My NEA

Hopefully this helps - Slightly Creepily Edited to not have faces involved :) because the internet is big

Leo Hammett - 12/01/24

Why am I here

At your age:

- I had some GCSE grades

- I had got into the school your in

- I had just received an Arkwright Scholarship

- I wanted to work hard but people suggested I drop an A-Level

My Life at Present:

- A*A*AA

- Member of college rowing team

- Somehow probably booked to DJ in front of 1400 people

- Go into quite a decent uni (5/5 offers)

- Got 100% in my NEA

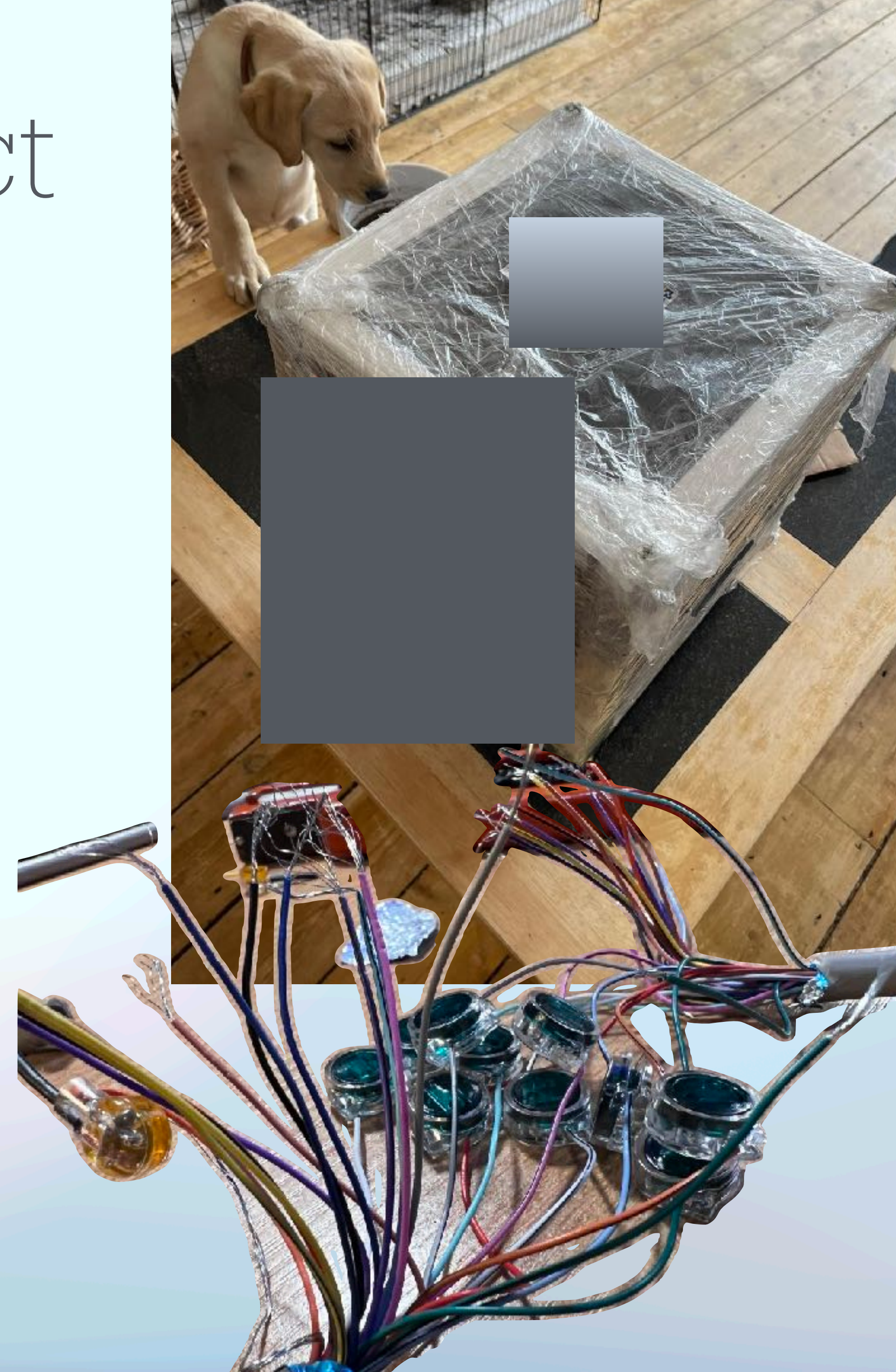- Have an amazing network of friends

So yh, working hard on the NEA (and everything) is good

A bit about my own project

- C# - finished later than python people

- Required lots of independent research for the drivers

- I felt behind on it for ages, until I did it

- I constantly felt that I should change my project as it wouldn't be able to get enough ABC features

- Quite funny how I actually managed to get permission from parents and teachers

The result

How I decided on my project

- For me I was told I needed to pick something I wouldn't get fed up with so I found the one thing.

