

CHEER UP FOLKS, IT'S COMEDIANS WEEK IN **THE Sun**

It's rubbish that funny men pull faster. I was always hilarious and didn't get laid until I was 26

Says **JIMMY CARR**



I was in the South of France. I saw a Brownie on a school trip. She was holding up a book. It said on the front "rough guide". I thought: "Yeah, she's not a looker"

I say no to gay marriage. It'll end in gay divorce - and that'll be bitchy

REDUNDANCIES, repossessions and a lack of credit have left us all fearing a long, hard winter.

But Jimmy Carr has his own gallery of gags to beat the credit crunch blues. The comic, who today kicks off a new Sun series to cheer up Britain, quipped last night: "They say the people most affected by the credit crunch are pensioners - well, let go of the handbag then, Nanna." Jimmy is currently touring Britain with his hit stand-up routine and says crowds are flocking to comedy gigs as the economic gloom worsens. "People are unsure of the future so they want to laugh," he explains. "It's pure escapism." "More people are going out to comedy shows than they were before. There's been a real run on tickets. "I go around the country and do a simple gag like, 'The property ladder is now a snake' and get a real laugh."

Crazy
Jimmy, who is a pal of fellow comic Russell Brand, has his own take on the scandal that saw Brand boast on his Radio 2 show about bedding actor Andrew Sachs' granddaughter Georgina Baillie. He says: "I knew Russell in his crazy drug years when we were both starting out. He's a very sweet boy. "The only thing I thought was weird about the whole Sachs debacle was that Russell is a famous lothario but I didn't think she was that hot. "That was the big controversy that no one addressed." Jimmy insists he is jealous of the rise of fame of his namesake, camp comedian Alan Carr. He reveals: "Alan and I started around the same time and we get on very well. "People ask me if I'm related to him and I say, 'Yes, he's my sister'. "Jimmy goes on to confess he was a slow starter when it came to the opposite sex. He says: "Legend has it that funny men have no problem pulling women. But that's rubbish. "I was always hilarious but I didn't get laid until I was 26. "I guess girls just thought I was geeky, or my jokes weren't that funny, or both." But Jimmy did not lose his

By **SALLY BECK**

virginity until so late for another reason - he was a devout Catholic who vowed to stay celibate until he got married. And he found his no-nookie decision liberating, not restrictive. "I was an awkward teenager and not very confident," he says. "I loved the idea of having a girlfriend and being in love but was actually a bit nervous of the real thing. "That was partly down to lack of confidence and partly due to the fact I was really religious and didn't want to have sex before marriage. "That all changed when I was about 25 and I started thinking about religion, which I hadn't thought about for ten years. I thought, 'This is rubbish, isn't it? It's just a made-up story.' I stopped believing overnight." After Jimmy turned his back on religion, he felt a different kind of liberation. "When I stopped believing and started having sex, I felt there was a great weight lifted off my shoulders." Now that he is 36 and with live-in girlfriend Karoline Copping, a TV executive, one might have expected him to be thinking about starting a family. But he says: "I'm a heterosexual man in a very happy eight-year relationship. But part of me is gay. I really like the gay lifestyle of not having kids. "When you look at how creative a lot of the gay community are, not having kids might have something to do with that. It's an incredibly selfless thing to

have kids. It's such a huge sacrifice but such a common sacrifice that people don't make a big fuss of it. "People don't take it lightly - they take the responsibility very, very seriously and parenting is amazingly important and I'm too selfish to do it. My partner feels the same." Jimmy is happy to forgo having a family to concentrate on his amazingly successful career. His Channel 4 panel show 8 Out of 10 Cats is in its seventh series and an eighth is on the cards. We also see him on BBC1 presenting Commercial Breakdown, a collection of the weirdest ads on TV. His fourth DVD, Jimmy Carr In Concert, is out now and his

seven-month tour of stand-up gigs is almost sold out. Jimmy is used to being heckled at live shows. But at a recent gig in Margate he had to face an audience member who stripped off to reveal a nappy made of toilet paper. He said: "It's one of the more bizarre heckles I've had. Sometimes you do a gig and it's fine and sometimes you find yourself feeling like a supply teacher at a special needs school. "That was one of those nights. He was just a guy who was very drunk who made a big fuss of going out of the auditorium into the gents in the second half of the gig, and came back wearing only toilet paper. "I think he won a bet... it was very funny when he walked back in. It summed up Margate, which was really rowdy and fun."

Taboo

Known for gags rather than anecdotes and political comment, Jimmy tells around 290 jokes every show on taboo subjects such as paedophilia, homophobia and rape. A typical joke is: "I saw a headline in the paper: 'Man held after rape'. I thought, 'They cuddled?!'" But the comic insists: "People aren't offended. My audience get my humour, plus there's a balance of light and shade." Jimmy has watched fellow comics such as Brand, Sacha Baron Cohen and Ricky Gervais seduced by Hollywood - and says he would go too. But he admits: "I've had a spectacular lack of offers, which is a slight problem. I don't think there's anyone in Hollywood going, 'Let's get Jimmy Carr.' "If there was, I'd be there in a heartbeat, none of this 'too cool for school, let's turn it down' nonsense. I'd be packing my bags and on the next plane." ● JIMMY'S new stand-up DVD, Jimmy Carr In Concert, is out now, priced £19.99.



CARR'S THE STAR... Jimmy with partner Karoline

TOMORROW: Why Dara O'Briain loves Bridlington

Of the five fruit and veg you're meant to eat every day, I think you know you're fat if you count Jaffa cakes

When someone recommends a book to me and they say it's a page-turner, I always think: "Yeah, I know how books work"