Universities to charge between £0 and £3000 for each course
- **Ringfenced money for universities**  
all money raised through fees will go to university, estimated at an extra £1 billion
- **Minimum £3,000 for poorest students**  
30% to receive full grant, low earning families will have means testing for grants
- **Repayments linked to earnings**  
paid through tax system, beginning when graduate earns over £15,000