- In hindsight, I could have probably done an NEA on something I didn't enjoy, so don't stress tooooo much as it is more of a nice to have.

- All open-ended projects can effectively demonstrate high grade abilities, just plan for them to be added, the project choice tends to be more of a theme from what I saw, as most softwares have similar features.

- I would suggest trying to pick something relevant to your university course, as that way you have a paragraph on your personal statement (or whatever it is now), sorted.

My timeline

The picture was taken on 18th of February

- Final details to the code ~Febuary 21st

- Get some form of MVP done over the summer term - for me that essentially meant making a line, crazy

  - First attempts at coding for me were made 20th May 2022

  - I started to finish the initial kind of oh this is possible around 1st august

  - Then I went through a couple different attempts at making the UI before realising that Mrs Blight and Miss Brooke really knew what they were doing when they told us to use C#.

  - Email for support sooner rather than later because they know what they are doing and it was literally the reason I kept going when I was told I was on the right track. And given a tad of direction

- Finished the on February 7th and final touches just being adding in A* features by the 21st

- Finished the write up on the 6th of March 2023 with basically a large chunk of the 7th of February to 6th of March being perfecting the NEA. Literally anything can be achieved with hard work its great.

From my own (uncensored) observations, those people in my year who played games in class, or didn't think the NEA needed to be fully completed when the teachers said so, are at present severely not where they want to be.

How I got 100% - I found the cheat sheet

Just use the syllabus...

Marking criteria

Analysis (9 marks)

Level	Mark range	Description
3	7-9	Fully or nearly fully scoped analysis of a real problem, presented in a way that a third party can understand. Requirements fully documented in a set of measurable and appropriate specific objectives, covering all required functionality of the solution or areas of investigation. Requirements arrived at by considering, through dialogue, the needs of the intended users of the system, or recipients of the outcomes for investigative projects. Problem sufficiently well modelled to be of use in subsequent stages.

Given the syllabus, there is no mystery or luck involved, just hard work.

Other advice for the NEA

- Finish the NEA as soon as possible, id suggest aim for before the end of the Christmas term so if you get unlucky (as many of you will), you can continue after January mocks.

  - If you are doing early entry for university make that a priority and then catch up, do both tho.

- If you go 'oh the teachers are giving me really early deadlines I can technically wait until sometime may to finish it' you will do three things:

1.) unfairly give both teachers pain

2.) Get a low grade in your NEA

3.) Mess up your A-Levels

Things I could have done differently

- I would have spent more time doing it over the summer (and looked after myself by socialising and walking over the break etc, so I stay productive)

- Emailed sooner when things got difficult because the support is so much better when you actually request it.

- Begun the project sooner, with the aim of simply getting parts done.

- ICL rush the analysis and come back to it at the end - none of it needs to be perfect, just good enough. I ended up spending ages on it but not making much progress, may be my own thing but because it was coursework I got perfection procrastination. Just get it done and perfect when you can.

Things I did well...

- Perfected the write up, not just the code (the code can always be improved)

- Threw in (and documented) literally as many features from the ABC table as I could after finishing the project. If in doubt chuck it in

- Respected my teachers

- Made my main goal (at home and when allowed, don't sabotage your exams) to complete my NEA as soon as mocks finished

- Applied to university early and put in a lot of effort, do this over summer if you're only going to do one thing - early entry (October time) is probably the easiest way to 2x or 3x your chances of getting in to a good university/ apprenticeship.

- If you don't like a party/ the vibes are dead, leave it if safe to do so. Even if none of your friends want to leave with you.

