

SUNDAY EXPRESS



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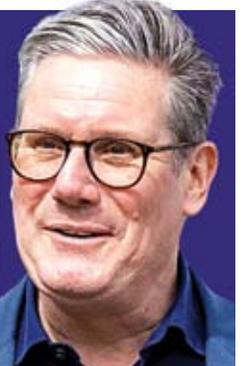


RISHI: WE WILL KEEP UK SAFE



EXCLUSIVE: LEADERS TALK TO

KEIR: I'LL RULE WITH IRON GRIP



SUNDAY EXPRESS 10, 11, 12&13

IT'S JUST KATE TO SEE YOU AGAIN



Princess steps out for first time in six months

SEE PAGES 4,5,6&7

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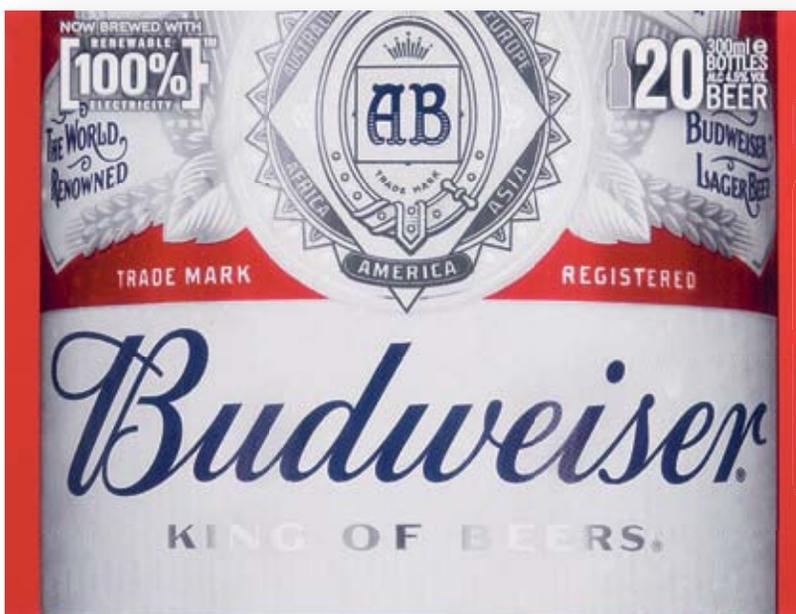
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EURO 2024 KICKS OFF FOR ENGLAND

Beer and new TVs fuel £2.75bn retail boost

FOOTBALL fans are expected to guzzle an extra 20 million pints as Euro 2024 brings a retail boost worth an estimated £2.75billion, writes **Jon Austin**.

Pubs, convenience stores, gift shops and garden and electrical retailers are hopeful of cashing in on a splurge on beer, pizzas, TVs and garden furniture.

British Retail Consortium research suggests six per cent of shoppers will buy a new television or electronic device, four per cent will buy official merchandise, and nearly 10 per cent will host gatherings with booze and food.

Jeff Moody, of the British Independent Retailers' Association, said: "The Euros arriving in the summer months is fantastic timing."



HERE'S TO A WIN: England fans Andrew and Robert Smith, Adam Brown, Jamie Balmer and Lewis Hammond in Dusseldorf. Left, proud supporters in Dortmund

Pictures: ANDY STENNING; JEREMY SELWYN; GETTY; PA



BRING IT HOME, LADS!

From **Jerry Lawton** IN DUSSELDORF and **Jon Austin** IN LONDON

THOUSANDS of England fans arrived in Germany yesterday as Gareth Southgate said his team can win the Euros.

Ahead of England's first group game against Serbia in Gelsenkirchen near Dusseldorf today, Southgate said his side must earn the right to be recognised as one of Europe's elite teams over the next month.

He said: "Everybody recognises that we've got a dangerous team but I don't think they go overboard about that."

"We're a team that can win this – but there are other teams that can win it and so it's about delivering over the period of a month, finding your best form and dealing with the events that happen within tournament football."

Leeds University fashion design student Alexia Zamani, 22, from Oxford, was among the fans arriving in Dusseldorf to cheer on the Three Lions. He said: "I'm really confident. I reckon it's going to be 3-1 and Harry Kane (right) will be on the scoresheet. We have definitely got the players to win the whole thing."

Ryan Morris, 40, has taken son Teddy, 11, out of school for a fortnight to give him the tournament experience – risking an unauthorised absence fine. The pair, from Bristol, drove

FLYING THE FLAG: England supporters in Gelsenkirchen



to Manchester to catch a flight out. Mr Morris said his son, who is approaching the end of Year Six, would "learn more out here than he would at school – it's a life lesson for him and will be a great experience".

Matthew Pugh and Nicholas Panniers, from Hereford, met up in Dusseldorf after Mr Pugh travelled by road and sea, while his friend flew in from a friend's wedding in Cyprus. Mr Panniers, 36,

was "optimistic" England would not only win today but go on to win the tournament.

There are fears violence could flare between rival supporters, and arsonists are believed to have set fire to a fanzone where thousands of England fans will watch the match. Around 1,500 fans fled as the toilet truck in Gelsenkirchen went up in flames.

Firefighters quickly brought the blaze under control and no one was hurt.

One group of England fans from Scarborough, North Yorkshire, had some unexpected guests on their way to Germany, after finding three asylum-seekers hiding in their camper van in Calais.

The fans had set off at 7am on Friday.

COMMENT

By **Lucy Frazer**

CULTURE SECRETARY



FOOTBALL is part of national life. The Premier League has become universal. Wherever you are, you are never far from a fan of one of our great clubs.

Like many Sunday Express readers, I am looking forward to cheering on Scotland and the Three Lions every step of the way. As Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, I'll also be watching closely as we prepare to host the 2028 event.

It will be the biggest sporting event the UK and Ireland have jointly hosted. We have a clear plan to ensure fans feel they have a voice that is respected.

We're investing £320million in grassroots sports, and delivering equal access for women and girls, putting in place the £30million Lionesses Futures Fund and establishing the Board of Women's Sports.

Enjoy the Euros and join me in willing on our teams as they fly the flag for British football.

TROOPING THE COLOUR



By **Emily Ferguson** ROYAL EDITOR

THE PRINCESS of Wales couldn't stop smiling yesterday as she made a spectacular return to public life while continuing her treatment for cancer. In her first public appearance in 173 days she looked happy and in good health alongside her three children and other senior members of the Royal Family as they celebrated the King's official birthday.

Charles, who also has cancer, and his beloved daughter-in-law stood side-by-side on the Buckingham Palace balcony as a striking symbol of unity and defiance against the disease.

Both were diagnosed within a few short weeks at the start of the year and have grown closer as they support each other through their illnesses.

Royal insiders said Kate, 42, spoke personally to her 75-year-old father-in-law to let him know she would be attending Trooping the Colour – her first public appearance since Christmas – and he was “delighted” by the news.

Early photographs yesterday showed the Princess of Wales arriving at Buckingham Palace with her children, Prince George, 10, Princess Charlotte, nine, and Prince Louis, six, ahead of the birthday parade.

Kate looked typically stunning and stylish in a crisp white Jenny Packham dress with black details and matching wide-brimmed hat by Philip Treacy.

Pinned to her chest was the Irish Guards Regimental Brooch as their Colonel.

Her much anticipated appearance came less than 24 hours after the princess shared a deeply moving message about her ongoing cancer treatment.

She said in a statement on Friday that she was making “good progress” but had “good days and bad days” and admitted “I am not out of the woods yet”.

Shortly after her arrival at the palace, she and her children appeared in the glass state coach to deafening cheers and cries from excited crowds in The Mall.

Kate showed no sign of nerves and kept a watchful eye on her brood as they travelled along one of London's most famous thoroughfares, Horse Guards Parade.

Smiling and waving to those gathered either side, they were surrounded by other members of the family.

Kate's husband the Prince of Wales, 41, pictured, was on horseback, as Colonel of the Welsh Guards. He rode alongside the Princess Royal, 73 – Colonel Blues and Royals – and the Duke of Edinburgh, 60, Colonel Scots Guards.

Unlike last year, the King was in a carriage with Queen Camilla, 76, after his

Back in the public eye...it's all smiles from brave Kate



doctors advised him against participating on horseback.

But if he was annoyed by the change it did not show, as he enthusiastically waved to the crowds, beaming from ear to ear.

Their Majesties were preceded by the carriage of the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester and Vice Admiral Sir Tim Laurence. The Duchess of Edinburgh, 59, travelled in a coach with her daughter Lady Louise Mountbatten-Windsor, 20, and the Duke of Kent, 88.

Charles is Colonel in Chief of the regiments of the Household Division – including the Life Guards, Blues and Royals and all five regiments of Foot Guards – who were on parade. Marching with them were the mounted Band of the Household

Cavalry and the massed Foot Guards bands. When the inspection of the Guardsmen in their scarlet tunics and bearskins began, the King cast his eye over the servicemen, who are fighting soldiers when not performing ceremonial duties.

SITTING beside him in the carriage was the Queen in a pale-green silk crepe dress and coat by Anna Valentine and, just like Kate, a Philip Treacy hat. Pinned to her coat was the Grenadier Guards military brooch.

During the pageantry, the colour was trooped through the ranks of soldiers before the guardsmen marched past the King – first in slow then in quick time – with Charles

acknowledging the command of “eyes right” with a salute.

In a change from last year, Kate did not join other senior family members on a dais but watched the spectacle with her children from the Duke of Wellington's former office.

Little Louis got up to his usual mischievous antics and was seen yawning, trying to open a window and dancing to the military music during the pomp and pageantry.

Afterwards the members of the Firm travelled back to Buckingham Palace for their traditional balcony appearance. Stepping out to huge cheers from the thousands gathered outside the steel gates below, they put on a united front as they watched a spectacular flypast by the RAF.

The rain briefly relented and blue skies broke through for the show, which concluded with a spectacular display by the Red Arrows.

Standing shoulder to shoulder with Kate, the King's closeness with his daughter-in-law was clear for all to see. At one point she leaned in to speak to him, prompting them to giggle and share fond glances.

Afterwards Garrison Sergeant Major Stokes, who helped plan the event, said: “I think it's such a nice thing for the Princess of Wales to come and attend.”

“It is probably the only day we see the entire Royal Family together in public, and I think they really appreciate the day as well – it's the closest thing we get in the UK to a national day, so all of that makes it incredibly special.”

Pictures: ANDREW PARSONS/KENSINGTON PALACE, MAX MUMBY, SAMIR HUSSEIN/WIREIMAGE/GETTY, JAMES VEYSEY/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

ROYAL FAMILY MAGIC: Kate beams down at nine-year-old Charlotte during balcony appearance. Left, George, William, Louis, Charlotte, Kate, Charles, Camilla and Sophie watch RAF flypast



Late Queen would have been proud of family's unity

COMMENT

By Emily Ferguson

ROYAL EDITOR



KATE'S return to the public eye was nothing short of spectacular.

Dazzling in a monotone dress with her glossy brunette hair swept back in an updo, the Princess of Wales's first appearance in almost six months looked like any other.

She seemed relaxed, joyful and healthy as she waved to the delighted crowds – who cheered her on as she whizzed past them in a state carriage.

Her eyes were sparkling and she quickly eased back into the role of senior royal and mother, doting on her children – especially mischievous Prince Louis – throughout the parade.

Kate's return culminated in a heartwarming reunion with her father-in-law on the Buckingham Palace balcony.

In a powerful image of solidarity, Kate and Charles stood shoulder-to-shoulder in front of the world's watchful eye.

Beaming at each other and sharing jokes, the pair demonstrated their closeness – which has only strengthened during the unprecedented times they find themselves in.



The late Queen Elizabeth would have been proud at how the family pulled together so magnificently and presented a strong message of unity and resilience.

After Kate's tremendous display at Trooping the Colour, you would be forgiven for forgetting that she continues to undergo gruelling cancer treatment.

The princess herself said that she was "making good progress" and wants "to make the most of feeling well" when her body allows.

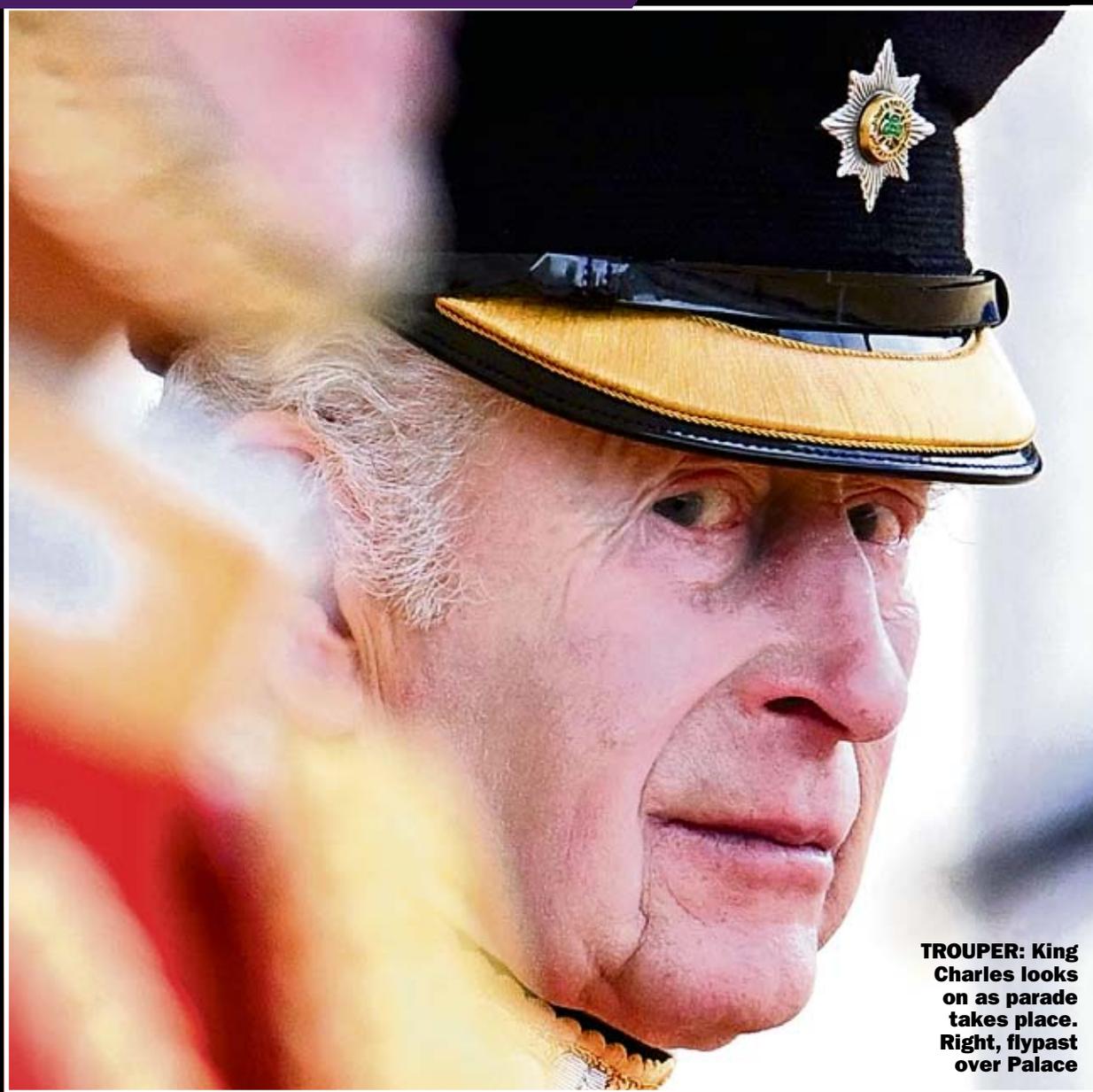
Yesterday was certainly one of her "good" days and it was reassuring for everyone to see her fit so easily back into public royal life.

But her attendance should not be taken for granted, as no day is ever the same when it comes to cancer treatment.

Kate still has months of chemotherapy ahead of her and while she is keen to get involved with her work, the princess must put her health first.

Let's hope the outpouring of love and support she has received this weekend continues to help her through the tough days and that she feels able to make more public appearances in the months to come.

TROOPING THE COLOUR



TROUPER: King Charles looks on as parade takes place. Right, flypast over Palace



Rain couldn't dampen

TENS OF thousands of people lined the Mall yesterday for Trooping the Colour, which has marked the monarch's birthday for more than 260 years. This year's spectacular event took on special significance with the King and the Princess of Wales both battling cancer.

The crowds braved a downpour just as the parade was starting at 11am.

But even the wet weather could not dampen the joy of those getting a wave from Kate – accompanied by children George, 10, Charlotte, nine, and Louis, six – and Charles as they passed by.

For the 8,000 people who had secured tickets for an enclosure at Horse Guards Parade in St James's Park several months ago, the appearance of the King and Princess came as a bonus.

It was also a surprise to the men of Number 9 Company Irish Guards who led yesterday's ceremony.

Only last week, they were read a letter that had been penned by the Princess – the regiment's honorary colonel – in which she apologised for missing the Colonel's Review rehearsal.

But on Friday Kate revealed her plans to

By **Marco Giannangeli** DEFENCE EDITOR and **Julia Kuttner**

attend yesterday's event, adding: "I hope to join a few public engagements over the summer but equally know I am not out of the woods yet."

Minerva Hall, 61, was one of the many drawn to the event by the possibility of seeing the Princess.

"When I read Kate was coming today I went downstairs and said to my husband 'where's my stuff? I need to go, I'm going to leave the house early, Kate is going to be there, I'm going to go,'" said the grandmother of four from Catford, in south-east London.

"I cried when I heard she was unwell. My brother's got cancer so I know what it's like, especially to be open about it to everybody.

"It must have been even harder for her – it shows how close she is with us."

Minerva added: "It's great that she and the King are not hiding it. They're making themselves one of us.

"We really love them, and it's like they love us too."

Joseph Afrane, 60, agreed, saying: "It was

fantastic when I heard it on the news on Friday. I thought, 'God, I thank you for bringing Kate back', because she's very hard-working.

"I saw her. She waved to me. She gave me a big wave."

The Princess's appearance was especially meaningful for Danish cancer sufferer Lone Smith, 53, who is visiting the UK for only five days.

"I get emotional because I have been struggling with cancer myself, so I think it is good to see her here today," said the mother of five from Hjørring.

"It gives hope. I understand how it was for Kate to talk to the children about it. It was not easy to tell my children. My very dear friend lost her husband to cancer.

"It was very hard for me to go to my children and tell them that now I have to struggle, too. Kate was very brave."

Australian couple Mandy and Peter Harwood said: "It was good to see Kate smiling and it was worth braving the weather just to see that."

Clare Fleming, 53, from Exning, Suffolk, said: "I love Kate's quiet dignity and decorum.

"She never says too much, never says too little and always finds exactly the right words to describe how things are."

She praised Queen Camilla, too, for being a tower of strength for Charles.

"I like the way that they just get on with it, without making a fuss," she added.



ROYAL WAVE: Prince Louis greets the waiting crowds



POMP: Military riders and horses in The Mall

Pictures: JAMES VEYSEY/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK; STAN KUJAWA; JIM BENNETT & KELVIN BRUCE/PA; BRITISH ARMY

QUIET WORD: Kate tells youngest child Louis what is happening at Horseguards Parade as Princess Charlotte and Prince George take their eyes off the action



'She's role model for patients'

By **Lucy Johnston** HEALTH EDITOR

A TOP cancer expert has expressed his admiration for the Princess of Wales in attending the King's birthday parade despite suffering side-effects from her treatment.

Her ongoing therapy, known as adjuvant chemotherapy, is thought to include several drugs known to cause fatigue, nausea, hair loss and anaemia.

In a statement released by Kensington Palace on Friday the princess said her treatment was "ongoing and will be for a few more months".

Prof Karol Sikora, former director of the WHO cancer programme, said: "What Kate has done is a tremendous boost to all cancer patients in Britain at the moment. They realise they are not alone.

"People with cancer are listening to what she says about it. She's a role model for it."

He added: "Kate almost certainly has no measurable cancer present and scans will be negative, so this adjuvant chemotherapy is a preventative measure and trials show it can significantly increase the chance of long-term survival from 70 to 90 per cent. She will likely be on a combination of drugs, and the longer you take these the more tired you feel.

"There are lots of drugs that we can use to stop other side-effects such as nausea but we don't have anything to stop tiredness, which can vary from day to day.

"One day she will feel fine and another she will feel terrible. Her hair will thin and she may decide to wear a wig or a scarf. Some patients brazen it out and embrace being bald. Each patient is different."

Prof Sikora, *inset*, said Kate has a "very good" prognosis, as the treatment she is being given means her cancer has not spread. She has not returned to full duties but is carrying out light tasks such as helping her children with their schoolwork when she feels able.



love for King and Kate

Injured runaway horse parades with top rider

By **Emily Ferguson** ROYAL EDITOR

ONE OF the five Household Cavalry horses injured after bolting through the streets of central London took part in the King's Birthday Parade yesterday.

Tennyson, described as being as "bold and brave as a war horse", was in the rear rank of the prestigious Sovereign's Escort, which led the King down the Mall from Buckingham Palace to Horse Guards Parade. It was the black steed's first major parade since the incident.

