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## There are no mugs at Sky - Times competition.

By Michael Knipe.

Michael Knipe reports on the broad range of exciting projects, in fields as varied as songwriting, charity funding and virtual entrepreneurship, marked by the latest Times Student Awards

As part of his prize last year, Hugh Miles, from Trinity College Dublin, won work experience with Sky News. This is his (abridged) diary.

BEFORE the six weeks I spent with Sky News I thought I was a relatively media-savvy guy. I had done work experience with various papers both here and abroad, and I like to keep an eye on new media technology. But as I circulated through the departments, I realised how little I understood.

Every day, it seemed, I witnessed a brand-new project, depending on cutting-edge technology. Everyone was very hospitable. I started my time working with the runner and began to learn basic Sky geography (no mean feat - it all looks identical).

The place that excited me most was the foreign desk, as there one felt most acutely the "connectivity" of people talking to you live from halfway around the world. Early-morning meetings provided a thumbnail sketch of each day's operation.

In my second week I went to the Millbank political office in Westminster, and the road with a journalist and cameraman. It was exciting to see the story we had been working on all morning appear on the telly by lunchtime.

I was particularly lucky at Millbank because the petrol crisis flared up, sending all hands to the pump, including mine. I found myself not just answering calls but even conducting interviews.

After Millbank, Sky Radio provided a quiet couple of days before I moved to the very cyber Sky Active and Sky Online. Here I truly felt on the cusp of the information revolution. I talked to some of the presenters, (Simon McCoy signed my Sky mug) and was struck by how unorthodox a route many of the staff had taken to get there.

My fourth week, in the operations department, made me acutely aware of the gulf between me and those I shadowed. At a pinch, I could stand in as a presenter or a journalist. There is no way on earth I could direct.

In the fifth week I went to Belfast, which was the most enjoyable week of all. In this small office, turning out tons of news, I could really see everything that was happening. It was an education in the unfolding political situation there.

I spent my final week with promotions and publicity. This involved lots of imagination and shmoozing with media contacts. Promotions too looked like fun.

I had a wonderful time with Sky News and am extremely grateful to all concerned.