- Selected my friends based on if I wanted to be like them or not
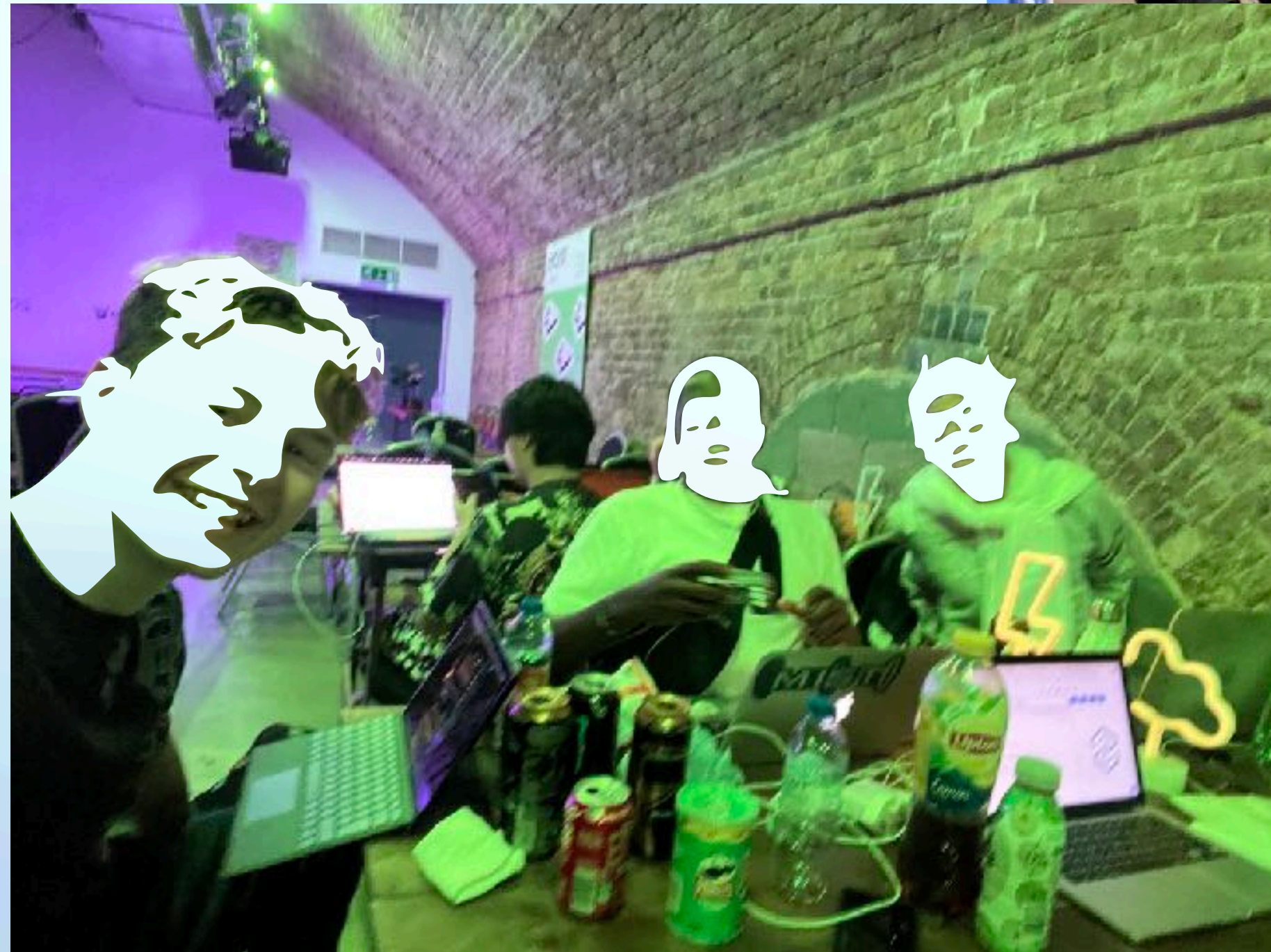
Questions? Ty for listening

Hackathons

easya.io

- Here's a lil CS based shoutout

Quick tips for university / apprenticeships

Tips from someone with 5/5 offers

- Put your NEA in your personal statement (don't say its your NEA)

- Look up the course like once and then find some books on it and look up their summary so you can get vibes for the personal statement (idk if personal statement still exists)

- Apply to oxbridge, even if you don't care, because the school give extra support and early entry gives you a much higher chance of getting in to other universities

- Compare yours to your inspiring friends (because like a true genius you pick your friends based on who you want to end up like) / find good example statements, after you've made a couple drafts, and add any good ideas into your own (obviously not word for word)

- Go to some open days and ask people for tips to getting into the uni, icl everyone loves advice

- Find loads and loads of work experience/easy achievements to put on your list, it also just becomes great fun.

- Ask friends and family for tips with everything, and then pick up on the reoccurring wisdom.

Actually done now, thanks all