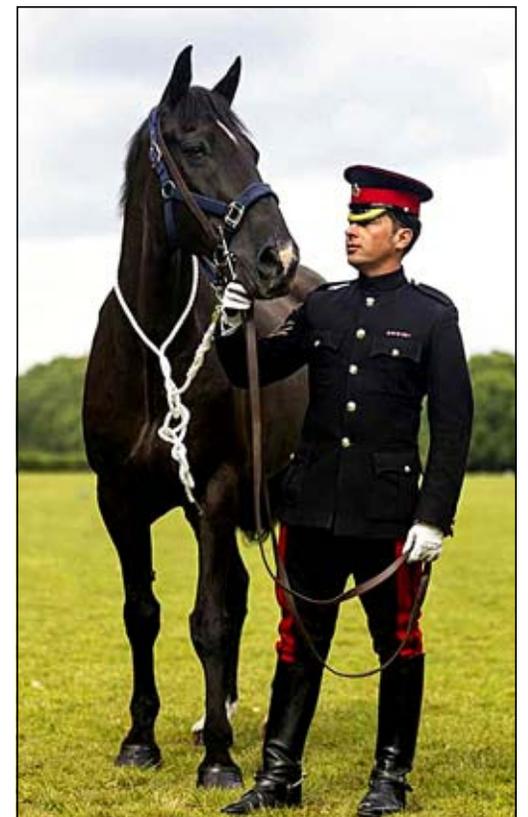
He was ridden by Corporal of Horse Harvey, the Life Guards Squadron Equitation Instructor and most experienced rider in the division. The gelding was among the runaway horses injured after being spooked by building works while on extended exercises in Belgravia in April. Shocking images showed the animals covered in blood as they sustained wounds during their dash through the city.

Tennyson's stablemates Trojan and Vanquish, which were also injured after throwing their riders, formed part of the ceremonial guard for the official entrance to the Royal Palaces yesterday.

The two most seriously injured horses, Vida and Quaker, are receiving respite care from the Horse Trust in the Cotswolds. Three of the five riders hurt in the incident have recovered and are back on duty, while the other two are expected to return in due course.

Capt Charles Carr-Smith, 1 Troop Leader, The Life Guards Squadron, Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment, said: "Military Working Horse Tennyson is the epitome of a Cavalry Black.

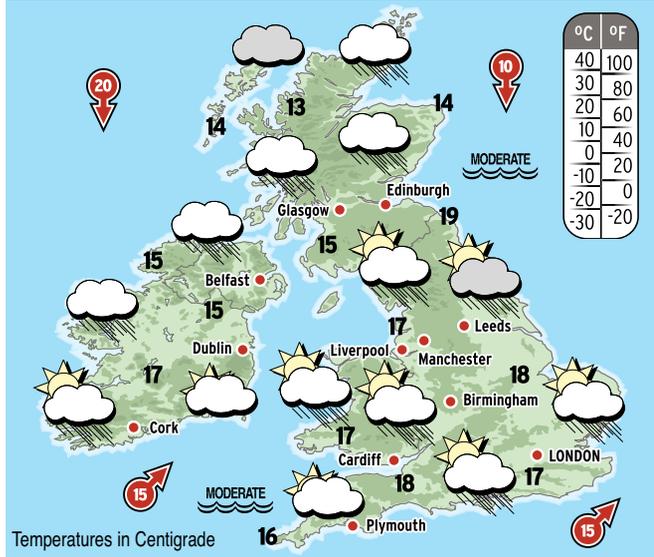
"Bold and brave as a war horse should be yet a gentleman to ride and groom."



'BRAVE': Tennyson, seen with Cpl Harvey



Weather forecast



Today's summary: Sunny spells and showers

North West: Wet with spells of rain for a time. A mostly dry afternoon. Moderate south-westerly winds. High 17C (63F).

Northern Ireland: Wet and cloudy with patchy rain and then showers. Moderate north-westerly winds. High 15C (59F).

Wales: Mostly bright but the small chance of a shower developing. Gentle south-westerly winds. High 18C (64F).

Midlands: Mostly bright but the small chance of a shower developing. Gentle south-westerly winds. High 18C (64F).

North East/Yorks: Unsettled with scattered showers, especially during the morning. Moderate westerly winds. High 18C (64F).

Scotland: Mainly cloudy with the chance of showers or spells of rain, heavy later. Light winds. High 16C (61F).

UK OUTLOOK TOMORROW: Bright tomorrow with spells of sunshine however there will be showers. Showers will be most frequent across northern and western areas.

East Anglia: Unsettled with showers, especially during the morning. Moderate south-westerly winds. High 19C (66F).

London/South East: Dry for a while with some sunshine, but showers later. Fresh south-westerly winds. High 20C (68F).

South: Mainly dry but with the chance of a shower breaking out. Moderate south-westerly winds. High 18C (64F).

South West: Mostly bright and dry but the small chance of a shower developing. Moderate westerly winds. High 19C (66F).

Channel Isles: Early showers, then largely dry with spells of sunshine later. Moderate westerly winds. High 17C (63F).

Sea: North Sea: Moderate. Irish Sea: Moderate. Channel: Moderate.

SIX-DAY FORECAST

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	min max					
London	12 21	11 21	12 21	12 21	14 20	13 20
Belfast	10 16	7 15	10 16	12 18	12 17	12 17
Birmingham	9 19	9 19	10 19	12 19	12 19	12 19
Cardiff	10 19	10 20	11 20	12 19	13 18	12 18
Glasgow	10 17	9 17	10 15	12 18	12 18	12 17
Manchester	10 17	10 17	10 18	12 18	13 18	12 18
Newcastle	9 16	9 16	10 17	12 18	12 20	12 19
Norwich	10 20	11 19	10 18	12 19	13 20	13 20
Plymouth	11 18	11 19	12 19	13 18	13 17	12 18

24 hours		SUN		RAIN		TEMP	
(hrs)		(ins)		(min) (max)		(min) (max)	
Aberdeen	1.8	0.05	6	15			
Aberporth	3.2	0.24	8	13			
Ainwick	7.8	0.02	6	15			
Belfast	3.4	0.06	8	15			
Birmingham	4.0	0.35	9	17			
B'mouth	4.3	0.13	10	18			
Bristol	4.4	0.20	9	15			
Cardiff	4.9	0.13	10	16			
Durham	1.8	0.12	7	16			
Edinburgh	2.1	0.02	6	16			
Glasgow	3.3	0.06	6	18			
Hull	2.5	0.17	9	16			
Ipswich	4.8	0.15	9	17			
Leeds	0.8	0.35	9	14			
Lincoln	5.5	0.28	10	15			
London	4.5	0.22	10	19			
Manchester	2.7	0.09	10	13			
Oxford	5.5	0.17	9	17			
Sh'ampton	3.4	0.24	10	18			
St Andrews	11.8	0.00	7	15			

Britain yesterday		Moon, sun and tides	
Warmest: Southampton 18C (64F)	Coldest: Tulloch Bridge 2C (36F)	MOON rises: 3.26pm, sets: 1.45am	SUN rises London: 4.42am, sets: 9.20pm
Wettest: Killybegs 0.98in.	Sunniest: Ronaldsway 9.8hr.	Manchester rises: 4.39am, sets: 9.40pm	Full Moon 22 June
Lighting-up times		HIGH TIDE	
Belfast 10.02pm-4.46am	Birmingham 9.32pm-4.44am	London Bge (9.53am), (10.21pm)	Liverpool (7.19am), (7.55pm)
Bristol 9.29pm-4.52am		Greenock (8.01am), (9.20pm)	Dover (7.29am), (7.45pm)
		Glasgow 10.05pm-4.30am	London 9.20pm-4.42am
		Manchester 9.40pm-4.39am	Newcastle 9.47pm-4.26am

Today		Europe forecast		Tomorrow	
Amsterdam	Thunder 18C/64F	Amsterdam	Cloudy 20C/68F	Brussels	Showers 20C/68F
Brussels	Thunder 18C/64F	Brussels	Showers 20C/68F	Dublin	Rain 17C/63F
Dublin	Rain 17C/63F	Frankfurt	Thunder 23C/73F	Geneva	Fair 26C/79F
Frankfurt	Rain 21C/70F	Lisbon	Cloudy 23C/73F	Madrid	Sunny 31C/88F
Geneva	Fair 24C/75F	Paris	Thunder 21C/70F	Rome	Fair 26C/79F
Lisbon	Cloudy 24C/75F				
Madrid	Sunny 31C/88F				
Paris	Thunder 21C/70F				
Rome	Fair 26C/79F				

Around the world yesterday	
Amsterdam . Fair 16 61	Hong Kong.. Thndr 29 84
Athens Sunny 30 86	Istanbul Fair 23 73
Barcelona . . Sunny 22 72	Jersey Shwrs 15 59
Berlin Shwrs 20 68	Lamaca Sunny 35 95
Budapest . . . Sunny 25 77	Las Palmas . Sunny 24 75
Cairo Sunny 40 104	Los Angeles. Sunny 21 70
Cape Town.. Sunny 20 68	Luxor Sunny 43 109
Casablanca . Fair 23 73	Malaga Sunny 30 86
Corfu Sunny 27 81	Mallorca . . . Sunny 25 77
Dublin Shwrs 13 55	Malta Sunny 26 79
Dubrovnik . . Sunny 24 75	Melbourne . . Fair 12 54
Faro Sunny 26 79	Miami Thndr 32 90
Florence . . . Sunny 26 79	Moscow Fair 22 72
Gibraltar . . Sunny 25 77	Nairobi Fair 22 72
Guernsey . . Shwrs 16 61	New Delhi . . Sunny 41 106
	New York . . . Fair 29 84
	Nice Sunny 22 72
	Nicosia Sunny 40 104
	Perth Sunny 20 68
	Prague Cloudy 18 64
	Singapore . . Thndr 30 86
	Stockholm . . Fair 18 64
	Sydney Shwrs 13 55
	Tel Aviv Sunny 37 99
	Tenerife Sunny 25 77
	Toronto Fair 23 73
	Tunis Sunny 33 91
	Venice Sunny 23 73
	Vienna Sunny 24 75
	Warsaw Fair 24 75

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Warning over rise in election violence

By **Jonathan Walker**
DEPUTY POLITICAL EDITOR

THE RISE in violence targeting election candidates "should worry us all", a leading think tank has warned.

Politicians will be increasingly scared to meet voters, according to the Henry Jackson Society. It follows two attacks against Reform leader Nigel Farage, who has been offered additional Home Office security.

A milkshake was thrown at him in Clacton, Essex, on June 4. And on Tuesday, other objects were thrown at him as he campaigned in Barnsley.

Two people have been charged over the incidents.

On Friday Labour candidate Rosie Duffield, defending her Canterbury seat, announced she would no longer attend hustings events due to fears about "personal security".

She said: "Since the start of this campaign, myself and many other candidates have had to be mindful of our own safety and the safety of our campaigning teams."

In a report, the Henry Jackson Society will call for new measures to protect politicians including a ban on protests outside their homes.

Researchers Sam Bidwell and Theo Zenou said: "The General Election campaign has already seen cases of political violence.

"It's easy to see how incidents like these can escalate and result in tit-for-tat violence. And yet, all too often, these incidents are celebrated



ASSAULT ON DEMOCRACY: Mr Farage attacked campaigning in Barnsley

on social media." Two MPs have been murdered in recent years – Labour's Jo Cox on this day in 2016 and Tory Sir David Amess in 2021.

Jo's sister Kim Leadbeater also condemned the assaults on Mr Farage: "It makes me really sad that eight years on from Jo's murder, we're still seeing totally unacceptable behaviour."

● In a post on X, ahead of the eighth anniversary of her death, Jo's widower Brendan Cox wrote: "Jo would be gutted to be missing this election, and her chance to play a role in making our country better. She believed in the potential of politics. She'd also be gutted to see people using it to denigrate minorities and spread division."

Time to say 'enough' and cut hate from politics

NO MATTER how much you disagree, it is never OK to get physical with politicians.

You might have no time for Nigel Farage's hard-line stance on immigration but in our prized British democracy he has the right to air his views without constantly fearing attack.

The same goes for the extreme pro-Palestine activists determined to intimidate Labour and Tory candidates until they get their way.

Today marks eight years since we lost my friend Jo Cox, a wonderful Labour MP who was murdered by a far-Right extremist.

And it is less than three years since Conservative MP Sir David Amess was stabbed to death in his

COMMENT

By **Lord Walney**

GOVERNMENT ADVISER ON POLITICAL VIOLENCE



local surgery by a violent Islamist. Yet the threats facing candidates on the campaign trail now feel greater than ever.

It is shameful many candidates are getting death threats and needing a police presence at campaign events.

Some have been advised not to travel on public transport because they are at high risk of attack.

Others have needed the kind of close police protection usually only

offered to the most senior ministers in national security roles.

Politicians do not get much sympathy from the public and sometimes that is deserved. But no one should live in fear and we all lose if decent people are put off from standing to represent their area because they worry about attack or the safety of their family.

Or if they are forced to keep silent on certain issues to avoid being targeted by angry mobs.

It is time to say enough is enough and cut the hate from our politics. MPs need better physical security and we need to address this toxic political environment that is at severe risk of spilling over into more violence.

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1 9 25 29 34 39 BONUS BALL 22
THUNDERBALL
12 16 19 24 36 THUNDERBALL 10



The Health Lottery

SATURDAY JUNE 15: BIG DRAW
4 9 10 12 20 BONUS BALL 23
2ND CHANCE DRAW
2 7 12 32 41 (WINNER GETS £100K)

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Picture:
STEVEN
MEISEL

Naomi puts on a show at V&A

By **Jaymi McCann**

ONE HUNDRED outfits worn by former supermodel Naomi Campbell on catwalks and in music videos are to go on show.

The clothes that helped make the 54-year-old a global star will take centre stage at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London's South Kensington from Saturday.

Photos from her 40-year career will be displayed alongside them.

After being scouted in Covent Garden aged 15, Naomi quickly rose to prominence in the industry, making history at 18 when she became the first black model to feature on the cover of *Paris Vogue*.

She went on to gain international acclaim, starring in catwalk shows, advertising campaigns and editorial fashion shoots.

Naomi said: "I'm honoured to be asked by the V&A to share my life in clothes."

The exhibition, called **NAOMI: In Fashion**, includes around 100 outfits from designers such as Alexander McQueen, Chanel, Dolce & Gabbana, Gianni and Donatella Versace, and Jean Paul Gaultier.

Images from leading photographers such as Nick Knight, Steven Meisel and Tim Walker will form an installation.

The exhibition will also explore Naomi's early life in south London, as

well as her performances in 1980s music videos for artists including Bob Marley and Culture Club, and her more recent activism.

● **NAOMI: In Fashion** will be displayed until April 6 next year at the V&A in Cromwell Road, London



NEVER OUT OF FASHION: Naomi promotes her show. Inset, Vivienne Westwood platforms which caused her memorable catwalk tumble in 1993; right, Roulé Comme Une Buick bustier by Thierry Mugler; far right, a Versace Marilyn Monroe dress; above, as a teenager

GENERAL ELECTION 2024

'Use right to vote many fought for'

SENIOR Tories are pleading with supporters to turn out on July 4 with a warning previous generations "gave their lives" to defend the right to vote.

It comes amid fears stay-at-home Conservatives will hand a massive election victory to Labour.

Veterans minister and former commando Johnny Mercer said: "People gave their lives to protect the freedoms and privileges we have, so I urge people to cast their vote."

Former Defence minister Tobias Ellwood, who served with the Royal Green Jackets, said: "By casting our vote we exercise that very privilege so many gave their lives to defend."

And PM Rishi Sunak said Ukraine was fighting for the democratic rights we take for granted.

He told the Sunday Express: "Their bravery should remind us how blessed we are to live in this country where we get to elect our representatives."

Electorate fears AI manipulation

VOTERS fear artificial intelligence systems are manipulating them by feeding false information.

There is also deep unease about the use of technology to send carefully crafted messages on social media.

A survey by Ipsos found 44 per cent of adults were concerned about AI's potential influence on the election.

It found most people believe voters cannot differentiate between fake AI-generated images and the real thing.

Concern is most pronounced among 2019 Lib Dem voters, with 56 per cent saying they are worried, followed by 49 per cent of Labour voters and 45 per cent of Tory voters.

Trinh Tu, managing director for public affairs at Ipsos, said: "With trust in politicians at an all-time low, these findings highlight how crucial it is for all parties to address anxieties about AI's potential to further erode trust in the democratic process."

Labour 'will tax family holidays'

FAMILY holidays would be threatened by a Labour government, Tories claim.

They say Sir Keir Starmer has left the door open to a "holiday tax".

The Conservatives rule out the introduction of a "frequent flyer levy" in their manifesto as part of a commitment not to introduce any new green charges. They also vow to "support domestic flights".

But they say Labour's manifesto is "silent on new green taxes".

Transport Secretary Mark Harper said: "We know Labour are already planning to introduce a whole raft of new taxes to fill the £38.5 billion black hole in their unfunded spending promises. We can now add a new holiday tax to the list."

Earlier this year it was reported an adviser to Shadow Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero Ed Milliband had suggested travel could be "scaled down using mechanisms like a frequent flyer levy".

'Only the Tories can be trusted to keep Britain safe'

By Jonathan Walker and David Williamson

ONLY the Conservatives can be trusted to keep Britain safe in the face of a "more dangerous world", Rishi Sunak has warned.

The Prime Minister yesterday joined more than 50 heads of state and governments for a two-day Ukraine peace summit near Lucerne, Switzerland, in what could prove to be one of his last acts on the international stage.

He met Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to reiterate the UK's support and to stress that any future peace deal must be on Ukraine's terms.

Mr Sunak slammed Labour for failing to

'We must take steps to protect ourselves'

match his pledge to increase defence spending to 2.5 per cent of GDP by 2030. And he warned the UK and its allies are threatened by an "axis of authoritarian states" including Russia, China, Iran and North Korea.

He said: "It is only we Conservatives, with our iron resolve, who can be trusted to keep Britain safe."

The party's manifesto included a pledge to increase defence spending to 2.5 per cent of GDP in less than six years. Labour is also committed to meeting the 2.5 per cent target but has not set out a timeframe.

Condemning Russia's "brutal war of aggression" against Ukraine, Mr Sunak



SUMMIT: PM Rishi Sunak with Ukraine's leader Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday

said: "In a reminder of how much more uncertain our world is becoming, the axis of authoritarian states are China, through its 'unlimited partnership' with Russia, helping it to try to circumvent the sanctions that we and our allies have imposed on the Kremlin's war machine.

"Iran is providing the drones with which Russia attempts to terrorise Ukrainian cities. And North Korea has sent Russia

ammunition. In this more dangerous world, we must take steps to protect ourselves."

Setting out his hopes for an end to the war in Ukraine, Mr Sunak said: "From a position of strength, we must work with President Zelensky to set out the principles for a just and lasting peace, based on international law and the UN Charter."

GREAT ELECTION DEBATE: PAGES 22&23

Unwaivering support for Ukraine in fight for democracy

LAST night I joined other world leaders for the Ukraine peace summit.

I was there to offer my support to President Zelensky and to make clear aggression cannot, and will not, prevail.

The valour and sacrifice of the Ukrainian people has been truly humbling. They are prepared to die to make life worth living, to ensure they determine who governs them not Putin.

In this country, we should be so proud of all we have done to support Ukraine.

For almost a decade, we have been training Ukrainian forces. When Russian troops massed on their border, Boris Johnson and Ben Wallace rushed equipment to Ukraine which helped them to halt the advance.

As Prime Minister, I have been proud to expand our backing for Ukraine: we were the first country to provide it with Western battle tanks and the first to send long-range missiles. Our support has enabled Ukraine to push back the Russian Black Sea fleet and resume

COMMENT

By Rishi Sunak
PRIME MINISTER



grain exports. The Ukrainians are fighting for values we share: for the right to determine their own future, for freedom, for democracy. Russia is fighting a war of brutal aggression.

Putin has no regard for civilian life or the life of his own troops who are sustaining huge losses in this campaign.

No country should be aiding Russia. But, in a reminder of how much more uncertain our world is becoming, the axis of authoritarian states is: China through its "unlimited partnership" is helping it to try to circumvent the sanctions we and our allies have imposed on the Kremlin's war machine.

Iran is providing the drones with which Moscow attempts to terrorise

Ukrainian cities. And North Korea has sent Russia ammunition.

In this more dangerous world, we must take steps to protect ourselves. We will invest 2.5 per cent of GDP in defence by 2030. Our increase will not only fire up our defence industrial base – creating good jobs here – but allow us to stand up for our interests, deter our enemies and defend our values.

I worry Labour have not committed to matching our increase, choosing to keep the civil service at its bloated post-Covid size. It is only Conservatives, with our iron resolve, who can be trusted to keep Britain safe.

The Ukrainians are fighting for their democratic freedoms, for the right to determine who governs them. Their bravery should remind us how blessed we are to live in this country where we get to elect our representatives, to choose our own government.

When we go to the polling station on July 4, let us remember that.

Majority back Penny's polish to spearhead party revival

By **David Williamson** POLITICAL EDITOR

PENNY Mordaunt wowed a worldwide audience when she held the sword at the King's Coronation – and now an exclusive poll makes her favourite to wear the Conservative crown.

She is the most popular contender by far to take over from Rishi Sunak if he quits in the wake of an election defeat.

The Prime Minister plans to serve a full term in Number 10 if he pulls off an unexpected win on July 4.

But a WeThink poll for the Sunday Express reveals Ms Mordaunt is in pole position to become next Tory leader.

She is the number one choice of 39 per cent of all voters as well as half of Conservative supporters.

The former Portsmouth North MP has enjoyed a popularity boost after her fearsome attacks on political rivals in two seven-way TV debates.

An ally said: "When other big names, even those responsible for this mess, are going into hibernation, Penny is keeping the party alive – fighting tooth and nail for what's left of our electoral chances."

Ms Mordaunt, 51, said: "I'm focused on

'Energy in debates has gone down well'

the campaign and want to ensure we continue Portsmouth's growth and success. Labour's plans to increase my constituents' taxes and bills would choke off our recovery."

She is far in front of former Home Secretary Suella Braverman, who is supported by 14 per cent of those polled when "don't knows" are excluded.

