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## Biology Curators Group Newsletter

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molluscs and eggs which have been stored in particular enclosed environments. The acetic and formic acids evolved by the woods and adhesives used to fabricate storage cabinets react with agents within the objects to form complex salts - typically a calcium acetate formate hydrate or molluscs. This 'storage cabinet chemistry' is discussed in detail and it is relevant to note an intensification of investigation in this field with the award of a research studentship in the University of Glasgow Chemistry Department to take this further. The project 'Analytical Studies of the Decay and Conservation of Museum Artifacts' has Glasgow Museums as its co-operating body.

In the same issue Philip Howard, taxidermist at the National Museums of Scotland, describes the methods used to prepared specimens for the new fish gallery. Practical details are given on moulding techniques, casting and painting the completed fish.

What could turn out to be a very influential paper was published by Mark Gilberg in **Studies in Conservation** vol. 36 no 2 (May 1991) on the effects of low oxygen atmospheres on museum pests. Laboratory cultures of *Tineola bisselliella*, *Lasioderma serricornis*, *Stegobium paniceum* and *Anthrenus vorax* were exposed to low oxygen atmospheres (0.4% oxygen, the balance nitrogen) at 30°C for three weeks. Complete mortality was observed for all developmental stages. These findings are discussed in terms of offering a viable alternative to conventional chemical fumigation. The experiment used a prepared oxygen : nitrogen gas flow to produce the atmosphere under test, but it is noted that oxygen scavengers are available which can easily reduce oxygen in enclosed atmospheres to less than 0.4% by volume.

**Studies in Conservation** (36) contains an article titled 'The use of a commercial pheromone trap for monitoring *Lasioderma serricornis* (F.) infestations in museum collections' by Mark Filberg and Alex Roach. The studies were performed in the Australian Museum anthropology collections using pheromone traps made by Fuji Flavor Co. Ltd, 3-5-8 Midorigaoka, Hamuramachi, Nishitama-gun, Tokyo 190-11, Japan.

The authors found the traps to be very useful and were able to detect infestations at an early stage. They were no use for controlling the pests, because only male beetles were attracted. The traps were baited with both pheromone sex attractant and food attractant, but the effectiveness of the food attractant was not evaluated.

Pesticides used included CIG Pestigas 0.4%

Pyrethrins Insecticide, Ficam W Insecticide and Wellcome DIA CON\*IGR, none of which I am familiar with. The paper also points out that pheromone research on other museum pests would be valuable, but is not available.

Steve Garland, Bolton Museum

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## BCG SPORT

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### Sir Rat: the Final Whistle?

The rat has been silenced! Well, muffled anyway. I've never been one to hold back but I have to admit that the latest batch of news from the league contains some very sensitive stuff: items which really shouldn't be allowed to go any further than these four damp and slimy walls. Items passed to me in the strictest confidence. You know the sort of things - succulent, juicy, embarrassing and libellous! I'm just sorry that I can't share them with you. Well, not unless you promise that they'll go no further. OK, then this is for your eyes only.

What about young David Alias then? Up before the beak for nobbling the under-pitch heating system at Lakeland Town - allegedly? All for a good cause apparently. Fed up with playing on a filthy brown mud covered pitch he wanted to see the return to natural frozen grass during the winter months. Retaining the appearance of 'Green peas' I think he said, but I could be wrong. He realised that longer studs would have been simpler but not as environmentally friendly - allegedly. I can't help thinking that his case would have been stronger if he hadn't been filmed doing it for Match of the Day.

While on the subject of the environment, how many of you consider industry to be part of the sports scene? Well, it would seem that the Scots do. A board room leak at Celtic allegedly suggests that a new team structure is afoot to bring the two together. I can't see it working myself. All that heavy machinery cutting up the pitch. Facilities to accommodate team reserves alongside ship welders may be required, whilst during a match extra hooters are sounded for 30 minute tea breaks and union meetings. I ask you! ... Hang on this doesn't sound too bad! I wonder what the Rangers service will make of it. Who knows, if it catches on we might find Steve Coppel a manager of the people's palace!

Rumours are also abounding that Brighton and Hove Albion are to drop part of their team next season for the usual reasons. Expense before experience again. When will they learn that you simply can't climb the first division and bring the crowds back without the players to back it up? Perhaps I'm being unfair. Maybe the reason they want the captain out is because they can't pronounce his name over the P. A.?

On the recent U. E. F. A. visit to Burnley it was gratifying to see the specially laid on exhibition about the wonderful world of football. Many historical old faces were there but there was strangely no mention of yours truly. What have I ever said about Burnley that might make them leave out the greatest moment in the history of the game - when I picked up the ball and ran, thus spawning a whole new concept .... called 'penalty for hand-ball'?! Talking of doing a runner; it looks like Gordon McGregor Banks has upped and left recently promoted Horniman aquarists for Chester Zoo of all places. I think he's seen 'Bedknobs and Broomsticks' too often for his own good. Animals don't really play soccer Gordon, it was only a cartoon! My scouts have tipped me on who they want to replace him but I refuse to enhance anyone's ego through this column so I'll leave you guessing.

I'm not one to start rumours of course but is there something Bruce Langridge ought to tell us? No sooner has he taken up the position of groundsman at Oldham than Jane 'is it a squirrel' Mee is off to Ludlow - allegedly.

There's just so much going on this year that it's hard to keep up. Both the annual training camp and forthcoming challenge cup in Madrid look set to reveal some new international talent. Let's hope that there's still the money around next year to keep them on the circuit. So many just seem to be in it for the money these days. No wonder they all end up as leisure consultants. Let's hope that the House of Lords come to the conclusion that the basic skills are what we need to emphasise and recommend some increased funding. (Income taxonomy??)

The new 'Players Manual' should help to establish some ground rules to bring back the quality. Although some of the tales I've heard about its production might not give you that impression. Suffice to say that the final draft (leaked by a mole - they have such unpleasant habits) looks great despite being originally written by a bunch of ~~dyxtestiscs~~ ~~Desliekszits dextrix~~ drunks!

One other publication which caught my attention was the leaflet on Players Welfare. I particularly like the

graphic illustration of the dangers of staring closely at floodlights. The Glasgow floods seem particularly mesmerizing, if a little small.

There's so much more I could tell you but space and attention spans are limited. One final bit of news which will sadden the hearts of you both ... if not the editor ... is that Sir Rat is hanging up his boots. Not because of increased censorship or severe editorial policies but because I can't handle the fame anymore. I just wish to crawl back to my little sewer and live on past glories. Lying to my grandchildren without fear of contradiction or libel actions. This is the end, allegedly,

'Bye  
Sir Rat 'you wouldn't let it lie' Buzzbee

The fact that both the editor and Sir Rat have retired simultaneously is purely coincidental - honest!



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