

Lean times

Is someone trying to tell us something? Have our contacts in the PR world been spying on PCW journalists as they sneak into the Star Café on the morning toast run? Maybe we're all just getting too self-conscious after receiving not one, not two, but three missives promoting slimming products. First there was a fax for the diet that would see us losing a rather worrying 17 pounds in just seven days. This was closely followed by a promo for the Ultratone Futura: a portable electronic slimming device consisting of four pads strapped to the waist, it sends impulses that cause your muscles to flex. No sooner had this landed on the ChipChat desk than we received notification of CLOtherapy — clothing that actually makes you thin. As the badly-designed web site www.adrenalin.tm explains, wear one of these sweatshirts and the mesh panel running up the back will keep you cold, causing your body to burn more fat in its efforts to keep warm. Any other bizarre get-thin-quick schemes, send them this way. Makes a nice change from get-rich-quick spams.

Kitchen devils

Strawberry Pop Tarts may be a cheap and inexpensive source of incendiary devices. Toasters which fail to eject Pop Tarts cause the Pop Tarts to



► SCORCHING COMBINATION: THE TV/MICROWAVE COMBO IN ACTION

emit flames 10-18 inches in height." With an opening like that, we just had to read on. The "Strawberry Pop Tart Blow Torch" homepage <http://www.sci.tamucc.edu/~pmichaud/toast/>, sister site to Fun with Grapes (the same address, but replace the word "toast" with "grape") was the inspiration for much frenzied activity in the PCW kitchen last week. Two broken microwaves, a broken

Caption Competition

► "The good old days... Thatcher, Wham and Teenyboppers... how we miss them."



"Despite being told never to hug TVs in public, play was interrupted when a stray set walked onto the pitch" was the winning caption in our August competition (below right), from an anonymous entrant. As no prize could be awarded, it is carried over until next month. So, for a chance to win a staggering £40 in book tokens, supply the caption that goes with the picture above. Entries can be emailed to captions@pcw.co.uk, while modem-incompatible submissions should be sent to October Caption Competition, Personal Computer World, VNU House, 32 - 34 Broadwick Street, London W1A 2HG.



toaster and a flame-licked ceiling later, we deduced that maybe this is not the best way to pass an empty lunch hour, and so moved on to www.glubco.com/weaponry/mag.htm, the temptingly-titled "When your microwave stops working the fun begins", a site that demonstrates exactly what it's possible to achieve using components from a broken television when they are combined with the internal workings of a non-functioning microwave oven. Undaunted, we turned to the Twinkies Project www.twinkiesproject.com. Finding Twinkies in London was not an easy task, but once they had been located we were able to recreate the rapid oxidation (burning) and gravitational response (dropping from the roof of our building) tests with moderate success. We were also on the look-out for a new toaster to replace the one we had ruined with our Pop Tart experiments, and happened across the Talking Toaster www.the4cs.com/~corin/cse477/toaster/. No longer, it seems, is it necessary to twiddle with heat-setting dials or even to lower the bread into the machine. The toaster will

instead ask how well done you want your toast, recognising your spoken answers. The only downside is that it seems to be a one-off model. If anyone knows where we can get one, send your ideas this way.

Oops!



■ Our August "Small Business" section stated that BT was the only company installing ISDN2. A list of other installers can be found on the net at www.cable.co.uk. Further, the name Zyxel Cambridge ISDN should have read simply Cambridge ISDN, who can be reached on 01223 495929. ■ In our September group test we quoted £2461 inc VAT at the end of our Lexon review. The real price was £2109 inc VAT, as shown in the features table. ■ Also in the September issue we stated that Eudora Pro Email 4.0 ran on Windows 3.1. In fact runs on Microsoft Windows 95 or Windows NT 4.0 or greater.