Home Secretary James Cleverly and his predecessor in the role, Priti Patel, are both the choice of 12 per cent.

Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch has been seen as the bookies' favourite to be the next Tory leader but she is backed by just 10 per cent.

Security minister Tom Tugendhat was the choice of just four per cent, and only seven per cent said they wanted to see someone else in the top role.

But Ms Mordaunt's biggest challenge may be securing re-election to Parliament. She won her Portsmouth North seat in 2019 with a majority of 15,780 but Labour aims to oust her.

She is considered one of the Tories'



Picture: IAN FORSYTH/GETTY

NUMBER ONE PICK: Penny Mordaunt's popularity is on rise among voters

strongest public speakers. During the first of the seven-way television debates, the former Navy reservist strongly criticised the PM's decision to leave the D-Day commemorations in Normandy early, saying it was "completely wrong".

An ally praised her as a "team player", saying: "Look at what she's doing even now to defend the party's record and help colleagues keep their seats."

"I think the 'Penny' is finally starting to drop for many of us – she's the leader we need."

And a local Conservative supporter said: "Her no-nonsense approach and

sheer energy in the debates has gone down very well.

"She's seen as someone who's honest, approachable and in touch."

Favourites to replace Rishi Sunak as Conservative leader have already begun jockeying for position behind the scenes, to the annoyance of some party officials.

A Tory adviser said: "Members of the Cabinet are texting candidates regularly just to 'check in', while others are already lining up their leadership teams."

And they said: "Sometimes you wish they would focus more on the General Election campaign."



IT'S ACTUALLY happened – the moment Tory MPs and supporters were hoping would never come.

Nigel Farage's Reform UK party has overtaken the Conservative Party for the first time.

On Thursday evening, a YouGov poll put Reform on 19 per cent with the Tories one point behind on 18 per cent – with Labour comfortably ahead of both of them.

It was just one poll (the others still have the Conservative Party ahead) and it happened after YouGov changed its methodology. But it was a symbolic moment that sent the Conservatives into a tailspin.

Nigel Farage has (of course!) been busy trying to make the most of what's being dubbed "the crossover moment".

He has proclaimed Reform UK are now the "opposition to Labour" – trying to spin the line that it's now the Conservatives who would be a wasted vote.

Of course – this is Farage's spin – Reform UK is unlikely to win many, if any, seats at the General Election because of the way the voting system works.

'Reform poll shock shows they could have a big influence on the direction of the Conservatives'

But this is the key thing. Reform's success won't just be judged on how many seats they win.

It will be judged on the influence they have.

The higher they poll and the more votes they take from the Tories, the more they will influence the future direction of the Conservative Party.

If Farage wins Clacton and gets a seat in Parliament, his voice will be even louder in Westminster.

If the Conservatives lose the election they'll be plunged into an existential crisis – a battle for the soul of the party.

Should they try to reclaim the centre ground or tack to the Right?

Should they try to shore up the Brexiteer vote – or the "blue wall" vote of Conservative Remainers who have traditionally voted Tory

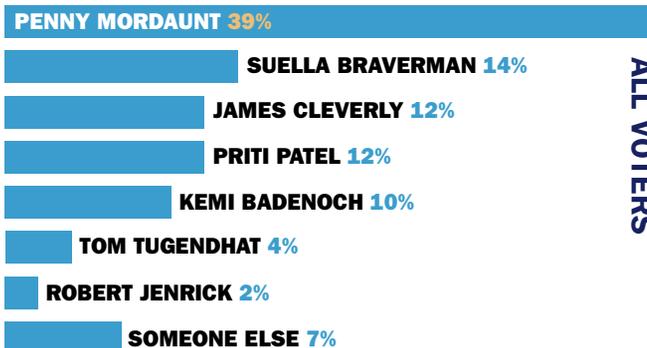
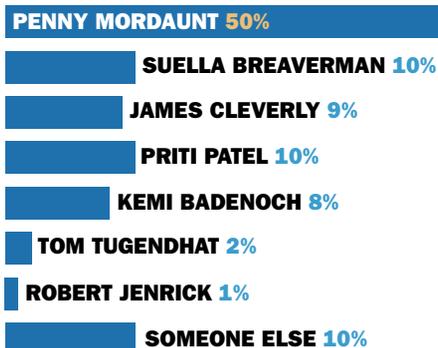
because they trust them on the economy like the idea of low taxes?

The Conservatives will be at a crossroads – and the more Reform is seen to be cannibalising their voter base, the bigger the influence they will have on the party's direction.

As Nigel Farage said himself, why try to lead the Conservative Party when he can take it over?

So yes, the "crossover moment" is just one poll. But it could have a much more significant influence than that.

Who do you think would make the best Tory leader if Rishi loses the election?



● Sophie Ridge presents Politics Hub every weekday at 7pm on Sky News (Freeview channel 233).

GENERAL ELECTION 2024

Farage crusade to defend British values

NIGEL Farage will launch a crusade to defend British culture and values tomorrow when his party Reform UK publishes its manifesto.

It contains a raft of measures to protect free speech, maintain UK sovereignty and fight against a culture of political correctness.

Mr Farage will take on the “institutionally biased” BBC by calling for the abolition of the licence fee. He says viewers should be free to choose which TV services they pay for.

The manifesto also sets out opposition to a so-called cashless society. Other measures include a Free Speech Bill to prevent organisations imposing “Left-wing bias and

By **Jonathan Walker** DEPUTY POLITICAL EDITOR

politically correct ideology” and a ban on banks withdrawing services from people they disapprove of.

Mr Farage was “de-banked” when his account with NatWest Group subsidiary Coutts was closed after an internal memo said he was “seen as xenophobic and racist”.

One poll suggests Reform is now the second most popular party behind Labour. Mr Farage is demanding the BBC include him in Thursday’s election debate with Rishi Sunak, Keir Starmer, Lib Dem’s Ed Davey and SNP’s John Swinney.

Sir Keir: I’ll lead Labour with an iron grip

EXCLUSIVE

By **David Williamson**

POLITICAL EDITOR

SIR Keir Starmer vowed to lead a Labour government with an “iron grip” and to keep the radical Left at bay, in a personal message to Sunday Express readers.

He promises to put the “country first” if he triumphs in next month’s election and will not be a puppet of the Left.

The Labour leader also pledged to lead a “common-sense government” and insisted his changed party would not descend into the chaos and conflict that has dogged the Tories.

Sir Keir declared Brexit was here to stay and he would stand up to radicals and EU Rejoiners. And he said he would veto policies that were not focused on improving lives.

Committing to govern from the centre ground, he said: “I think most people don’t want the extreme Right. They don’t want the extreme Left.

“They want to know they’ve got a common-sense government that knows what is necessary to take the country forward, to take their community forward, to help their family get on in life.”

In a clear echo of Tony Blair’s 1997 landslide promise that a party that “ran for office as New Labour” would

“govern as New Labour”, Sir Keir stamped on suggestions that Left-wing radicals could take control.

He said: “I think you’ve seen just how steely I’ve been in changing this Labour Party. I have an iron grip on my party, I’ve changed my party.”

Sir Keir said the way he leads the party will be “the way we govern if we are given a mandate”.

He added: “This is a different Labour Party. That is why it will always be country first, party second.

“If anybody brings me a proposal that isn’t country first, the answer is going to be ‘No’ straight away.” He

is under fire for refusing to nail down the specifics of his tax plans.

But he said: “We need to ensure everybody reading the Sunday Express knows in cast-iron terms, we will not be increasing tax on working people. We will not be increasing income tax.

“We will not be increasing national insurance. We will not be increasing VAT because we think people have paid too much tax.”

He attacked speculation that people could have to pay capital gains tax on family homes, insisting this was “never a policy”.

His focus on “wealth creation”, he says, is evidence of his success at transforming

Labour. “You may not

expect a Labour leader to say my

number one priority is wealth creation,” he

said. “But that shows you how far this party has changed.”

Speaking to the Sunday Express in a

hospital in the former Labour stronghold of Bassetlaw –

which turned blue in 2019 – Sir Keir

described his ambitions to bring prosperity in areas

which have been left behind.

“We’re going to absolutely turbocharge our economy and make sure it works and living standards are improving,” he said.

And he is quick to assure voters who backed Brexit that while he wants to negotiate a better deal for businesses this is not a plot to put

Britain back in the orbit of Brussels. “We took a decision to leave the EU, we’ve left the EU and we’re not rejoining,” he said. “That means we’re not rejoining the EU or the single market or the customs union,



STEELY: Sir Keir with our political editor David Williamson

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Picture: ANDY COMMINS



HEALTHY LAUGHTER:
Sir Keir shares a
joke on a visit
to Worksop's
Bassetlaw Hospital

and we won't be having freedom of movement, because that was what we had a referendum on and that issue is determined."

And while he has pledged to scrap Rishi Sunak's plan to send illegal migrants to Rwanda, he is adamant the small boats must be stopped.

"Nobody but nobody should be making that journey," he said.

Describing how he would draw on his experience as Director of Public Prosecutions to go after the organised crime gangs behind the people smuggling, he said: "The key to stopping the boats is smashing the gangs that are running it.

"Those gangs should be taken down. And having worked with others to take down terrorists gangs, I will not accept and I do not accept the only gang this government seems to pretend you can't take down are the smuggling gangs."

Labour faces competition from Nigel Farage's Reform UK but Sir Keir is not impressed by Mr Farage's claim he now leads the true opposition. He said: "I don't think it's for Nigel Farage to declare himself Leader of the Opposition. I'm actually the Leader of the Opposition at the moment. I hope to change that."

● Sir Keir's wife, Victoria, has not been a fixture of the campaign. He says there are two clear reasons for this: work and GCSEs.

The Labour leader, 61, said: "My wife has been working in the NHS and helping and supporting our son who has just finished his GCSEs. She will always be alongside me, always supporting me."

We'll use private healthcare to cut long waits for cancer diagnosis

LABOUR would use private healthcare firms to diagnose cancer faster and save lives, Shadow Health Secretary Wes Streeting has pledged.

He would provide care "fit for a king" by providing thousands of extra tests and scans with weekend and evening NHS working.

Mr Streeting, below, was diagnosed with kidney cancer in 2021 but made a full recovery within months after the disease was caught early.

He said: "I know the earlier it is caught, the better chance of survival. Since the Conservatives took office in 2010, hundreds of thousands of patients have waited too long."

The NHS has a target of ensuring patients

are treated within two months of a referral. But last year the deadline was missed for 102,000 people, more than one in three.

Labour says it will ensure the target is met for every patient by the end of its first term.

Mr Streeting said: "Cancer doesn't discriminate. You can be the poorest family in the land or you can be king.

"I'm determined to do all I can to ensure everyone gets cancer treatment fit for a king, no matter who you are or what your background."

Labour's cancer plan includes continuing with Rishi Sunak's ban on smoking, which will make it an offence for anyone born on or before January 1, 2009 to be sold tobacco products.



Poll predicts landslide to eclipse 1997

SIR Keir Starmer could be on the verge of eclipsing Sir Tony Blair's 1997 landslide by leading his party to a 262-seat majority.

New Labour secured power with a margin of 179 – but the latest Survation poll suggests the Conservatives are about to suffer an even more crushing defeat.

According to the analysis, they are on course to win just 72 seats compared with the 365 the party won under Boris Johnson in 2019.

In a further sign that British politics could be in for one of the biggest shake-ups in decades,

Nigel Farage's Reform UK is the favourite in seven constituencies. And it is placed second within 10 points of the lead in six more.

While Labour is in front in 456 seats, the Liberal Democrats are on course to make major gains by winning 56 constituencies.

The SNP, which was the third biggest party after the 2019 election, are ahead in 37 seats.

Survation's Vasil Lazarov said: "Far from the polls narrowing, it is difficult to imagine the Conservative Party's electoral prospects getting much worse."

WHAT FLOATS YOUR VOTE?

ELECTION DIARY

● Labour's manifesto includes plans to force members of the House of Lords to retire at the age of 80.

Meanwhile, one of SIR KEIR STARMER'S first tasks if he becomes Prime Minister will be to attend a Nato Summit in Washington hosted by President Joe Biden, starting July 9.

Mr Biden is 81 and due to seek re-election this year. Will Sir Keir tell him he's too old for the job?

● A key result to watch on election night is Birmingham Ladywood, if local campaigners are to be believed.

Shadow Justice Secretary SHABANA MAHMOOD is defending her seat in what should be a Labour stronghold.

But local lawyer AKHMED YAKOUB, standing as an independent pro-Gaza candidate with the backing of George Galloway, could just cause an upset, according to sources in the city.

Ladywood's former Labour MP Blair-era Cabinet Minister CLARE SHORT, isn't helping. Now living in London, she said she'll "probably vote Green".



● Beleaguered Conservatives are seeking hope from elections overseas. Polls suggested Indian Prime Minister NARENDRA MODI (above) was set for a landslide victory. Instead he lost his majority in voting earlier this month.

"Perhaps the polls are wrong here too," one candidate suggested wistfully.

● Tory SIMON CLARKE, one of Rishi Sunak's most vocal critics, received a nice boost in his re-election bid when Boris Johnson recorded a video endorsing him.

But it's striking how few Tory candidates have received backing from Boris since the campaign began.

Earlier this year, Mr Sunak's team were talking about deploying Boris to charm voters in the North and Midlands. Some candidates are now wondering if that was just wishful thinking.

● Former Labour leader JEREMY CORBYN is standing as an independent in Islington North, taking on the official Labour candidate for the seat.

But he almost faced a challenge from an unexpected quarter.

A second Jeremy Bernard Corbyn (Bernard is indeed the "real" Mr Corbyn's middle name) briefly became a candidate too.

Islington Council's website states this Mr Corbyn is "no longer nominated". The council simply says: "The particulars of the candidate are not as required by law."



SUNDAY EXPRESS OPINION

Kate's first step back a real crowd pleaser

IT WAS the King's official birthday but all eyes were on the Princess of Wales as she joined her husband and children for Trooping the Colour.

She has been in the nation's thoughts and prayers since revealing that she is undergoing a course of preventive chemotherapy.

Catherine and her father-in-law share a common bond after being diagnosed with cancer within days of each other earlier this year. And millions will have been touched to witness them standing side-by-side yesterday at her first public appearance since starting treatment.

It gladdened the heart to see her looking so well and happy, alongside her loving family.

But we must remember this is not a return to public duties. Her Royal Highness is still undergoing treatment and yesterday was only the first step on a journey back to full health.

She has chosen to speak candidly about the progress she is making and how the treatment is affecting her. Some days are better than others, she says, and chemotherapy sometimes leaves her weak and tired.

Many who have undergone similar treatment, or supported loved ones battling cancer, will know how she feels. The powerful message from the Princess is that they are not alone.

Catherine is rightly putting her recovery first. We look forward to seeing her again – but only when she feels the time is right.

Starmer's new pitch

SIR KEIR Starmer has parked his tanks firmly on Rishi Sunak's lawn by vowing to back business and protect Brexit.

With his talk of an "iron grip" on the Labour Party, Sir Keir conjures up memories of the former "Iron Lady", Margaret Thatcher, who restored Britain's greatness after decades of decline.

He is making a clear pitch for the support of Sunday Express readers, who would never in a million years have backed his predecessor, Jeremy Corbyn.

Sir Keir has certainly changed his tune from the days when he wanted a second referendum on EU membership.

Now he says Brexit is safe in his hands and he will not sanction a return to the single market, customs union or free movement.

He has ruled out increases in income tax, national insurance, corporation tax and VAT but is giving little away on other possible tax rises.

With just 18 days of the campaign to go, the polls show that he is on course to win a "super-majority".

If traditional Tory supporters switch their vote to Reform UK, that's an outcome that will be even more likely.

Lions ready to roar

BEING A football fan is all about having faith and we have no doubt Gareth Southgate's men can win the Euros.

But there's a long road to travel before the final, and the journey starts with a clash against Serbia today. In pubs and living rooms across the country, fans will be crying out: "Come on, England!"

Labour is being dishonest over tax rises...again

COMMENT

By Laura Trott

CHIEF SECRETARY
TO THE TREASURY



LABOUR'S manifesto last week offered not a single tax cut. Not one. Instead, across the 136 pages, Labour pledged to increase the tax burden to a record high. And it gets worse.

On top of the record high tax burden, which is based on their own figures, we know there is a £38.5 billion black hole in Labour's unfunded spending promises.

This black hole will necessitate taxes going up by £2,094 for every working family in our country.

So the question is, which taxes are they going to hike?

Labour has form for not being honest with the public in its manifestos. In 1997, Labour pledged to "promote secure pensions". But two months after becoming Chancellor, Gordon Brown launched his infamous raid on pension pots.

His plan had been worked up well in advance but Labour lacked the conviction or principles to be upfront with the public about its plans during the campaign.

We can't – and we won't – let them get away with this again.

Last week, I set out 18 potential tax rises that Labour have failed to rule out during this election campaign, so that Sunday Express readers can hold them to account.

Included in this 18 are tax rises on pensions, family homes, family businesses, cars and energy bills.

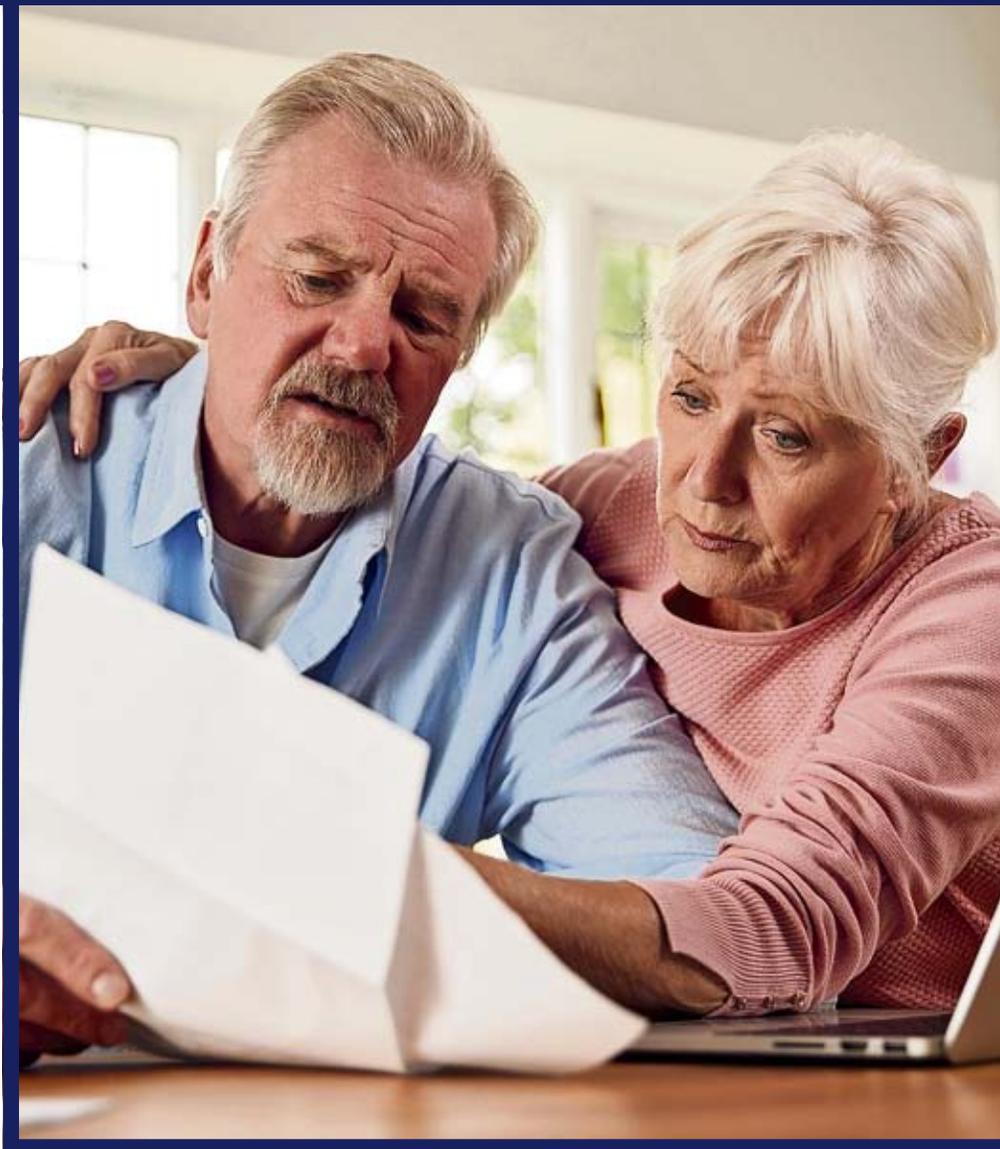
In contrast, the Conservatives have a clear plan to get taxes down. We have set out in our manifesto the bold action we will take to reduce tax by £17.2 billion a year by the end of the decade.

We have already cut National Insurance Contributions – which are just another tax on work – and if elected we will cut NICs again, taking the total tax cut for the average worker to £1,350 a year.

We will abolish Stamp Duty for homes worth up to £425,000 for first-time buyers and introduce a new, improved Help to Buy scheme to help young people get the keys to their first home.

We will help hard-working parents by providing 30 hours of free childcare a week and end the single-earner penalty in the Child Benefit system.

And we will make sure that people who have worked hard all



FUTURE CONCERNS: Labour has form for not declaring its tax rises, say the Tories

“
Labour
have tax
rises
coded
into their
DNA
”

their lives have peace of mind and security in retirement.

Our Triple Lock Plus guarantees that both the state pension and the tax-free allowance for pensioners will always rise with the highest of inflation, earnings or 2.5 per cent.

We will never let the state pension get dragged into income tax.

