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# First Student Majáles

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The first day in May is not just for celebrating spring and international workers day but also a festivity whereby students rejoice in the beauty of student life. Czech Majáles (Rag) is a long run tradition and is historically a student run event that happens every year at the beginning of May. It enjoys the participation of various student clubs and societies as well as individuals sharing their ideas with fellow students.

The day also encourages students to engage with creativity and to compete with other students. The aim of the celebration is to be able to present student life in its authentic character, atmosphere, humor, irony, and its self-reflective nature. The foundations are built using concepts such as freedom and independence to allow for student life to critique and clash with opposing groups easily.

As a way of raising awareness of the importance of this day the students of Charles University organised a parade through the city of Prague to celebrate and share the liberties that students as a social group have. After a number of years, the students of Charles University opted to organize a first real Student Majáles since the 1970s and this year they organised an event solely by and for students, one where there is no entrance fee paid and all students as well as interested public is invited to join. It is aimed to become a renewed tradition as opposite to the commercial Majáles celebrations which are more common in recent years.

The start of the celebrations saw students clothed in fancy dress with banners and signs, gathering on Kampa Island to form their parade. After group pictures and group motivation the students began to chant and walk towards the John Lennon Wall. Passersby looked with curiosity at the students who were celebrating loudly though song and rhymes. The next landmark to pass was Charles Bridge, walking across the famous attraction entertaining the numerous tourists. The parade route then took us to Bethlehem Chapel through to Národní třída. The students spent some time on Wenceslas Square chanting, shouting and entertaining the crowds that were gathered there. The final stage of the parade took us through to Karolinum, the ancient seat of Charles University.

The afternoon saw the university host a variety of concerts, film and theatre performances in the Karolinum building. A selection of bands played throughout, including The A-Bomb, Derelict, Rajtaraj and Vobezdud, each offering a different style of music ranging from punk to folk performances. There was also a range of documentaries that were produced in the Czech Republic and they were shown to the audience including thematic, political and business films. The afternoon also saw a variety of theatre performances including student performances as well as theatre lovers. Various stalls were set up to promote certain student clubs and societies as well as a number of students trying to raise money for a choice of student activities by selling items.

Throughout the day the city sees a number of cafés helping to support Majáles. They do so by offering special Majáles drinks so people can try and discover food and drink in student friendly places across Prague!

The end of the day traditionally hosts the nomination and election of the King or Queen of Majáles.