But Labour has refused to make the same commitments.

In fact, if Labour got into power, it would be the first time in history that the state pension would be subject to income tax.

We have been very clear that taxes have been too high in recent years. But Sunday Express readers know there is a good reason why.

The pandemic put extraordinary demands on the NHS and it was right to provide our doctors and nurses with an extra £87.8 billion to help them save lives.

It was also right that when the economy went into deep freeze,

we stepped in with furlough to save thousands of jobs. But this didn't come cheap.

We could have played fast and loose with the country's finances, and stuck it on a credit card that our children and grandchildren would have to pay the bill for.

But that's not Conservative and it's not right.

SO, INSTEAD we took the tough decisions. This wasn't easy. But it was the right thing to do. Come July 4, the choice is clear. You can vote for the Conservatives, who will cut tax. Or you can vote for the Labour Party, who have tax rises coded into their DNA.

Keir Starmer must find the courage and conviction to be honest about his tax rises, and seek a real mandate for them.

Sunday Express readers should not be taken for fools.

Picture: JOE RAEDLE/GETTY

FURY: Donald Trump hit out at his rival during a gala in Florida on Friday

Trump and Biden trade insults in birthday bust-up

From **Mike Parker** IN LOS ANGELES

A VICIOUS war of words has broken out after Donald Trump used a rally to celebrate his 78th birthday to launch a scathing attack on Joe Biden, dubbing him "crooked Joe".

Mr Biden's team blasted back, sending Mr Trump a "birthday greetings" message accusing him of being "a crook, a failure and a fraud".

It opens with the words "Happy birthday, Donald" but then lists 78 "accomplishments" that include two impeachments, four criminal indictments, threats to political opponents and support for violence.

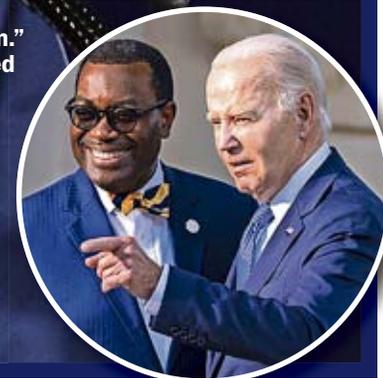
It was sent by Mr Biden's election campaign executive James Singer, who added the line: "You're a crook, a failure, a fraud and a threat to our democracy, economy, rights and future."

Mr Trump told a gathering of 5,000 supporters who cheered loudly as he was presented with a colossal MAGA cake: "There's a certain point at which you don't want to hear 'happy birthday'. You just want to pretend the day doesn't exist."

Followers paid up to £45 on Friday night to attend the rally at Palm Beach Convention Centre as Russian warships, including a nuclear sub, continued military manoeuvres in Cuban waters less than 100 miles from the US coast.

Mr Trump blasted the move but lambasted his rival's "open border" immigration policy following last week's arrests of eight suspects with alleged links to Isis, and said: "Crooked Joe Biden is now guilty of supplying material support to terrorism."

Mr Biden attended the G7 leaders summit in Apulia, Italy, last week where he posed for a photo with African Development Bank President Akinwumi A Adesina, inset.



'You're a crook, a failure, a fraud and a threat to our economy, rights and future'

BIDEN AIDE JAMES SINGER



RETHINK: Richard Coles

Strictly fail was 'brutal' for Richard

RICHARD Coles has revealed that as a former pop star he thought he would have done well on Strictly Come Dancing, writes Karen Rockett.

The retired Anglican vicar and Communards star took part in the contest in 2017, paired with Australian professional dancer Dianne Buswell, but was voted off in week two after a disastrous paso doble to the Queen song Flash.

The 62-year-old, who is dating actor Dickie Cant after Richard's husband David Oldham died in 2019, said: "For some reason I thought I'd be good on Strictly."

"I found out along with 10 million other people that was not the case. It was a brutal awakening."



SHAKEN: Ecclestone

Petra plays down riches after raid

HEIRESS and model Petra Ecclestone is trying not to flaunt her wealth after being targeted by robbers, writes Karen Rockett.

The twice married mother of four, 35, has swapped London's Belgravia for a quieter lifestyle in California and vowed: "I try my best not to stand out now. No more orange Lamborghini, no more yellow Rolex."

Petra was the target of a £500,000 jewel raid on her London home.

And she was just eight when her father Bernie, a Formula One billionaire, and her mother, model Slavica Radic, were victims of a violent robbery.

"That stays with you. I still don't sleep well at night," she said.



ALL-TIME SPORTING GREAT: Sir Bradley at Beijing 2008

Olympic hero Brad's bankruptcy shock

SIR Bradley Wiggins faces losing "absolutely everything" including his eight Olympic medals after being declared bankrupt, his lawyer has said.

The cycling great, 44 – who was the first Briton to win the Tour de France – has seen his £13million fortune disappear due to failed business ventures.

He is homeless and staying with his ex-wife and friends after his £975,000 converted barn in Lancashire was repossessed and sold months ago, lawyer Alan Sellers revealed yesterday.

"In reality, Brad is sofa-surfing," he said. "He stays with friends and family. It is a total mess."

"He has lost absolutely everything. His family home, his home in Majorca, his savings and investments. He doesn't have a penny. It's a very sad state of affairs."

Trustees are being appointed to dispose of Sir Bradley's assets, which

By **Berny Torre**

could include his five gold Olympic medals and Tour de France trophy, after he was declared bankrupt by a court on June 3.

His former wife Cath, with whom he has three children, has been letting him stay at a red-brick semi she owns in Lytham St Annes "to help him out", said Mr Sellers, who is head of sports law at Liverpool solicitors Bond Turner.

Sir Bradley claims to see his Olympic medals as meaningless "junk" since his retirement in 2016, the lawyer added. Wiggins is Britain's most decorated Olympian with eight medals, just ahead of fellow cyclists Chris Hoy

and Jason Kenny. He stepped up to the podium at every Olympic Games from Sydney 2000 to Rio 2016, and was famously pictured on a gold throne after winning the Road Time Trial at London 2012.

In 2017, Spear's Magazine cited his net worth as £13million, helped by lucrative brand deals with Fred Perry, Skoda and others.

But in 2020 Wiggins Rights Ltd, which he owned with Cath and his mum Linda, entered liquidation, owing £650,000 including £313,447 to HMRC.

In 2022, liquidators made a £1million claim against him to pay back an overdrawn director's loan. A few months later it was revealed he'd entered into an

Individual Voluntary Arrangement to stave off bankruptcy.



TURN IN FORTUNES: Wiggins last year

By Elizabeth Ivens

PUPILS are being turned off studying English literature because the curriculum is too "narrow and dispiriting", it is claimed.

The head of one of the UK's most progressive schools has warned we are "turning young people off studying our own language" because the assessment guidelines have restricted what is taught at GCSE.

Will Goldsmith is head of Bedales, in Hampshire, alma mater of a host of celebrities including Lily Allen, Kirstie Allsopp, Daniel Day-Lewis and Minnie Driver.

He said entries for English literature A-level, once one of the most popular subjects in the UK, have plummeted.

Speaking at an education conference at girls' school Downe House, in Berkshire, he said: "This is our language – it's got our nation's name on it and yet we are seeing that we are impoverishing how we are teaching it. Tastes change but having taught

English literature and language GCSEs and examined it, and the same at A-level, I can tell you it has become a much more narrow, limited and dispiriting curriculum to teach.

"Last year, only around 34,000 children sat English literature A-level. It used to be one of the most popular A-levels. Now it's down to 12th, 13th or 14th in the table."

Bedales, one of the first co-ed boarding schools in the UK, is in the vanguard of

schools that are steadily abandoning GCSEs in favour of in-house qualifications.

Mr Goldsmith said the need to teach strictly "to the test" and the limited choice of texts for pupils to study is "killing children's love of literature".

"They are forcing certain texts on young people with no choice and they have to study them for so long.

"There is zero coursework and teachers

have to concentrate on drilling students with one text and teaching to the test only, with not enough time to look at anything else. This kills the love of literature.

"In my day, you had a far wider choice of texts," he said.

"Two years studying one book is death by analysis but teachers are under so much pressure because of the grading system that they can't do anything else."

'We're turning pupils off English literature'

Picture: GARETH CATTERMOLE/GETTY



UK Government



Keep things
smooth
by making the move to
Universal Credit

It won't be automatic, so look out for your letter telling you what you need to do and when. Find support and more information at [gov.uk/ucmove](https://www.gov.uk/ucmove)

UC Universal
Credit

Eligibility criteria apply

I'll give Swift heartbreak a miss

RADIO 2 DJ and music fan Edith Bowman is giving Taylor Swift's tour a miss, admitting: "I'm not a Swiftie, all she does is diss her exes."

The presenter, 50, will instead spend the summer touring the festival circuit with her children Rudy and Spike and husband Tom Smith, who is the frontman for rock band Editors.

Next weekend they will be at the Isle of Wight festival instead of Taylor's concerts at Wembley. Edith said: "Weirdly, my 11-year-old's beyond excited by the idea of seeing Simple Minds and Green Day. Music has become a common ground across the generation gap."

She also revealed she was advised to get rid of her Scottish accent when she got into radio. "I was like, 'No way! My accent is my identity. The idea of losing that side of me was terrifying."

Swift, 34, was at Liverpool's Anfield stadium last night and will be in Cardiff on Tuesday.



STILL TO
WIN OVER
A FEW
PEOPLE:
Taylor in
Liverpool and,
inset, Edith
Bowman

LABOUR'S Sir Keir Starmer has accused the Conservatives of a "Jeremy Corbyn style manifesto" in which uncoded policies are hurled "into the wheelbarrow". Would these be the same manifestos Sir Keir both agreed to and campaigned on in 2017? Oh, and again in 2019?

THE BBC is to install a special care package for *Strictly Come Dancing* contestants involving counsellors, chaperones and post-show therapy. Who knew doing the cha-cha-cha was such a cha-cha-challenge?

NICK FERRARI

Memo to party leaders: Rishi, we know your Mum ran a pharmacy, Sir Keir your Dad was a toolmaker. Now give it a rest!

HAVING been forced to pay £2million a few months ago for the illegal dumping of sewage, Severn Trent water revealed last week that it has paid its chief executive, Liv Garfield, a total of £3.2million over the last financial year. Quite a price for failure – and it stinks as much as their sewage.

Where is the family in this knife horror?

A NINE-YEAR-OLD performs a song in front of his grandmother. What could be more heartwarming? Only this is a rap song about knives and drugs, with the boy dressed in a gang-style bandana, his face covered and his hand pretending to hold a gun.

Meanwhile, one of his next door neighbours has barricaded his home with iron grilles for his windows and hoops of barbed wire across the top of his fence in protection.

Three years on, now aged 12, that same boy and an accomplice of the same age hacked to death an innocent teenager as he was discussing with a friend his plans for Christmas as they walked home through a park.

The machete they used had a 16-inch blade and the stabbing penetrated the victim's back so deeply it nearly emerged from his chest. He was also slashed in the legs and kicked and punched in the head during a sustained attack.

Student Shawn Seesahai, 19, left, never stood a chance and died at the scene in a park in Wolverhampton.

Before he committed the murder, the pre-teen killer posed for a picture with the machete sticking out of his tracksuit trousers.

It was taken in the early hours of the morning and sent to the boy's girlfriend with lyrics attached to it from rapper SJ, real name Jayden O'Neill-Crichlow.

He's currently serving a life term for a machete murder he committed in 2019.

The boy regularly stayed out until four in the morning and neighbours had informed the police and social services he was carrying a knife and that he chased other youths in alleyways around his home. This vile twosome have become Britain's youngest killers since the murder of James Bulger in 1993.

Welcome to Britain 2024 where, despite the protestations of local authorities, senior police officers and politicians of almost every shade, lawlessness has reached a virtually unprecedented level.

Figures show knife crime rocketed to 49,489 in 2023, that's almost 1,000 inci-



WHATEVER is the opposite of The Magnificent Seven would be the appropriate caption for the picture above. Because as the leaders of the G7 group meet for a summit in Italy, each one is faced with declining personal ratings at home. From left to right, Germany's Olaf Schulz is minus 51

points, Canada's Justin Trudeau 38, France's Emmanuel Macron 31, Italy's Giorgia Meloni a mere (!) 10, US President Joe Biden 18.5 and Japan's Fumio Kishida 40. But at least Rishi Sunak is a world beater for the United Kingdom – he's at minus 54! Wonder how many would love to extend their stay?

dents a week. Meanwhile, the proportion of teenagers killed in knife attacks has risen to a deeply troubling 82 per cent.

In the aftermath of this horrific story, charities and campaigners were, as ever, swift to judgment.

They blamed everything and everyone from local and central government, to austerity measures, poverty and the boys' school, including the lack of a school hall where they could play table tennis.

Utter drivell!

While the precise details of what parental influence these two had, there has to have been grandparents, or siblings, or step-parents, or uncles and aunts involved in some way. Blaming everyone but the family, however fractured, is wrong.

If a 12-year-old regularly returning

home that late to whomever his guardian was isn't a sign of something amiss, I truly don't have a clue as to what is.

There is only one way to stop this precipitous descent into a crime-ridden hell fuelled by ever younger killers – and that's to go after those responsible for looking after them.

You can hear the bleating and wails from family groups and lawyers, but other countries are trying it.

In the United States, parents of a Michigan teenager who killed four students and injured seven in a school shooting were sentenced to up to 15 years for not doing more to stop their son.

Just imagine the impact of that on irresponsible parents up and down the land?

Sentencing of these machete murderers

takes place next month, when there could also be a ruling as to whether the pair will be identified. So back to those bleeding heart campaigners, who protest they were young and unaware of their actions and this would blight their lives – which is even more nonsensical.

This was a sustained attack. Afterwards one of them carefully cleaned the machete with bleach and tried to hide it in the frame of his bed. They knew precisely what they were doing. They have surrendered the right to anonymity.

EXPERTS at Cornell University in the US have said red wine and chocolate form the perfect diet for astronauts to stay healthy. Expect next week's column to be coming from Pluto.

Picture: MANDEL NGAN/AFP/GETTY



OUTLAWED: Merchant

Comic's tall tale results in shop ban

STEPHEN Merchant has told how a store's staff banned him after he criticised its clothing.

The 6ft 7in star of BBC comedy *The Outlaws* tried to buy clothes from High & Mighty as it catered for taller people.

But he wasn't too impressed with what was on offer and said so in an interview with *Time Out*.

But then the costume department on one of his shows needed outfits.

Stephen, 49, said an assistant went to High & Mighty and told staff "I'm buying these for an actor".

He added: "The woman behind the counter said 'Which actor?'... 'Is it him?'."

"She pulled out a copy of the *Time Out* interview and said, 'We're not selling clothes to him'."



CHAOS: Smith as Prince

Matt's war and piece of cake fix

HOUSE of the Dragon star Matt Smith has joked that his on-screen family need to sit down with tea and cake, and talk through their differences instead of going to war.

The popular fantasy drama, a prequel to the acclaimed *Game of Thrones*, returns to *Sky and Now* tomorrow.

Matt, who plays Prince Daemon Targaryen, said: "We all need therapy. In the absence of that we could all have a cup of tea along with some red velvet cake. It might do it."

Speaking at the drama's London premiere, the former *Doctor Who* star, 41, admitted his character was an "agent of chaos", adding that Daemon should "take up chess".

It is 10 years since superstar Dolly Parton strutted her stuff to the delight of a new generation of fans at Glastonbury. Now those legendary songs can be heard again in a musical. RICHARD BARBER reports

RADIANT in an all-white rhinestone-studded trouser suit, the country music icon dominated the Pyramid Stage back in 2014. Britain's biggest festival had never seen anything quite like it. That iconic repertoire, including hits such as *Jolene* and *9 to 5*, has now been transformed into a musical, paying homage to one of the world's biggest stars.

However, while this time it won't be Dolly appearing in person, if you close your eyes you could be forgiven for thinking you were listening to the real thing.

With her peroxide blonde wig, false lashes and a dazzling array of sparkling costumes, US actress Tricia Paoluccio certainly looks the part.

But it is her astonishing ability to reproduce Parton's distinctive vocal that has to be heard to be believed.

After she has wowed audiences across the Atlantic, British Dolly fans can now hear Paoluccio for themselves, as the musical *Here You Come Again* – the title echoing one of Parton's biggest hits – tours the UK.

Paoluccio said: "I've been able to sing like Dolly from a young age.

"I seem to be able to copy that little scratch in her voice – and the vibrato, too."

With a career spanning more than 50 years, Dolly has sold more than 100 million records worldwide, making her one of the best-selling musical artists of all time.

She has seen an incredible 25 singles reach Number 1 on the Billboard country music charts alone.

Yet while fans will be delighted to hear that all the major hits are present – including *I Will Always Love You* and *Islands In The Stream* – this is no jukebox musical.

Rather, it is the story of Kevin, a lonely 40-year-old who has just broken up with his long-time boyfriend and finds himself at crisis point.

A devoted Dolly fan, he summons up her spirit in his isolation. And it is Dolly's unshakeable decency and dignity that eventually show him how to find his way back.

The project is the brainchild of Paoluccio herself, who insisted: "I didn't want to do a one-woman show – that felt too egotistical.

"I wanted a story where I would get to play Dolly and there'd be an uber fan who was rescued by her grace and kindness."

During the pandemic, Paoluccio, 52, was living in an isolated cabin owned by her parents, in a remote corner of California with her director husband, Gabriel Barre, and their two sons.

She recalled: "No TV, no internet, we could barely get a signal for our cellphone.

"Then we got a grant from a theatre in Florida to develop a two-person show."

They duly got in touch with Bruce Vilanch, a comedy writer who has written the script for the Oscars for many years.

She said: "I gave him my basic idea and the songs I thought we should include, then Gabe gave it a structure and Bruce started on the dialogue. The first draft completed, there was a Zoom reading of the piece.

"The audience loved it and we realised

Britain says 'Hello Dolly' as legend's hits revived for stage



HEALING POWERS: Tricia and Steven Webb starring in *Here You Come Again*

'What comes through is Dolly's grace and wisdom... and that everything is going to work out in the end'

TRICIA PAOLUCCIO



Pictures: HUGO GLENDINNING; SAMIR HUSSEIN/REDFERNS

we were on to something. We also realised the show bore a message that people needed to hear then and now – and probably always.

“What comes through via Dolly’s music, her experience, her grace and wisdom, is that everything’s going to work out in the end.”

Tricia and Gabe knew a man who knows Dolly’s lawyer. “He was sent a video of the show because, of course, if we were going to perform it in public, we needed her permission – she owns the rights to all her songs.”

For six months, they heard nothing. “And then, one day, our friend got a call from the lawyer.

“Dolly loved the show, loved me, gave me permission to play her, and gave us the worldwide rights to all of her songbook.

“It was unbelievable. I dropped to my knees in gratitude.”

After touring *Here You Come Again* in six US states, the production has arrived in the UK.

On Tuesday it opens at the Theatre Royal in Newcastle, having already delighted fans in Leeds and Leicester.

It then embarks on a huge UK tour that will finally come to rest at the Liverpool Empire in December, before, it is hoped, finding a West End home.

Actor Steven Webb, who played the title role in *Oliver!*, Cameron Mackintosh’s 1994 revival of the Lionel Bart musical, and more recently was Elder McKinley in *The Book of Mormon*, will play the role of Kevin in the UK.

Steven said: “The more I read the script, the more I saw parallels with my own life.

“I’d broken up with a long-time partner. I’d had a drink problem which I had conquered. And I’d been a life-long fan of Dolly! There is something so healing about her positivity.

“It just blew my mind when I read the script. By the end, I had tears streaming down my face.”

WHILE the original show was based in Texas, it was felt the musical would resonate more with British audiences if it was set on home turf.

Step forward British screenwriter and playwright Jonathan Harvey, who has written for *Coronation Street* and *Gimme Gimme Gimme*. After being sent the script and a recording of the show, he said: “It made me smile. I found it very charming.

“But it didn’t make me cry – and I wanted to be moved by it.”

It was his idea to relocate the action to somewhere in the north of England.

“I was trying to channel the spirit of Alan Bennett. I thought he’d locate it in the Yorkshire Dales.

“Our first venue was a month in Leeds so it made sense to set it in Halifax.”

He didn’t make many changes to Dolly’s dialogue but Kevin has needed subtle rewrites to include more English references.

He has also dialled up the drama for UK audiences: “Dolly turns up in this man’s attic – a sort of *Mary Poppins* figure – and I felt it had to be at more of a crisis point than in the original script.

“In the American version, Kevin had been drinking. I didn’t think that was strong enough. So, let’s just say she finds some pills and throws them away.

“It’s important we see the darkness of his state of mind. I wanted to show a bit more pain beneath the laughs, the light as well as the shade, just like life... and Dolly.”

● For tour dates and ticket information, visit www.hereyoucomeagain.co.uk



FIELDS OF DREAMS: The real Dolly Parton rocks the crowd at Glastonbury



BBC splashes out £90,000 to protect statue



ATTACK: Protester with hammer and chisel damages statue in 2023

THE BBC is spending almost £90,000 to protect a statue by paedophile sculptor Eric Gill. The 1932 piece, *Prospero And Ariel*, is on the front of Grade II-listed Old Broadcasting House. It will have a 13ft by 9ft screen around it after a protester attacked it with a hammer in 2022. The statue was targeted again last year after the artist’s diaries revealed he sexually assaulted his two daughters. But the BBC says it is a “significant part of the façade”. It added it “has to ensure the statue is conserved to a sufficient standard to ensure the building’s listing is correctly upheld. The BBC does not condone the views or actions of Eric Gill”.

Clive: Election is ‘what being British means’

By Jaymi McCann

CLIVE Myrie has told of his pride at hosting the BBC’s election night coverage as it is “the front line of what it means to be British”.

The News at 10 and Mastermind host will reveal the results with Laura Kuenssberg from 10pm on July 4.

And he tells today’s *Desert Island Discs*: “There’s a lot of pressure and there’s a nervous energy there as well.

“I’ve never presented an election programme in the UK before, I’m getting my head around a lot of statistics.

“But you know we want to try to make it fun too. It’s not just going to be a night for geeks, I hope it’s not just a night for political geeks.

“I want people to be able to tune in and get a sense of where this country is going, and the buzz of being on the front line. This is the front line of what it means to be British.

“So there’ll be an adrenaline rush that will keep me going right into the wee small hours of the morning.”

Bolton-born Clive, 59, who is promoting his new book *Everything Is Everything*, also discusses how he is following in the footsteps of Sir Trevor McDonald, 84, who was ITN’s first black journalist.

“Seeing Trevor was an event for everybody. Not just in our household but for so many Caribbean households

up and down the country because there was a black guy in a position of authority, talking about serious things,” he says.

“That was a big thing, and I’m pleased to say he is someone I know a little bit now and he was such an important part of my decision to get into this profession.

“You can’t be what you can’t see. He is so bored with me telling him that. It’s like ‘Clive, before you say it, I know you think I’m your hero and that’s fine. Let’s move on, what are you having to drink?’”

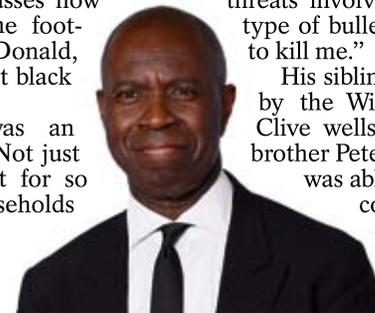
He also discusses how racism has affected his life, after being sent faeces and pictures of gorillas in the post and nasty emails. In 2017 he received death threats from a man who was later arrested and prosecuted.

Clive, who has been married to wife Catherine since 1998, admits the experience left him shaken and he tells host Lauren Laverne: “The death threats involved talking about the type of bullet he’d use in the gun to kill me.”

His siblings were also touched by the Windrush scandal, and Clive wells up when discussing brother Peter, who died before he was able to get a passport or compensation.

● *Desert Island Discs*, Radio 4 and *BBC Sounds*, today, 10am

FRONT MAN: Clive Myrie hosts BBC’s election coverage





THREAT: Russia's Kazan nuclear submarine

By **Marco Giannangeli**
DEFENCE EDITOR

THE PRIME Minister has been given a top-secret briefing after a Russian nuclear submarine was identified off the coast of Scotland.

It comes as President Vladimir Putin vowed to “punish” the West for giving Ukraine long-term missiles and a £40billion loan using frozen Russian assets.

Kazan, a state-of-the-art Yasen-class submarine, was detected on June 5 after an RAF Poseidon P8 anti-submarine aircraft dropped sonar buoys used to detect subsurface activity at depth.

An RAF maritime surveillance plane tracked the sub as it headed up the west coast of Ireland to Scotland, passing close to Britain’s nuclear naval base at Faslane. Military com-

Russian nuclear sub spotted off Scotland

manders feared the loitering 13,800-tonne vessel was probing for weaknesses on Nato’s extreme flank. The sub did not enter British waters.

News of the Russian vessel’s location was passed to the Permanent Joint Headquarters in Northwood, with both the Prime Minister and Defence Secretary informed.

Kazan was expected to go to

Venezuela before landing in Commonwealth nation Guyana where Royal Navy patrol ship HMS Trent was recently deployed as a show of support against increasing border belligerence by Russia-supporting Venezuela. The Russian president has reacted with fury at the provision of American Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) rockets to Ukraine and a loan.

In a briefing last week, Julianne Smith, the US Nato Ambassador, said Washington DC may review its policy of not allowing the ATACMS to target mainland Russia, adding: “We will continue to assess and adapt to Ukraine’s ever-evolving needs.”

On Thursday members of the G7 agreed to the £40billion loan, to be financed by interest accruing from frozen Russian assets in the West.

Around £240billion in assets from

Russia’s central bank was frozen as part of Western sanctions shortly after the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine. Sources say the deal was struck so Ukraine could be assured of enough funds in the event the US Congress once again held up aid under a Donald Trump presidency.

US President Joe Biden also signed a 10-year security pact with Ukraine leader Volodymyr Zelensky.

Justin Crump, from Sibylline strategic risk group, said: “It is important to note that it isn’t Russian funds, but rather the interest accrued from them, which will guarantee the £40billion loan to Ukraine.”

“The UK’s position is that all the money belongs to Russia and, as such, cannot be touched.

“However, it may prove useful leverage when it comes to peace talks,” he said.

‘Putin reacted with fury’

Ukraine leader Volodymyr Zelensky.

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Picture: YUI MOK/PA

BOWING OUT:
Lulu will be playing her last major gig at Glastonbury



Lulu's final Shout at Glastonbury

LULU has promised to Shout when she takes to the stage at Glastonbury for a final time – but says she definitely will not be camping.

The star, 75, who has been belting out the Isley Brothers song for 60 years, will perform on the Avalon Stage at Worthy Farm, Somerset, on Friday next week. She will make a second appearance later that day with BBC Radio 1 DJ Arielle Free, who has done a remix of Shout.

Lulu, who has announced she is retiring from touring, said: “The main thing is you go to Glastonbury and give them what they want. “That song is part of me. You give them that part of you. They’re happy and you’re happy that they are. I’m not a camper though.”

THIS SUMMER'S BEST LINE UP



If you look under 25 and want to buy alcohol you will need to prove your age. Challenge 25. No I.D. No sale. You must be 18 or over to purchase alcohol. Selected stores. Subject to availability. Coca-Cola Zero cans 8x330ml and Diet Coke cans 8x330ml £4.25 (£1.61 per litre). Peroni Nastro Azzurro Beer Lager Bottles 10x330ml £12 (£3.64 per litre). San Miguel Premium Lager Beer 12x330ml £12 (£3.03 per litre). Asda Sizzlin' Hot & Spicy Chicken Wings 1.4kg, was £6 now £4 (29p per 100g). May exclude Asda Express and small stores, see ASDA.com/smallstores



Picture: BBC



Bill's prostate cancer bravery is still saving lives, says pal Louise

TV PRESENTER Louise Minchin has pledged to carry on her friend and colleague Bill Turnbull's legacy in raising awareness of prostate cancer, writes Jane Oddy.

For Father's Day today, the former BBC Breakfast host has urged all men to take a 30-second risk checker.

And she is also fronting Prostate Cancer UK's Find It Earlier campaign after being deeply affected by the loss of her co-presenter. He died in 2022 aged 66 after a long battle with the disease.

Louise said: "Bill's honesty about his diagnosis was so important. It would have been a really massive decision for him, as he was so private about his personal life.

"But his bravery saved lives. Men still come up to me all the time and say, 'Louise, I am here and alive because Bill talked about his diagnosis and my prostate cancer was caught early'."

She added that all men should complete the quick online check: "There are some men who are more at risk than others. The earlier you find it, the easier it is to treat – and an earlier diagnosis could be life-changing.

"Father's Day is a day of joy but it can serve as a reminder day to make sure the men you love in your life – dads, brothers, sons – are healthy and well."

Referrals for the disease, which affects one in eight

'He was a great friend and a wise mentor. I miss him a lot'

men, spiked last year and Prostate Cancer UK linked it to Bill's death.

Louise, who is a celebrity supporter of the charity, also commended the King for being so open about his cancer. It was discovered when he was being treated for an unrelated procedure for an enlarged prostate.

She said: "Obviously when anyone like King Charles, who has such a high profile, talks about their diagnosis, it makes it feel real, and that it can happen to anyone."

Louise, 55, encourages her husband of 26 years, David, a cancer survivor himself, to check regularly.

The mother of two, a keen triathlete who also took part in charity runs with her friend and co-star, said: "If I can carry on what Bill started, then that's brilliant.

"He was a great friend to me. He was also a wise mentor and I miss him a lot. I wish that he knew how much of a difference he made to people's lives. What he did was incredible."

● Louise is supporting Prostate Cancer UK's Men's Health Week campaign. The earlier you find it, the easier it is to treat. Visit prostatecanceruk.org

PALS ON AND OFF SCREEN: Bill and Louise on Breakfast. Left, at Great Manchester Run

Child drownings double as fewer learn to swim

THE NUMBER of children drowning has doubled in three years as fewer learn how to swim.

Experts say the alarming trend is also because of a rise in the popularity of water sports such as paddleboarding and wakeboarding.

The latest figures reveal 41 children died by drowning last year – double that of 2019 to 2020.

As many as 125 children have accidentally drowned in the past four years.

Aras Rudzianskas, 13, and David Radit, 14, both from Newcastle, drowned in the Tyne at Ovingham, Northumberland, earlier this month.

Their deaths sparked calls for youngsters to be made more aware of the dangers of open water.

Research has revealed more than two million youngsters missed out on swimming sessions

By **Lucy Johnston** HEALTH EDITOR

during the pandemic, resulting in almost a quarter of a million children being unable to swim the length of a 25m pool.

At the same time, the Swimming Teachers' Association has calculated that 660,000 children are now missing out on swimming lessons due to teacher shortages. As a result, the association says, the children "may never learn a skill that may one day save their life".

Professor Carl Heneghan, director of Oxford University's Centre of Evidence-Based Medicine, said: "This is a major public health problem – every 11-year-old should be able to swim as a statutory element of the national curriculum. If

we cannot teach people to swim properly we have a problem." Matt Croxall, director at the Royal Life Saving Society UK, said: "The alarming increase in tragic child drowning in England highlights just how important it is that families are aware of the importance of water safety.

"With warmer summer days on the horizon, we will inevitably see people flock to open water sites across the UK and Ireland, as well as taking the opportunity to enjoy water at home in the garden. We want to ensure that everyone can enjoy water this summer by having the knowledge to do so safely."

The society is urging everyone to learn the Water Safety Code as part of its annual Drowning Prevention Week that runs until Saturday.

Cleverly in cop car cow smash call

HOME Secretary James Cleverly has asked for a "full, urgent explanation" as to why police rammed a runaway cow on Friday.

It was filmed in Staines-upon-Thames as a man tried to get away from it.

Then a Surrey Police car struck the beast. As it tried to get back up, the car trapped its head under the front of the vehicle.

The cow sustained a large cut to its leg.

On X, Mr Cleverly wrote: "I can think of no reasonable need for this."

The Independent Office for Police Conduct is probing the incident.

PARTIES GO HEAD-TO-HEAD ON NATIONAL SECURITY

SARAH BRACKWELL, 45, is a disability access consultant living in London with her partner:

How do you restore women's trust in the police after horrifying examples of misogyny and predatory behaviour?

CONSERVATIVE: By ensuring that senior officers are tackling those within their ranks who fall below the high standards we expect, and by making sure that the police are equipped to deal with the crimes that disproportionately affect women and girls. We have made progress, but we know there is more to do.

LABOUR: Four years after Sarah Everard's murder, it's disgraceful that there still aren't proper national police vetting rules. We'll change that, with new strong laws to root out bad cops from forces.

JOHN KANE, 45, local government worker living in Trowbridge, father of three daughters and one son:

How will you clear the asylum backlog and would it involve an amnesty for thousands already in the system?

CONSERVATIVE: No amnesty! Only Labour will give an amnesty to 100,000 asylum seekers and scrap our deterrent, taking us back to square one. We cleared the legacy backlog and are ready to remove illegal immigrants to Rwanda. Our plan will stop the boats.

LABOUR: Labour will end asylum hotels by hiring 1,000 new staff to clear the backlog and setting up a returns unit to remove more people. Only the Conservatives have an amnesty – letting people stay in hotels forever.

MATT CRESSWELL, 45, a teacher living in east London, married with one son and one daughter:

Is it now time to arm police as a matter of routine?



We're ready to remove illegal immigrants to Rwanda. Our plan will stop the boats

**JAMES CLEVERLY
Conservative**



CONSERVATIVE: The British policing tradition is based on consent, not force, and we should treasure that. But that doesn't mean arms don't have an important role in keeping the public safe, which is why the Conservatives will always back our firearms officers so they can police with confidence.

LABOUR: Firearms units are made up of specialist trained officers and form an essential part of policing. We believe that Chief Constables are best placed to decide how many of those specialist officers we need.

ANDREW BURKINSHAW, 47, deputy headteacher living in London, married with two daughters:
What would you say is a

WHO DO YOU TO PROTECT

Protecting Britain from terrorists, stopping illegal immigration and restoring faith in scandal-hit police forces are just some of the challenges facing whoever is in control of the Home Office the day after the election, writes Political Editor David Williamson.

Home Secretary **JAMES CLEVERLY** and his Labour opposite number **YVETTE COOPER** here answer your questions and explain what they

sustainable level of net migration if we want our economy to grow?

CONSERVATIVE: Our Conservative plan is delivering the biggest ever cut to migration. We're slashing it by 300,000 because we don't think it's fair for British workers to be undercut. Labour have put the sword of Damocles over our changes because their Left flank and union paymasters want open borders.

LABOUR: Labour will bring down net migration which has trebled under the Tories. We'll link immigration controls to new requirements for employers to train workers here in the UK.

ALISON BRAGG, 51, living in Workington, home-educating mother of three sons and three daughters:

How do you plan to stop extremists radicalising young people on their smartphones?

CONSERVATIVE: Under our Online Safety Act young people will be better protected than ever before. We are strengthening our support for Prevent, which puts a duty on statutory partners to disrupt extremism and reduce the impact of extremist ideologies, online and in communities.

LABOUR: We'll establish a comprehensive, cross-government counter-extremism

What do you think - ARE TORIES THE BEST PARTY TO TACKLE IMMIGRATION?

YES - 0901 133 4421 ● text SXYES to 63333

(CALLS COST 50P PLUS NETWORK ACCESS CHARGE)

NO - 0901 133 4422 ● text SXNO to 63333

(TEXTS COST 50P PLUS STANDARD NETWORK RATE)

You must have the bill payer's permission. Vote closes at midnight tonight. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390. Express Newspapers may contact you by post, SMS and/or email with offers, goods or services that may be of interest to you. To stop receiving SMS messages please text 'NSNOINFO' to the originating number.

Picture: MICHAEL PENHALLOW/GETTY



TRUST MOST YOUR FAMILY?

would do to stop knife crime, prevent the radicalisation of young people by extremists and ensure that serious criminals face a punishment that fits the crime. We have put the issues that matter most to you to the country's most powerful politicians.

As the election enters its final weeks we will make sure the voice of Sunday Express readers is at the heart of the national debate.

strategy, including swift and strong action to tackle the rising risks of online radicalisation. And we will hold online companies to account.

ROB FERGUSON, 30, sales director living in Minster, Kent, engaged to be married:

What's driving knife crime and how will you stop it?

CONSERVATIVE: Knife crime is a serious problem, nowhere more so than in Labour-run London. We have introduced some of the toughest knife crime legislation in the world, including banning zombie knives, and are backing the police to increase their use of stop-and-search. We need Sadiq Khan to step up and fix the problem in his city.

LABOUR: Knife crime is up 80 per cent. Labour will ensure that carrying a knife always carries consequences, with stronger laws on gangs and online knife sales. We

will also set up youth hubs to prevent teenagers being drawn into crime.

RICHARD JACK, 45, is a psychologist living in Newcastle. He is married with one son:

Should life mean life and how will you protect the public from the worst offenders who are granted parole?



CONSERVATIVE: Under the Conservatives the worst offenders are spending longer behind bars than ever before. Our parole reforms will add further safeguards at a ministerial level to stop those who are still a risk to the public from leaving prison.

LABOUR: Serious offenders need the strongest sentences. The Conservatives have been letting prisoners out early because they've failed on prisons. Labour will build more prison places, with proper punishments and probation to keep communities safe.

EDWARD SCHULDT, 77, living in London, retired, married with one son and two daughters, and eight grandchildren:

How big a threat is Russia's spy network in the UK and how will you break it up?

CONSERVATIVE: For obvious reasons we don't tend to comment on security and intelligence matters. But under legislation we introduced to tackle state threats we have prosecuted people conducting espionage and disruption on behalf of Russia. We are acutely aware of Vladimir Putin's appetite for interference and we will match his ambition with robust action of our own.

To put your questions on any subject please email us at:
questions@express.co.uk

Or write to Great Election Debate,
Sunday Express, 1 Canada Square,
Canary Wharf, London E14 5AP

LABOUR: Espionage is a serious threat. Labour will develop a new counter-terror strategy to defend Britain from state threats, including measures to ban dangerous state-backed groups from operating here.

CLAIRE FAYERS, 56, children's author living in Abergavenny with her husband:

Why don't you all just admit the Rwanda plan is doomed and nobody can stop the boats?

CONSERVATIVE: Only the Conservative Party has a clear plan and will take the bold action to smash smuggling gangs and stop the boats. Flights are ready to take off to Rwanda in July with me as your Home Secretary. Labour will scrap Rwanda and destroy our deterrent, making the UK a magnet for asylum seekers.

LABOUR: The Rwanda scheme is a con which has already cost £300million to send just one volunteer. Labour will use the money to boost our border security and smash the criminal boat gangs.

JULIE FOSTER, retired college lecturer, Burnley, married with a son and daughter:

Will you stop disruptive protests from causing gridlock and chaos?

CONSERVATIVE: Everyone has a right to protest in our country but that does not extend to causing chaos for those going about their daily lives. This is why we brought in new criminal offences and proper penalties for disruptive protest acts, such as interfering with key national infrastructure.

LABOUR: The UK has a proud tradition of peaceful protest but violent, intimidating or criminal activity must not be tolerated. We will support the police in using powers to prevent major disorder.

We'll tackle the rising risks of online radicalisation, and hold online companies to account

YVETTE COOPER
Labour



It's a new 'mane' course thanks to Clarkson craze

JEREMY Clarkson has sparked a huge surge of interest in a fungus that boosts brain function and memory.

Viewers of the third series of Clarkson's Farm on Prime Video saw the presenter, 64, growing Lion's Mane mushrooms in a disused shelter on his Diddly Squat Farm in Oxfordshire.

The Top Gear and Grand Tour star also grew Grey Oyster and Speckled Chestnut mushrooms to sell with the Lion's Mane in the shop on the 1,000-acre site.

But the cognitive boosting properties of Lion's Mane clearly appealed to viewers, resulting in a 450 per cent jump in Google searches for the product.

During the show, Clarkson's girlfriend Lisa Hogan suggested dehydrating and blending them into powder to sell as supplements.

She said: "I put it in my coffee every morning and it's like spearmint going through my whole head, your whole mind

By David Stephenson TV EDITOR

opens up and you're really clear thinking. It's amazing. Everyone who's anyone takes Lion's Mane."

In the end, his Diddly Squat Farm Shop failed to satisfy health and safety regulations to sell the powdered mushrooms as a health product but the publicity did produce a spike in interest.

Separate Ocado data showed searches for Lion's Mane mushrooms rocketed by 482 per cent in the week after the episode was broadcast.

Pork sausages also enjoyed a surge in popularity after Clarkson – assisted by Kaleb Cooper, above – introduced pigs to his farm.

Ocado said that M&S Select Farms British 12 Free Range Pork Chipolatas had spiked by 134 per cent; M&S Select Farms British 6 Free Range Pork Sausages had gone up 108 per cent, while The Black Farmer Wiltshire's Cured Bacon – Smoked had increased by 56 per cent.

Ocado Retail's produce trading manager Martha Springham said shows such as Clarkson's Farm "showed consumers just how hard Britain's farmers work".

A fourth series of the Amazon show is now being filmed.



BIG BOOST: Jeremy's focus on mushrooms at his Diddly Squat farm is sparking huge interest, not least for Lion's Mane, pictured top inset



SHOW CALL: Ryan

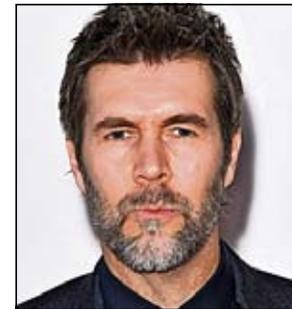
Not too late for women on TV chat

KATHERINE Ryan has hit out at TV bosses for only letting men do late-night chat shows, leaving women to do daytime interviews, where they can be "warm and gentle".

The comedian believes only men like Jonathan Ross, Graham Norton, Alan Carr and in the past Michael Parkinson are given the evening shows, while potential female hosts are excluded.

Speaking on Grace Dent's Comfort Eating podcast, Ryan, 40, said: "For a while I thought that either myself or any of my female peers could have a late-night chat show.

"I'd love to see the format of topical, powerful monologue, comedy monologue, and then sit down and chat."



STAND-UP TOUR: Gilbert

Rhod takes funny turn on cancer

COMEDIAN Rhod Gilbert says being diagnosed with cancer has not only given him a whole new lease of life but a new show.

The 55-year-old has been successfully treated for head and neck cancer, and is on a stand-up tour until the end of 2025.

He said: "I'm not sorry I got cancer. My first thought was I'm going to die. My second, hooray I've got a new show.

"That doesn't mean I want it back. But I am just gorging on life. After my show someone told me, 'I lost my child to cancer' and I can finally laugh."

But Gilbert said his illness has taken its toll on his wife Sian Harries, 43: "She hasn't been able to process it on stage."

By David Williamson
POLITICAL EDITOR

PENSIONER poverty could almost double in the next 15 years, according to a shock report.

A surge in deprivation will leave one in four older people in financial hardship, according to the charity Independent Age.

It claims retired folk are washing in cold water and keeping lights switched off to save money – and the situation could get much worse.

By 2040, the number of older people in poverty is expected to soar from 2.1 million in 2022 to 3.9 million, the report states.

Campaigners say the research should be a "wake-up call" for political parties. They warn that older women and people with disabilities are much more likely to suffer.

There is also deep concern that the number of older private renters is expected to treble by 2040.

Independent Age expects the proportion of those over 65 in the private rented sector to treble to 13 per cent. And 60 per cent of those will live in poverty. The figure rises to 75 per cent for those with a disability. Joanna Elson, the charity's chief

Poverty will hurt one in four OAPs

SUNDAY EXPRESS
CRUSADE
FAIR DEAL FOR
PENSIONERS

executive, said: "The rocketing levels of poverty in later life this research projects are bleak.

"Every day, we speak to some of the almost two million older people already in financial hardship who are skipping meals, washing in cold water or not using the lights in the evening, all to save money. It's a hor-

rible situation but it's the reality for one in six older people. And this research shows it could get worse."

The report, carried out by the UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence, warns the share of older people in poverty is on track to rise from 17 per cent to 23 per cent.

Ms Elson added: "Older private renters are already at huge risk of being in poverty, often because their fixed income is eaten up by paying rent. Unless something is done, their number could increase even further."

The Conservative Party's manifesto pledges to "cut tax for pensioners" with its "triple lock-plus".

Labour's manifesto commits to a "review of the pensions landscape".

Payout pledge fail

WASPI campaigners have hit out at the Tories and Labour for not vowing to compensate women after the election.

About 3.6 million born in the 1950s were hit by the Government not properly informing them of increases to their pension age entitlement.

Angela Madden, Waspi chair, said: "Despite the overwhelming support from parliamentary candidates, the two main parties have avoided support for Waspi women in their manifestos."

SHE WAS the middle-class bride to Elizabeth II's youngest son and after all the troubles of the Queen's other children – Charles, Andrew and Anne all got divorced – the wedding and the title given to Sophie Rhys-Jones was decidedly low-key when she married Prince Edward.

Not for them a Westminster Abbey service, as all three of Edward's elder siblings had, first time around – nor the bestowal of a dukedom.

Instead the couple married on June 19, 1999, at St George's Chapel, Windsor, and became the Earl and Countess of Wessex. But what a difference the years make.

Over the past quarter of a century the former PR girl from Kent has become the go-to royal for some of the most difficult tasks that members of the Royal Family carry out.

Sophie, 59, regularly travels on behalf of the Government to represent the UK in troubled parts of the globe. Last month she travelled to Ukraine to speak to victims of Russian sexual violence and meet President Zelensky and his wife.

With typical understatement, she said: "It isn't brave for a duchess to visit Ukraine. The survivors of this horror have true courage."

That modesty, willingness to get stuck in, commitment to causes and the ability to look elegant even in tough situations won Sophie the affection and admiration of the late Elizabeth II and of the King, who rewarded Edward and Sophie with

'Sophie got stuck in and rewrote the royal rule book'

an aristocratic upgrade to Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh soon after his own accession to the throne.

But Sophie's first steps on to the royal stage were not so sure-footed.

After she and Edward married, they both kept working – he in film production and she in her PR firm.

In 2001 there were tabloid claims about what Sophie said to an undercover reporter, including comments about the Queen and critical remarks about politicians. A year later she and Edward announced that they would step down from their businesses to focus on charities and supporting Elizabeth II during her Golden Jubilee.

At the end of 2001, the couple faced heartache when Sophie had an ectopic pregnancy removed, and in November 2003 she underwent an emergency caesarean after pregnancy problems and a severe loss of blood put her and her baby at risk.

Fortunately, both she and the baby, Lady Louise Windsor, came through unscathed. The family was completed with the arrival of James, who has succeeded his father as Earl of Wessex, in 2007.

Family life is centred around the couple's home at Bagshot Park.

The house is just 11 miles from Windsor Castle and in her later years, the Queen enjoyed the company of Sophie and the children who would regularly drive over to watch old films with her.

Just how close they had been was evident the day the Queen died and Sophie, looking stricken, was photographed with her husband

How the PR girl became the Duchess in demand

Sophie Rhys-Jones and her prince are now the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, and this week celebrate their silver wedding anniversary. CATHERINE PEPINSTER reports on the 'modest' royal whose role grows every year



arriving at Balmoral. For a quarter of a century Sophie has toured the UK and the world on behalf of first Elizabeth II and now King Charles, as well as the many charities she personally supports. Her particular interests include disabilities such as blindness and learning difficulties, farming and girl guides.

IN the past month alone she has visited charities working with blind people, handed out farming awards, attended a D-Day service at the National Memorial Arboretum, and taken an overnight stop in Germany after visiting the British Armed Forces there.

On Wednesday, she was once more focusing on the topic that has

become her own – working with victims of sexual violence in conflict – when she met survivors from the Yazidi peoples, who have suffered so much at the hands of Islamist terrorists in the Middle East in the past 10 years, at a reception at the US embassy in London.

Her commitment to this work has taken her to Kosovo, South Sudan, Iraq, Ethiopia and Colombia.

Once a royal duchess or countess would have spent some of her time dropping in to safe, worthy causes, and the rest looking decorative.

The Duchess of Edinburgh, rather like her sister-in-law, the Princess Royal, has rewritten the royal rule book about getting stuck in to tough and unfashionable causes.

SETTING STYLE: Sophie is now a key member of the Royal Family, carrying out work worldwide



HEART OF THE ROYAL FAMILY: Top left, Sophie in the 90s; with Elizabeth II at Ascot in 2019; with Edward and children

Swan stars' cygnet-ure moves

SWAN LAKE stars came face to face with the real thing when they promoted a new production of the famous ballet.

Four cast members from the English National Ballet took time out from their "in-the-round" show at London's Royal Albert Hall to pirouette across the road and meet the regal birds in Kensington Gardens.

Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* tells the story of young Prince Siegfried who falls in love with Princess Odette, danced by South Korean-born lead principal Sangeun Lee.

She and her companions transform into swans under the spell cast by evil Baron von

By **Karen Rockett**

Rothbart and spend their days gracefully gliding on a lake only to return to their human form at night. Derek Deane's *Swan Lake* in-the-round caused a sensation at its premiere in 1997 and has since been enjoyed by more than 500,000 people worldwide.

With 60 swans, stunning costumes and atmospheric lighting, the production transforms the Royal Albert Hall into a magical lake with the score played live by the English National Ballet Philharmonic.

The show runs until next Sunday.



Doubling up on people hitting 100

THE number of people over 100 has more than doubled in 20 years.

There were 15,120 centenarians in England and Wales in 2022, compared with 6,920 in 2002, the Office for National Statistics said.

The number living to be more than 105 has also jumped – from 300 to 640.

Caroline Abrahams, charity director at Age UK, said: "It demonstrates the true worth of advances in medicine.

"But a bigger older population will mean significant challenges for policymakers in terms of the need to invest in the services which an ageing society will rely on."

Asda glitch sparks run on make-up

SAVVY shoppers cleared the shelves after Asda mistakenly reduced make-up items to as little as five per cent of their normal cost.

The blunder saw Rimmel and Max Factor products priced at "3 for £2" instead of "3 for 2".

It meant items that usually retail for £13 were on sale for as little as 67p.

Some customers bought more than 500 products, which they can resell online for more than 10 times what they paid.

The blunder was discovered by reselling group LiveCops on Thursday. Asda said: "This promotional offer has now been corrected."

Sea staff's pay strike rocks Navy

SEAFARERS at the Royal Fleet Auxiliary have voted to strike this month in a dispute over pay.

Members of the Rail, Maritime and Transport union will walk out on June 25 – International Seafarers Day.

The union says essential safety measures such as maintaining moorings and gangways will be upheld during the strike.

The fleet is the Royal Navy's civilian support branch and owned by the Ministry of Defence.

Union leader Mick Lynch said: "This strike is not just a fight for fair pay, it's a stand for the dignity and recognition of seafarers."

Soaring violence on our railways revealed

BRITAIN'S most violent railway lines have been revealed, with the shocking figures suggesting a North-South divide.

British Transport Police statistics show across England last year there were 13,991 attacks on trains, the highest rate in the past five years.

Southeastern, which covers London, Kent and parts of East Sussex, saw 1,122 reports, which is 46 per cent more than the next worst line, Southern, with 768 incidents.

The routes also had the highest total during the past five years, with 4,524 violent incidents against its staff and customers.

In one shocking attack in March, horrified passengers pleaded with a knifeman to stop stabbing another young man in south-east London.

The victim was critically injured but survived. By contrast, some operators such as Grand Central, Hull Trains and Transport for Greater Manchester all reported fewer than 10 violent attacks each last year.

A spokesman for the Rail Delivery Group, which represents all operators, said: "Frontline

By **Jaymi McCann**

rail staff provide all sorts of help and advice for our customers every day, and they should never face any kind of abuse.

"Staff safety is something that the railway takes extremely seriously.

"Rail companies already have stringent meas-

'Body-worn cameras are being rolled out'

ures in place aimed at preventing and addressing instances of violence and, together with BTP, support staff in securing justice when assaults occur.

"The use of body-worn video cameras is proven to be a powerful visible deterrent. This technology has been rolled out and we hope staff will benefit from this protection."

Attacks on railway employees also increased

last year with 4,202 on staff or BTP officers in just 12 months, of which 438 were on Southeastern.

Company safeguarding manager Mark Sutton said: "We take a zero-tolerance approach to violence and anti-social behaviour on our railway and encourage colleagues to report all incidents.

"As such, we know the number of reports will be higher than other operators.

"Protecting our colleagues is a key priority. We are expanding our use of body-worn video and our safeguarding team works closely with the BTP to protect our workforce and customers."

Detective Superintendent Brett Walker, from the BTP, said: "No person on the rail network should ever be subjected to violence or abuse, especially rail staff who are simply doing their job.

"We take assaults towards members of rail staff extremely seriously and it will not be tolerated.

"We will explore all investigative avenues to identify and prosecute offenders.

"This includes encouraging staff to report incidents to us and supporting the introduction of body-worn cameras for frontline rail staff."

CAMPAIGN TO END PROTECTION

Name every youngster found guilty of murder

CHILDREN found guilty of murder should automatically be named, campaigners urged last night.

Calls are mounting for two 12-year-olds found guilty of the brutal machete murder of a stranger to be identified when they are sentenced.

They hacked unarmed stranger Shawn Seesahai, 19, to death with a machete in playing fields in Wolverhampton in November last year.

On Monday, they became the youngest to be convicted of murder since Robert Thompson and Jon Venables, both aged 11, were found guilty in 1993 of killing toddler James Bulger in Liverpool.

Julie Taylor, whose grandson Liam was stabbed to death by a gang of thugs, is among those wanting a change in the law to remove anonymity for anyone under 18 who deliberately kills.

Mrs Taylor said: "When I heard about 12-year-olds murdering someone it had me in tears. But they should be named."

"There should be a change in the law so that anyone convicted of murder, including children, is named. There should be no hiding or anonymity."

"These 12-year-olds knew what they were doing if you look at the stuff they sent and posted. Why should they get protection? They need to come down harder on them."

One of the three who murdered Liam Taylor outside a pub in 2020 was 17 and was only named when he turned 18.

Mrs Taylor now raises funds for bleed control kits and works with schools and MPs to deter youths from knife crime.

Former Met Police officer Steve Perkins said: "Anonymity only seems to serve the offender. Unless there are compelling grounds to oppose naming

By **Jon Austin** CRIME EDITOR

them, it should be the norm. If they are old enough to commit these heinous crimes, they are old enough to be named. The justice system seems to be geared up for the defendant and rarely for victims."

There is no automatic anonymity for children in crown court criminal trials but judges always put in place orders preventing their identification until they reach 18.

Judges would lift these orders upon an application by the media for the most serious offences such as murders and rapes.

With so many children now facing murder trials, there have been several cases where judges have refused to lift the anonymity. This includes the case of the 14-year-old killer of Ava White in Liverpool in 2021.

Judge Yip later allowed the naming on exceptional grounds of 16-year-olds Eddie Ratcliffe and Scarlett Jenkinson, who killed Brianna Ghey, 16, in February last year.

Mrs Justice Amanda Tipples is due to decide if the two 12-year-olds should be named in preparation for the sentence next month.

On Wednesday Policing Minister Chris Philp said they should be named.

He said: "In exceptional cases the public interest may well be served by doing that to understand a bit more about the background to this."

The Home Office, Ministry of Justice and CPS said they could not comment on any potential law changes in the run-up to the election.

We contacted the main political parties and received responses from Labour, the Lib Dems and Green Party, who all said they had no plans to change the law.



CHANGE LAW: Julie Taylor with a photo of grandson Liam. Below, Shawn Seesahai with his family. Inset left, one of his unnamed killers



Online weapons seller offering discounted knives and swords to get rid of stock ahead of ban



SELL-OFF: Knives are discounted online

AN ONLINE seller whose weapons have been bought illegally by at least three teenage killers offered "discounted" knives and swords ahead of a planned ban in September.

DNA Leisure also offered £25 mystery boxes of weapons as part of its "Knife & Sword Stock Sell Off".

Anyone buying knives online must

supply identification to prove they are over 18. Three separate murder trials heard that under-18s who went on to kill used a parent's ID to illegally buy from the vendor.

A government source said before the sale DNA Leisure approached the Home Office about handing over all the stock in return for compensation but officials

declined as it did not comply. A DNA Leisure spokesman denied weapons had been bought by convicted killers, adding: "Incidents like this have affected retailers despite, in our case, always complying with UK laws. We have taken the decision to go further than the ban and stop selling bladed items once stock has been sold."

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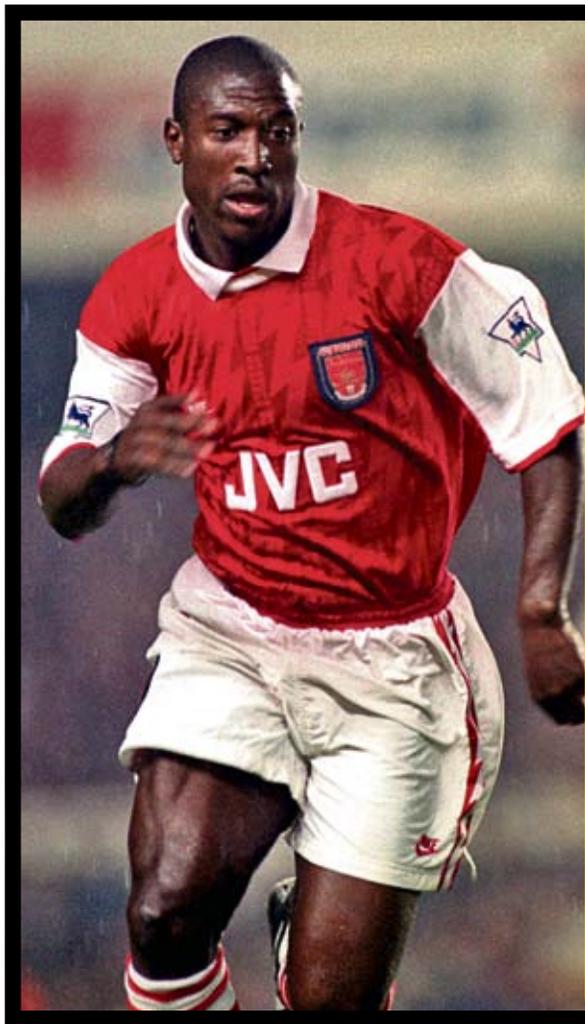
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Tributes to club legend Campbell



FORMER Arsenal and Everton star Kevin Campbell has died aged 54 following a short illness, it was announced yesterday.

Campbell, who became a football pundit in 2007, *below inset*, was hailed an "icon of the game" by Everton, who earlier this month revealed he was "very unwell" in hospital after falling ill in May.

He won four major trophies with Arsenal before going on to play for Leyton Orient, Leicester, Nottingham Forest, Trabzonspor, Everton, West Brom and Cardiff.

Arsenal said: "We are devastated. Kevin was adored by everyone at the club. All of us are thinking of his friends and family. Rest in peace, Kevin." Everton called him "not just a true Goodison Park hero and icon of the English game but an incredible person as well".

Tributes were also paid to Millwall goalkeeper and Montenegro international Matija Sarkic, who died suddenly yesterday morning at the age of 26.

He last played for his country in a 2-0 friendly defeat by Belgium on June 5, when he was made man of the match for nine saves.



Safety fears over released sex offenders

CONVICTED sex offenders released from jail are not being properly monitored because of police cuts, it has been warned.

A senior coroner said there was a "postcode lottery" of risk from more than 91,000 criminals who require regular checks.

Many forces are struggling to staff units dedicated to monitoring them.

They are having to prioritise who they keep tabs on because of shortages and a rise in numbers of those being released.

Fears emerged during an inquest into the death of vulnerable Elizabeth McCann, 26, who was raped and strangled by convicted sex offender Simon Goold at his flat in Ashton-under-Lyne, Tameside, in August 2022.

Greater Manchester Police was criticised over its monitoring of Goold, who was on a life licence after being released from a jail term for rape in 2019.

In a report, South Manchester's Senior Coroner Alison Mutch warned: "The inquest was told that a significant number of police forces were struggling to staff their Sexual Offender Management Units adequately.

By **Jon Austin** CRIME EDITOR

The level of supervision of sex offenders in the community was being 'risk managed', which is posing a risk to communities."

Latest figures show there were 91,040 registered sex offenders requiring multi-agency monitoring by the end of March 2023.

With levels growing annually there are fears that number will top 100,000 by 2029.

'This man was a danger to women'

The rise is due to an increasing number of people caught with indecent images of children, and other online offending.

There were 147,000 officers in England and Wales in 2010, but under Tory Coalition cuts this shrunk to under 127,000 by 2018. A push to recruit 20,000 new officers by last year saw levels rise to around 150,000.

However, Elizabeth's inquest was told staffing issues had been known by senior police manag-

ers for many years, with a decision taken to manage far below appropriate staffing numbers.

A Greater Manchester Police spokesman said: "While of little consolation to Elizabeth's family, our Sex Offender Management Unit has since doubled in size."

A spokeswoman for Women Against Rape said: "It's not a one-off. The coroner warns of the risk of future murders. This man was a danger to women. Police and probation staff were careless, untrained, unsupervised."

The National Police Chiefs Council said: "Policing in the UK has a number of effective tools to manage registered sex offenders and the risk they pose to the public. This will always be a complex area of work."

● We contacted 20 of the 43 police forces in England and Wales to ask how many staff they have monitoring how many sex offenders. Five provided details. West Midlands was monitoring the most (2,306), but did not say how many officers were involved, while Dorset Police had 18 "offender managers" covering 560 offenders in the community.

BILL BAILEY'S TV CHALLENGE

Pictures: SKY UK



BILL Bailey is known to millions for his madcap stand-up comedy and winning *Strictly Come Dancing*. But his zany persona hides a serious talent for music and a love of hand-crafted instruments, which he will share with viewers in a new TV show.

While Bill, 59, already owns dozens of instruments, he admits he still cannot walk past a music shop without buying another.

"Last week I was staying at a hotel in Inverness and we went out for a meal," he says. "We were only walking 100 yards to an Indian restaurant. But on the way, there was a music shop – fatal!"

"Of course, I had to go in and now I've earmarked a beautiful Dobro-style 1930s resonator guitar, with a metal soundboard, made by the famous manufacturer Ozark."

In Bill Bailey's *Musical Master Crafters: Juniors* he will highlight the skills needed to make and maintain instruments.

One fascinating episode features one of the 10 remaining experts in the country who still makes violin bows by hand.

In telling such stories, Bill hopes to

'Kids are open to all kinds of ideas'

inspire youngsters to pick up an instrument and, like him, fall in love with music.

Bill, who studied at the London College of Music, outlines how he went about capturing the young pupils' interest.

He says: "We had a couple of fantastic musicians who ran a workshop at a primary school. They were both very experienced working with primary school kids and they just captivated them."

"You could see these kids coming into the school hall and saying, 'What's going on? Why are we here?'"

"Suddenly, one of the musicians starts playing the clarinet with such beauty and fluidity that all the kids' mouths fall open – and they just go, 'Wow!'"

"One kid says to the clarinetist, 'You're really good at that.' Kids of that age respond to things like that. They are so open to all kinds of ideas. They're all just hungry to learn and figure out things."

Bill reveals he has a large collection of keyboards and also, "a lot of stringed instruments. I've got about a dozen or so serviceable acoustic and electric guitars to play around the house and on tour".

He reveals he also owns, "a mandolin, a mandola, a bouzouki, a saz and a cittern. I have to have a spare of each because

My mission to get children into music

Comedian Bill Bailey is also a classically trained musician who can play an incredible 63 instruments. He tells JAMES RAMPTON how he now hopes to share his passion for music with young people



PASSION: Lute player Elizabeth Kenny joins Bill on show; below, with pupils

although they're beautiful instruments, I don't think they were ever designed to be hauled around Europe on a 30-date tour. Some of them aren't quite robust enough."

The comic, who is blessed with perfect pitch, continues: "I was at the Royal Academy of Music the other day talking to someone who plays these wonderful instruments, like lutes. We were talking about lutes from hundreds of years ago."

"What really made me laugh was when she said, 'They changed the design because

people kept sitting on them and breaking them.' I thought, 'Clumsy medieval touring comedians. Nothing changes!'"

Music plays a key role in his stand-up show, with memorable routines including a synthesiser Belgian jazz version of the Doctor Who theme tune and *Silent Night* performed on Alpine cowbells. He says: "Music is like

looking into infinity. Somehow, with music, anything's possible. You're briefly in another world. If you play music by the great composers, say, then you're transported to another time and place."

"Then there's that element of it which is incredibly good for the soul. The moment I pick up a guitar all my troublesome thoughts immediately get ironed out."

Bill adds: "I don't think people realise how much music affects their life. It's a great way of connecting with people, too."

"I got a real sense of that after lockdown when people were venturing out again to live concerts. I felt this huge surge of energy and delight in audiences when they were able to go out and enjoy that again."

"You don't realise how much it means to you until it's gone."

In 2020 Bill, who is married with a grown-up son, became, at 55, the oldest person to win *Strictly*.

Yet he continues to derive enormous joy from music, as evidenced by his constant desire to learn new instruments. He showed off his newly acquired skill on the bagpipes on a recent episode of *Have I Got News For You*. His bravura performance of Scotland the Brave prompted panellists Ian Hislop and Paul Merton to leap up and do some Scottish dancing.

Bill laughs at the memory: "In the past 34 years, I don't think Ian has ever been out of his chair before."

His new show is part of Sky Arts' Access All Arts Week for primary schools, which returns for its third year, from tomorrow until Friday. Nearly 17,000 teachers in 9,500 schools in the UK and Ireland have joined the scheme, which offers free

downloadable resources. It was reported that 92 per cent of teachers who took part last year noticed a positive impact on pupils.

● *Bill Bailey's Musical Master Crafters: Juniors*, Sky Arts, Thursday, at 8pm



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■ WHO WOULD have imagined that a few months before a US presidential election to select the free world's most powerful leader, one candidate would be referred to as a "convicted felon" while the other contender's son would have been convicted of illegally buying a gun while addicted to crack? At least the justice system has – in both cases – done its work without fear or favour. That's something I suppose.

JENNIFER SELWAY



■ A COUPLE I have known for years said in passing they were both thinking of voting for Reform. I'd categorise them as apolitical Tories. They are not rich, they are self-employed, care about the environment and I don't know whether they voted for Brexit. They're moderate people, now resigned to a Labour government, who want to take the opportunity to punish the Tories. They are not alone.

■ IT IS exam time, but don't worry if your child does badly, fails to get a place at university or merely doodles on the exam paper while staring out of the window. Because exams are now racist so they are not worth the paper they are written on.

It appears exams have joined all the other things that are mysteriously racist – gardening, the countryside, master bedrooms, classical music, yoga, food, red lipstick... a growing list in urgent need of decolonisation, even if you don't quite understand why.

This latest manifestation of British colonialism has been uncovered by Dr Zahid Pranjol of Sussex University.

He argues that traditional exams favour those who can "recall information quickly under pressure and those who can concentrate immediately, maintain focus, perform the task quickly, and perform well under stress".

Useful skills you would think, but that only goes to show how bigoted you are. Dr Pranjol says exams are "rooted in the British empire's belief in its cultural and intellectual superiority".

Exams have been targeted by progressives for decades and it has long been fashionable to sneer at learning by rote. Critical race theory labels conventional education (you learn stuff) as the "banking system" – in which the educator deposits knowledge and the student absorbs it unquestioningly.

But all the things I did learn by heart – times tables, dates, theorems, poetry, long division etc – have proved to be very useful indeed. Learning incontrovertible facts and demonstrating your knowledge are essential and have nothing to do with racism.



■ I DON'T know if Giovanni Pernice was too hard a taskmaster when he trained his partners on Strictly. Amanda Abbington quit the series, later claiming she suffered from post-traumatic stress. Others have

made claims of "abuse" and "misconduct" while previous partner Debbie McGee staunchly defends him.

There are legal moves afoot and Pernice is absent from the line-up for the next series. He's been cancelled.

The trouble with shows like Strictly is that they purport to be TV fluff – light-hearted and good-humoured.

Whereas the truth is all professional dancers have to be obsessive perfectionists in order to succeed.

That means there is always the potential for conflicts like this.

Warning...may contain tragedy

Picture: MIRRORPIX



The Swift of my generation

FRANÇOISE HARDY, who has died at the age of 80, was my Taylor Swift. As an adolescent with frizzy hair and glasses I wanted more than anything to be like her, look like her, be French, have cheekbones and to write songs about the "perpetual torment" of love. "I was passionately in love with her," said David Bowie. "Every male in the world and a number of females were too." RIP.

WILLIAM Shakespeare read the email again carefully. It was from the Royal Shakespeare Company and he had always assumed they were on his side. In fact you could say they owed him, big time. Oh yes. Where would they be without him? For reasons best known to the powers-that-be, the RSC was staging *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at Stratford this summer.

It wasn't, Will reflected, one of his best plays. But Falstaff always got a big laugh when he appeared on stage – the great fat lump.

Yet now some snivelling potboy was emailing to say that the audiences would receive one of those damn silly trigger warnings to the effect that the play contains "bullying in the form of bodyshaming".

Bodyshaming Falstaff?

Yes, he, Will Shakespeare, did indeed describe the old lardbucket as a "gross watery pumpkin".

But that was the entire point of Falstaff. What else would you do with him – send him to a wellness spa? Advise him on diet and lifestyle goals?

He scanned through the other hazards on the "content advisory" page with mounting disbelief – "live music, flashing lights, gunshots, sudden loud noises and sound effects, haze and smoke, e-cigarettes, adultery, violence, manipulative and domineering behaviour, references to drugs and alcohol".

What were e-cigarettes anyway?

Shakespeare tugged fitfully at his ruff. They'd gone too far this time. He would make a stand and demand that the trigger warnings be retracted otherwise the RSC ninnies would have to put on a different play. Ha!

He sent the work experience potboy a crisp email and received a reply several minutes later.

"Hi Will, hope you're well and enjoying the weather. Unfortunately we cannot agree to your request to remove the trigger warning from our website. But the team is happy to work with you to resolve this situation by finding an alternative play providing it meets with our values and standards going forward."

Will ground what was left of his teeth. "Romeo and Juliet is always popular," he wrote and pressed send.

"We'd have to remind the audience that climbing on balconies without a safety harness can be dangerous."

"The Tempest?"

"Weather warning. Amber alert."

"How about *Titus Andronicus*?" Shakespeare typed.

"Remind me," replied the potboy.

"Titus returns from war with four prisoners who want revenge. They rape and gouge out the eyes of his daughter Lavinia. Titus kills two of them and bakes them in a pie which he serves up to his mother before killing her too."

"Hmmm. Is *Titus Andronicus* a plus-size?"

"No, he's a Roman general".

"No fat shaming at all?"

"No."

"Okaaaay. Leave it with me, Will. Cheers. Hope u have a gr8 weekend."

Hollywood hunk Rock 'blackmailed by wife' to hide his secret sexuality

From **Mike Parker** IN LOS ANGELES

HOLLYWOOD icon Rock Hudson was blackmailed over his secret homosexuality by his wife, a revealing new book claims.

It alleges the star of 1950s and 60s romantic comedies such as *Pillow Talk* and *Lover Come Back* was forced into a costly alimony deal to stop former secretary Phyllis Gates from exposing his private life and wrecking his career.

Screen heartthrob Hudson stunned his millions of fans when he became one of the world's first public figures to die due to Aids in 1985 at the age of 59.

But years earlier, Phyllis – his only wife of less than three years – secretly recorded him admitting to being gay after he offered her a paltry divorce settlement, according to authors Josh Young and Manfred Westphal.

They claim she hired Hollywood private eye Fred Otash to help her entrap Hudson, in a biography about Otash, just published in the US, entitled *The Fixer: Moguls, Mobsters, Movie Stars and Marilyn*.

Instead of the pittance he had offered, the McMillan and Wife star gave her their Hollywood Hills mansion. He also handed her shares in his film production company and the equivalent of £102,000 a year for 10 years to buy her silence in 1958.

Phyllis, who died aged 80 in 2006, described their marriage as a "fanciful farce" created to cover up his homosexuality.

Hudson was born Roy Harold Scherer Jr, in Winnetka, Illinois, on November 17, 1925.

He went to the same high school there as fellow film stars Charlton Heston and Ann-Margret, and developed an interest in acting while working part-time as an usher at a cinema.

After graduating in 1943 he served as a mechanic on an aircraft carrier in the Second World War, before moving to LA to achieve stardom in *Magnificent Obsession* in 1954.



'A FANCIFUL FARCE': Phyllis Gates and Rock Hudson were married for less than three years in the 50s

No playing footsie if they smell!

THREE-quarters of women would give a man with smelly feet the boot, as it's an instant turn-off.

Dirty feet, uncut toenails and fungal infections are also abhorrent to 71 per cent of women.

Among men, 69 per cent find it a passion killer but a quarter do find feet attractive compared with just one in 10 women.

The "Foesie Index" study also reveals only 49 per cent of men and 45 per cent of women believe healthy feet are important.

One in three cut their nails once every fortnight, with younger people more likely to keep their tootsies in shape with a pedicure than those aged over 35.



AGONY: Jamie-Lynn

TV star: I nearly died from sepsis

SOPRANOS star Jamie-Lynn Sigler has revealed she "almost died" after being taken to a hospital in agony on a visit to India.

The actress, 43, who played mobster's daughter Meadow in the iconic TV series, was diagnosed with life-threatening sepsis.

The condition, which can devastate the immune system, was triggered after a routine operation in the US.

Jamie-Lynn said: "I was this much away from death." She added she had been staying at an ashram retreat in India where "I felt so awakened and connected and peaceful".

The star added that after two weeks she "had a very bad reaction to the surgery and got sepsis. I almost died".

In 2016 she revealed she suffers from multiple sclerosis which, at one stage, caused her to be temporarily paralysed from the waist down.

But she kept the condition, diagnosed when she was 20, a secret from her co-stars and fans for almost two decades.

Booming drugs market sees addiction shoot up

THE number of people seeking treatment for drug addiction has soared to record levels due to the increased availability of cocaine and cheap alcohol, a report reveals.

The sharpest rise in addiction was among young people using cocaine and ketamine, a horse tranquilliser. It comes as separate figures showed spiralling deaths among drug users in treatment – 4,166 last year – up 11 per cent on 2022.

Those dying from alcohol-related illness has shot up by nearly 33 per cent since 2019, accounting for 10,048 deaths – the highest on record.

Experts say Covid is partly to blame for the surge in problem drinking and drug taking. But they also highlighted a surge in the availability of cocaine due to improved production techniques.

The data, gathered from government sources by UK drug treatment centre the Schoen Clinic, showed the numbers seeking treatment for cocaine addiction increased by 10 per cent last year to 23,529 people.

And admissions for ketamine use rose to 2,211 in 2023 compared with 1,551 the previous year.

By **Lucy Johnston** HEALTH EDITOR

The data also revealed 71 per cent of those needing treatment for drug use – 97,685 people – say they are mentally ill. This is a 53 per cent rise on five years ago.

A spokeswoman for the UK Addiction Treatment Group, which provides drug and alcohol rehab, said: "Illicit drug use has increased

'Part of increase is the fallout from lockdowns'

across the board over the past few years, but particularly cocaine use and ketamine use among young adults. We expect to see more of this as we move into the summer festival season."

She added: "During Covid many people also drank more at home and are now heavily reliant. "Part of this increase is the fallout from the

lockdowns, when people developed unhealthy habits that have now taken over their lives."

Professor Carl Heneghan, an urgent care GP and director of Oxford University's Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine, said: "The widespread availability of cheap alcohol is very concerning and in addition we are seeing increased availability of drugs such as cocaine, with global production at record levels.

"The long-term effects of these drugs – which are often used together in a highly toxic combination – are very damaging and include permanent liver damage, heart attacks and strokes.

"Addiction is a complex problem and we must work hard to stabilise the problem and reduce the use."

Dr Daniel Masud, addiction specialist at the Schoen Clinic, said: "The rise in treatment numbers highlights the growing need for integrated mental health support."

Alcohol abuse costs the NHS £27billion a year in England, with an added £14.6billion cost to the criminal justice system.

REVIEW

Edited by GARRY BUSHELL

His mellow harmonies could be heard on many iconic tracks of the 70s and 80s. Michael McDonald tells **Mick Wall** he's delighted his music still has an audience

VELVET VOICE OF A GENERATION



FOUR OF A KIND
Michael with wife Amy and children Dylan and Scarlett

MICHAEL McDONALD is speaking to me from a truck outside his new Southern California home. “The builders are here,” the Doobie Brothers legend explains from behind the steering wheel. “So I’m out in the parking lot.”

Famous for his suave “LA after dark” image – the manicured salt-and-pepper beard, soulful blue eyes, velvety tenor voice – today the multiple-Grammy winning star is feeling every one of his 72 years.

“Right now, life is total chaos,” he sighs. As well as the stressful house move, he’s taking pianos out of storage for a tour and promoting his eye-opening new autobiography *What A Fool Believes*. It is named after the US Number 1 he sang and co-wrote for the Doobies in 1979.

Co-authored by his friend Paul Reiser – the American actor best known here for his roles in the Beverly Hills Cop franchise and Netflix’s *Stranger Things* – the book is a cut above the usual pop star memoir.

“I really leaned heavily into Paul’s writing skills,” McDonald says. “He interviewed me for a month, then we transcribed from that a lot of what’s in the book.”

It’s unflinchingly honest, opening with a 19-year-old McDonald being fingerprinted by the LAPD after being arrested – yet again – for marijuana possession, and placed on probation for 12 months.

“The Doobies always had a very diverse songbook

“It was not a high point in my life – I’ll say that,” he tells me, no pun intended, adding that Los Angeles in 1971, “was a different world. Back then, no one really understood

the endgame with drugs as much as they do now. We thought we were indestructible and that a really bad hangover didn’t necessarily equate to brain damage.

“We thought, a couple of nights’ sleep and we’d be as good as new.”

Born into a second-generation Irish-American family in St Louis in 1952, his alcoholic father had been a marine in the Second World War.

His mother raised Michael and his two sisters largely on her own. His parents divorced when he was 13. “What I felt more than anything was relief,” he recalls.

By then the Beatles had stormed the Ed Sullivan Show and like millions of US teenagers, Michael was determined to follow in their Chelsea-booted footsteps. He learned guitar, piano, and realised he could sing.

A string of high school groups led to being talent-spotted by an RCA exec who brought him to Los Angeles in 1970.

McDonald found himself couch-surfing and picking up session work as a backing vocalist. He also met his future wife, a Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter named Amy Holland.

“It took a while to get together, she had a boyfriend when we met,” he smiles.

Married since 1983, they have two children, Dylan and Scarlett.

McDonald’s big break finally came in 1974 when he was hired to sing backing on the million-selling Steely Dan album, *Katy Lied*.

Steely frontman Donald Fagan was, he says, “The first person that used my voice almost as an instrument.”

It began with *Bad Sneakers*, the second single from the

Pictures: MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY; LYNDON JACKSON



BAND OF BROTHERS
The Doobie Brothers in San Francisco, 1975, Keith Knudsen, John Hartman, Tom Johnston, Jeff Baxter, Patrick Simmons, Michael McDonald and Tiran Porter

‘I became sing all

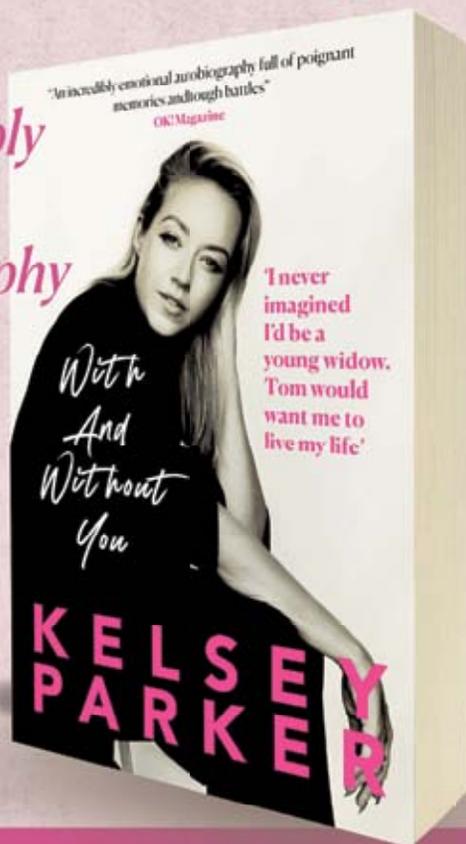
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PERFECT HARMONY:
Michael marrying Amy in 1983

album. “Donald said, ‘I want to try something. I want you to sing all the backgrounds’ – harmonies and backing vocals – ‘and we’re going to double-track you’.

“He suspected there would be a certain resonance to that and my voice became an instrument he would overdub onto tracks.”

The relationship continued over their next three albums, including 1977’s five million-plus selling *Aja*, a UK Top 5 and their biggest ever album.

“A light went on for me, and apparently for other people, because then I became that guy

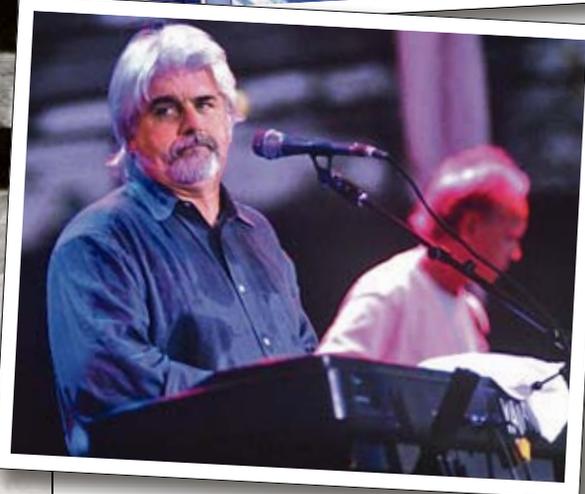
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A STAR IN DEMAND
Michael with singer Patti LaBelle; with pianist and songwriter Ray Charles; and on stage in 1998



...the guy who can ...the backgrounds'

who can do all the backgrounds." And not backgrounds. When the Doobie Brothers frontman Tom Johnston to ill-health through an American tour in 1975, their manager Jeff "Skunk" Baxter, formerly of Steely Dan, recommended McDonald to replace him. Within seven years, McDonald single-handedly transformed the band from boogie rock to sleek soul-pop troubadours.

HIS first Doobies album, *Takin' It To The Streets*, restored them to platinum status in the US while the rock-written and sung by Michael – gave their first original hit in two years. In 1978, *Minute By Minute* became their first number 1 album and remains their biggest. It did the lead single *What A Fool Believes* and its follow-up, the title track, both of which were co-written by McDonald. Such was

the profound transformation that it was like listening to a completely different band.

"People either credited me, or blamed me, for changing the band. But the Doobies always had a very diverse songbook. It was the change of lead vocalist that really caught people's attention. Luckily for us, it caught on in a whole other way."

Longtime fans weren't the only ones caught off-guard when they delivered *Minute By Minute*.

"It was a unanimous thumbs down from the label, but then *What A Fool Believes* caught the public's ear, and at the last moment we pulled it out of the bag again."

There was one last huge-selling Doobies album, *One Step Closer*, in 1980, including the McDonald-lead hit, *Real Love*.

The rest of the decade would find his instantly recognisable voice providing lead or backing vocals for countless artists, as well as his haunting solo hit, *I Keep Forgettin'*, in 1982, and his biggest UK hit, *Sweet Freedom*, in 1986.

There were also chart-topping collaborations with Quincy Jones, Patti LaBelle, James Ingram,

Christopher Cross, Burt Bacharach, Paul Anka, and Kenny Loggins. Michael's voice appeared on so many hit records, his record company told him to stop guesting.

"They said it was becoming a cheap currency," Michael recalls. "But I just couldn't resist, whenever I was asked. To this day, I can't think of anything more gratifying than to be a part of a song that I like, that I wouldn't have written myself, and to be a part of the creative process."

There was, however, a dark side to his success: an addiction to cocaine and alcohol it would take several stints in rehab, counselling and what he calls "white knuckling" to overcome. Crunch time came when wife Amy fell pregnant and checked herself into rehab in 1982. In a rare moment of clarity, McDonald decided: "The bus is leaving and if you don't get on this time, you might not be here when it comes back."

The biggest obstacle, he says, was back then marijuana was considered non-addictive, cocaine was considered cool and alcohol was legal so it must be all right. "One of the calling

cards in LA would be if you had a little blow on you. When I got the job with the Doobies, everybody drank and used drugs pretty much on a par with me. But it didn't take long before I became that guy who had to be walked to his room from the bar every night."

CLEAN AND sober these past 40-odd years, the days of seemingly endless chart-topping hits may be over, but McDonald continues to record and tour.

Indeed, his career has seen a resurgence in recent years, thanks to the emergence of "Yacht Rock" – a folding together of what used to be known as Soft Rock and AOL (adult oriented listening) with the McDonald-era of the Doobies at its forefront.

Characterised by the "Doobie Bounce", it encapsulates the honeyed tones of fellow smooth-operator travellers like Hall & Oates, Fleetwood Mac, Steely Dan, Toto and the like.

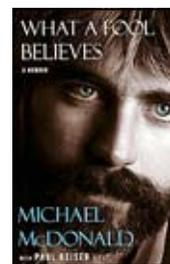
"When oldies radio first came out, I thought, 'Oh, good God! Am I already an oldie?' But what a sustaining force that has been for acts like us."

"Then with *Yacht Rock*, my son couldn't wait to show me those videos."

"But it's become something else. Maybe without it, we wouldn't be as remembered."

On tour in America this summer, opening for the Eagles, only a fool would believe otherwise.

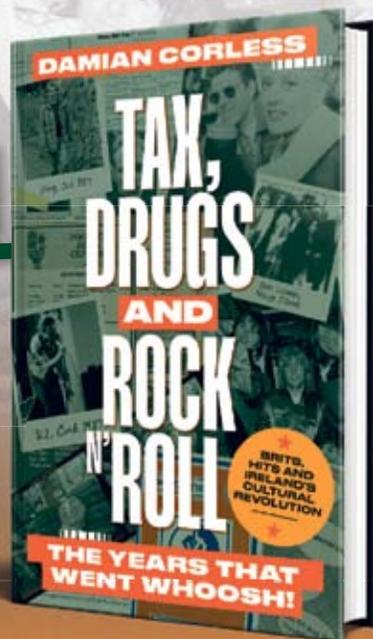
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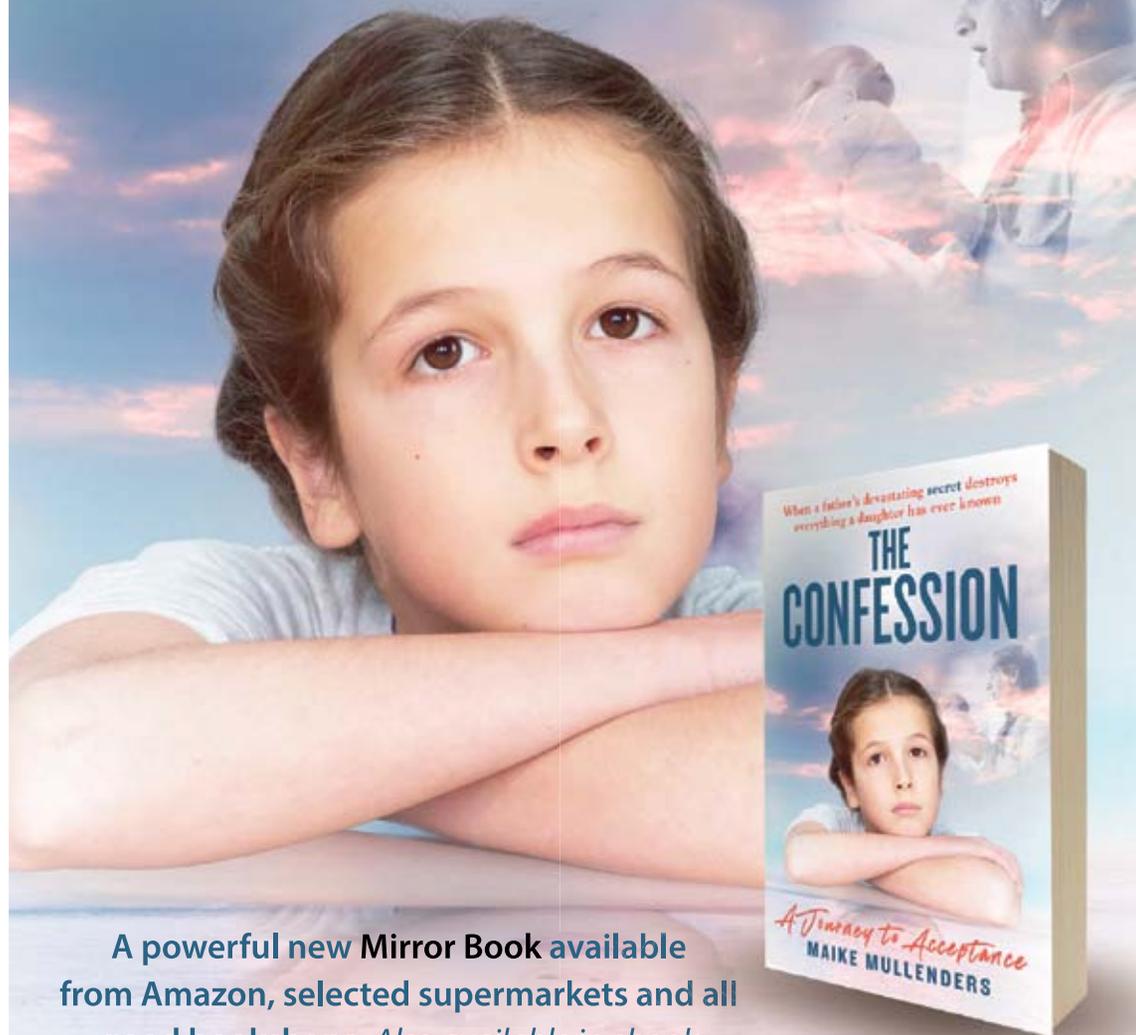
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REVIEW: MUSIC



with JAMES CABOOTER

BRU-C Family Only ★★★★★

After a flurry of early releases, drum & bass's finest rapper has been plotting something special since No Excuses went stellar. It's not the only thoughtful highlight here. Epic in scope, Bru-C hits the clubs, just as adept at making brooding, insightful commentary like Rise Up. Fellow scenester Wilkinson's church-like collab Paradise tops off fun for all the family.



LUKE COMBS

Fathers & Sons

★★★★

The purest of the new country stars doesn't need any pop or hip-hop crossovers to cement his rise. Recorded live, the intricate playing and Luke's emotionally open vocals overcome the odd treacly lyric about fatherhood. Plant A Seed and Front Door Famous see Luke now sound like a wise old country great.



JOHN GRANT

The Art Of The Lie

★★★★★

Keeping his audience on its toes, Grant effortlessly morphs from earnestness balladeer to synth pop overlord. This one features his most heartbreaking song yet in Father. Next, he's offering explicit squelchy funk and electronica. It's all done with humour and hooks, meaning John's intense tunes are approachable rather than oddball.



SEA GIRLS

Midnight Butterflies

★★★★

Yes it's album three but Sea Girls deliver the kind of melodic urgency normally reserved for shiny happy debuts here. The title track sounds like peak anthemic Coldplay if they were fronted by John Power, but then they switch to moody atmospherics for Horror Movies. Joyous and definitely ones to catch at a festival this summer.

REVIEW: STAGE



with STEFAN KYRIAZIS

ASHTON CELEBRATED

★★★★★ Royal Opera House to June 22, roh.org.uk

This Royal Ballet triple-bill tribute to choreographer Frederick Ashton showcases his trademark flair for fiendishly difficult footwork that delights.

Les Rendezvous from 1933, with elegant new designs by Jasper Conran, is a frothy froufrou of friends merrily mingling in a park. The company was on fabulous form, whirling past in an endless delight of flashing feet.

Rhapsody from 1980, set to Rachmaninoff, was choreographed for Mikhail Baryshnikov and requires showstopping virtuosity from everyone. Solidly danced, it never took flight.

The centrepiece, though, is Ashton's 1964 adaptation of A Midsummer Night's Dream. Trimming Shakespeare down to warring fairies Titania and Oberon (Francesca Hayward and Marcelino Sambe), their court and the humans lost in the woods, it is a storytelling feast. A special note goes to scene-stealing teenager Caspar Lench as a spectacularly springy Puck, and Joshua Junker who magnificently handled both Bottom's huge donkey's head and a rare male role en pointe.

Flawlessly danced and funny, The Dream is exactly that.

SWAN LAKE IN THE ROUND

★★★★★ Royal Albert Hall to June 23 ballet.org.uk

Sixty swans flutter en pointe, feet drumming the floor through clouds of

FLAWLESS Dancers thrill in triple bill



dry ice as Tchaikovsky's heavenly score soars through the Royal Albert Hall.

Staged in the round, Derek Deane's inspired English National Ballet adaptation reconfigures the classic choreography to radiate out from the centre, bulks up the cast (who impress throughout) and creates dazzlingly drilled, massed formations in every direction. You're also thrillingly close in the stalls, able to see the beauty, power and control in every carved calf and extended arm. It's wonderful.

The classic story of lovelorn Prince Siegfried (Gareth Haw) falling for swan queen Odette but deceived by her evil doppelganger Odille (both Sangeun Lee) is nearly swamped by the crowd-pleasing spectacle.

But Act III's black swan shenanigans and climactic pas de deux dazzle, before the showdown with sorcerer Rothbart delivers drama, tender intimate moments and a truly thunderous finale that left my heart pounding and spirits soaring.



SPECTACLE Gareth Haw & Sangeun Lee

REVIEW: CINEMA

STAR RATINGS ★★★★★ Excellent ★★★★ Good
★★★ Worth a look ★★ Poor ★ Don't bother



MISSION
Cage,
Martell and
Jenkins
star

Cage rattled

ARCADIAN

Cert 15 ★★★
In cinemas now

Conceived by screenwriter Michael Nilon during the pandemic, Arcadian is a post-apocalyptic survival thriller that imagines a deadly virus knocking humans off their pedestals, eventually giving birth to gnarled, nocturnal beasts that hunt our ravaged species under a cloak of darkness.

Director Benjamin Brewer's picture unfolds through the eyes of a stricken, close-knit family rallying together against the otherworldly predators from a fortified farmhouse stronghold.

The claustrophobic set-up is eerily reminiscent of the 2017 psychological horror It Comes At Night starring Joel

Edgerton, and the climactic scenes in A Quiet Place. However, Brewer stages his slick set pieces with the volume up and suspense dialled down.

Creature design is original, melding cartoonish and grotesque elements with staccato bursts of sound created when the beasts rapidly clack their jaws before they coalesce into a giant wheel and roll en masse after fugitive prey.

A creepy centrepiece involving one digitally rendered interloper relies too heavily on crazy good fortune to withstand scrutiny of logic and plausibility.

Nicolas Cage's performances are usually the craziest element on screen but in Arcadian, the Oscar-winner is surprisingly

“
The Oscar winner is understated as a father sacrificing everything

understated and effective as a father willing to sacrifice everything to protect his offspring.

He allows young co-stars Jaeden Martell and Maxwell Jenkins to shine although the script lumbers them with occasionally clunky dialogue.

Filmed on location in Ireland, Arcadian doesn't reveal the creatures in full until we're well

into the opening hour. From that point, Brewer escalates the bloodshed, shooting predominantly on twitchy, handheld cameras to stay close to the characters.

Unfortunately, that stylistic choice reduces some fight sequences to an unintelligible blur. The aching inevitability of a final stand diminishes any deliberate plucking of heartstrings to a tickle.

ULTRAMAN: RISING

Cert PG ★★★
On Netflix now

Writer-director Shannon Tindle's high-octane computer-animated adventure adds a lustrous sheen to the superpowered Japanese character dating back to the mid-1960s. Los Angeles Dodgers baseball star Ken Sato (voiced by Christopher Sean) flies home to Japan to join the ranks of the Yomiuri Giants under hard-nosed coach Shimura (Artt Butler).

Secretly, the prodigal son has begrudgingly returned to Tokyo to take up the mantle as superhero Ultraman from his injured father (Gedde Watanabe).

During a fight between Gigantron and the Kaiju Defence Force led by scheming Dr Onda

(Keone Young), Ultraman inherits Gigantron's newly hatched baby kaiju and embraces surrogate parenthood with fervour.

Writer and director Tindle and co-writer Marc Haimes - who previously worked together on the Oscar nominated stop motion fantasy Kubo And The Two Strings - evoke the wondrous film version of The Iron Giant with striking imagery of a giant robot protector towering over a wide-eyed child.

The Incredibles is another reference point with comical intergenerational angst punctuated by thunderous action-oriented set pieces.

Stylised visuals are crisply rendered and a tragedy laden storyline isn't overstuffed, setting up, somewhat predictably, a teaser in the end credits for a sequel.



CHILD'S
PLAY
Ultraman
inherits
a little
monster

SASQUATCH SUNSET

Cert 15 ★★★
In cinemas now

Sir David Attenborough has been the soothing voice of the natural history world for decades. The veteran broadcaster has witnessed many extraordinary sights on land, in the sea and the air but it's unlikely he will have ever seen a tribe of bigfoots urinating, lactating and defecating with wild delirium to mark their territory.

Bodily fluids overflow in filmmaking brothers David and Nathan Zellner's hypnotic hike through the mist-cloaked forests of North America in the company of a ragtag tribe of human-like creatures.

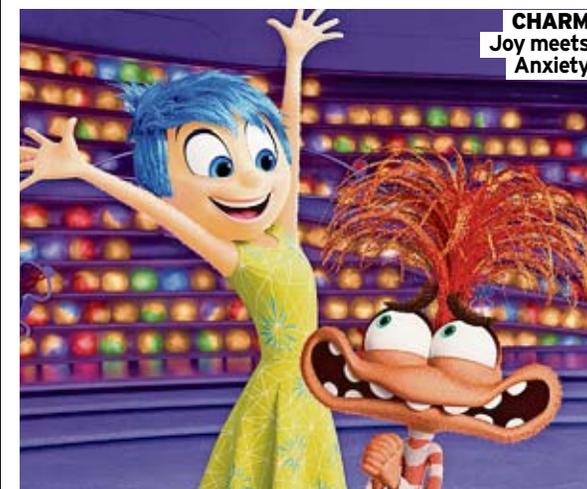
Over the course of four seasons, lovingly captured by cinematographer Mike Gioulakis as if this were a documentary, a mated couple (Jesse Eisenberg, Riley Keough), an elder male (Nathan Zellner) and an energetic youngster (Christophe Zajac-Denek) contend with a predatory mountain lion, poisonous mushrooms and the ferocity of the elements.

In amusing vignettes, one bigfoot gets high by sniffing the fur of a skunk while another creates an imaginary friend from his balled-up fist. Gentle laughs are frequently undercut by stunned silence. Death comes quickly and matter of factly.

Exemplary full-body foam latex suits fashioned by creature and prosthetics designer Steve Newburn allow the cast to vanish beneath pungent pelts matted with every conceivable excretion. Answering the call of the wild is clearly exceedingly messy.



WILD
Following
bigfoot
tribe



CHARM
Joy meets
Anxiety

INSIDE OUT 2

Cert U ★★★★★
In cinemas now

Riley, the protagonist in Pixar's 2015 film Inside Out, returns for its sequel as a 13 year old on the brink of puberty, and we watch as her existing Emotions - Joy, Sadness, Anger, Fear and Disgust - get usurped by four new, more complex feelings that wreak havoc on Headquarters.

Anxiety, played by Stranger Things' Maya Hawke, is joined by Envy, played by The Bear's Ayo Edebiri; Embarrassment, played by Black Bird's Paul Walter Hauser; and Ennui (Blue Is The Warmest Colour star Adele Exarchopoulos). Together they banish Riley's childhood Emotions and take control.

Young fans of Inside Out, now almost a decade older, will be similarly dealing with the complicated emotions that teenagehood brings, and this is a brilliant way to continue the story.

The inclusion of new emotions makes things more nuanced without sacrificing charm, and never pokes fun at Riley and her teenage confusion. Instead, it's a respectful and relatable exploration of puberty's psychological impact with some cracking jokes to boot, complete with the adventurous scale of animation that makes Pixar so beloved.

The entire film drips with charisma, immediately hooking you into its premise and keeping your attention with its glorious colours and charming characters.

REVIEW: TELEVISION



Mike Osman

What was your first TV memory?

Michael Crawford as Frank Spencer in *Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em* and Tommy Cooper. Both incredible. No one was funnier than Tommy - the silliness, the timing, the asides... He was my comedy hero and my biggest regret is that I never met him.

Who was your first TV crush?

Stephanie Beacham. She was in *Marked Personal*, which was on in the afternoon, and I used to skive off school to watch her.

What was your first TV appearance?

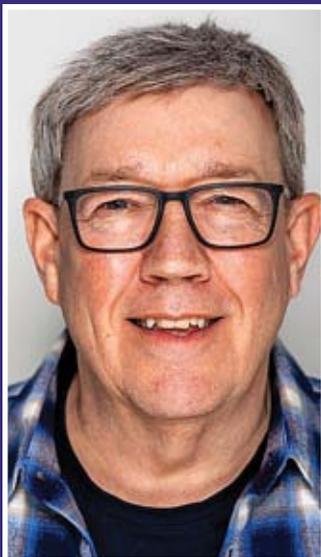
Live From The Piccadilly on ITV was the most important. I was recording *Copy Cats* when the producer David Bell asked me to appear on it. To me, that was the pinnacle. I got on *Copy Cats* in 1985 doing impressions of *Dirty Den*, the cast of *Auf Wiedersehen Pet* and *Only Fools & Horses*.

What is your favourite current show?

I just watched *Baby Reindeer*, but my all-time favourite is *Breaking Bad* - the pain, the anguish...it's a wonderful piece of television, brilliantly shot and cast.

Which TV show would you take to a desert island?

The Repair Shop. It's what the BBC does best. It's like a warm blanket, feel-good TV. I love the care and the craftsmanship... and also *Suzie Fletcher* who is my current TV crush.

**What TV show would you like to put out of its misery?**

The BBC News. They try to frighten the life out of you, everything is doom and gloom. I think they're very biased.

Guiltiest TV pleasure?

Gold Rush and *Storage Wars*. I did a cruise where most of the passengers were American. Impersonating three of the blokes from *Storage Wars* and Barack Obama helped me get away with it.

What are you up to at the moment?

I'm touring as my friend, the late great Cornish comedian Jethro, in my *What Happened Was* tribute show, doing all of his much-loved jokes.

● Mike Osman's *Jethro* tribute show is at the Regal Theatre, Redruth, tonight and Babbacombe Theatre, Torquay, on June 28.

GARRY BUSHELL



with DAVID STEPHENSON

A return to form for Regency raunch-fest

WAS THERE SOMETHING in the summer air this week? The American streamers were getting a little hot under their starched collars.

Bridgerton (*Netflix*) found its racy DNA again with characters slipping out of their crinolines, quite unnecessarily.

For some reason, I thought Colin Bridgerton (Luke Newton) and Penelope Featherington (Nicola Coughlan) would be different from the rest. Alas no.

This pair already had form from part one, enduring what appeared to be a most uncomfortable clinch in Pen's bumpy carriage. In part two they visited Colin's equivalent of a Regency starter home where he imagined they might live after marriage.

Most of the furniture was covered in dust sheets, but hygiene was far from their thoughts. After he whispered a few commanding phrases from his much-anticipated Paris travelogue - publisher to be confirmed - the couple struggled to contain themselves on a well-placed chaise longue. It only needed a valet to pop his head around the door, and it would have been *Carry on...* Colin.

This show needs an away day in a local monastery.

We all know America likes a legal drama and **Presumed Innocent** (*Apple TV+*) was a quality offering.

Jake Gyllenhaal played a Chicago lawyer in a swarty DA's office who one day discovers the colleague he's been having an affair with has been murdered. Or did he just "discover"? So hangs this suspense thriller, which grabs you from the first scene.

It comes from Scott Turow's 1987 novel, which has been updated by David E Kelley (*Boston Legal*), and JJ Abrams, whose films have made \$4billion. You never know, he might be due a flop, but this isn't it.

Half-way through the episode we drifted into back story, in which Gyllenhaal's Rusty Savage - name of the week - didn't try very hard not to have an affair with his pretty lawyer colleague (Renate Reinsve).

Hey, they were difficult work meetings.

Rusty keeps trying to teach his kid a curve ball. It turns out, he's been throwing a few himself. Our lawyer finally resorted to a therapist, where he came to the least persuasive explanation, "It wasn't about the sex..."

The only flaw in this classy new show is Rusty's wife (Ruth Negga) who obviously doesn't know how to call a cab, or she would have left months ago.

There's something very Eighties about it and it's bound to be a hit - unless everyone has read the book by now.

You're not going to believe this, but the most compelling show of the week was **Scam Interceptors** (*BBC1, Monday*).

If you're a fan of the film *The Beekeeper* with Jason Statham, this is its TV accompaniment. In the film Statham



FULL STEAM AHEAD
Luke Newton and Nicola Coughlan in *Bridgerton*

STEPHENSON'S ROCKET

Now there I was thinking it would be nice to watch a DC superhero on ITVX this week. And just like lightning, there he was. It was **The Flash** (*ITVX, Wednesday*). Only thing was, he was everywhere else including on Sky and on Prime Video. Then I recalled watching him on Sky when it first came out. He was so impressive at reading tyre prints off a pavement as a "police scientist". And he was called Barry. Really? He's a superhero. I'm calling these "silent repeats". They creep on you before you go, "I've seen this rubbish before..."

torches a call centre of scammers and then beats up any survivors.

While not condoning violence one can understand the sentiment.

In the BBC version, Rav Wilding is in charge of operations. Everybody is dressed in dark, forbidding clothing like a fringe theatre performance, but this is serious.

Rav and his friends hack into an old lady's phone call from a real scammer in India. When his team finally get her address, it's a race to get her to put the phone down.

The punishment? One of the researchers later calls the hacker and asks him, "Do your mum and dad know you're doing this?"

And whaddya know,

CLASSY SHOW:
Jake Gyllenhaal in *Presumed Innocent*



the hacker puts the phone down. Eat your heart out Statham. And finally, is politics entertaining? Increasingly, yes.

I mean, who didn't laugh or at times simply despair during **The Battle For Number 10** (*Sky News, Wednesday*)?

In this novel format, Starmer and Sunak didn't actually face each other in the grand surroundings of the Grimsby Town Hall. They sat uneasily before the voting public and skilled inquisitor Beth Rigby.

Leaving my sofa at home, I took a ringside seat in the so-called Spin Room to witness this new political blood sport.

It was funny, raw - and unpredictable.

On stage Slugger Rigby was taking lumps out of the political quarry, while journalists, broadcasters and political hangers-on watched the live transmission on a huge screen, "ooing" or "ahing", at every punch landed or parried.

When the questions stopped the "spin" took over. Labour's Jonathan Ashworth darted into the room looking very pleased with himself. "They should have thrown in the towel for Sunak," he declared, optimistically.

Later the Tories' James Cleverly, not so chipper, led a throng of advisers and security into the room, muttering about Labour putting "£4,800 a year on to your mortgage". Figures, figures...

So who won? Starmer struggled to deal with a charge of being a "political robot", while Sunak said he wasn't giving up, though looking ill-at-ease.

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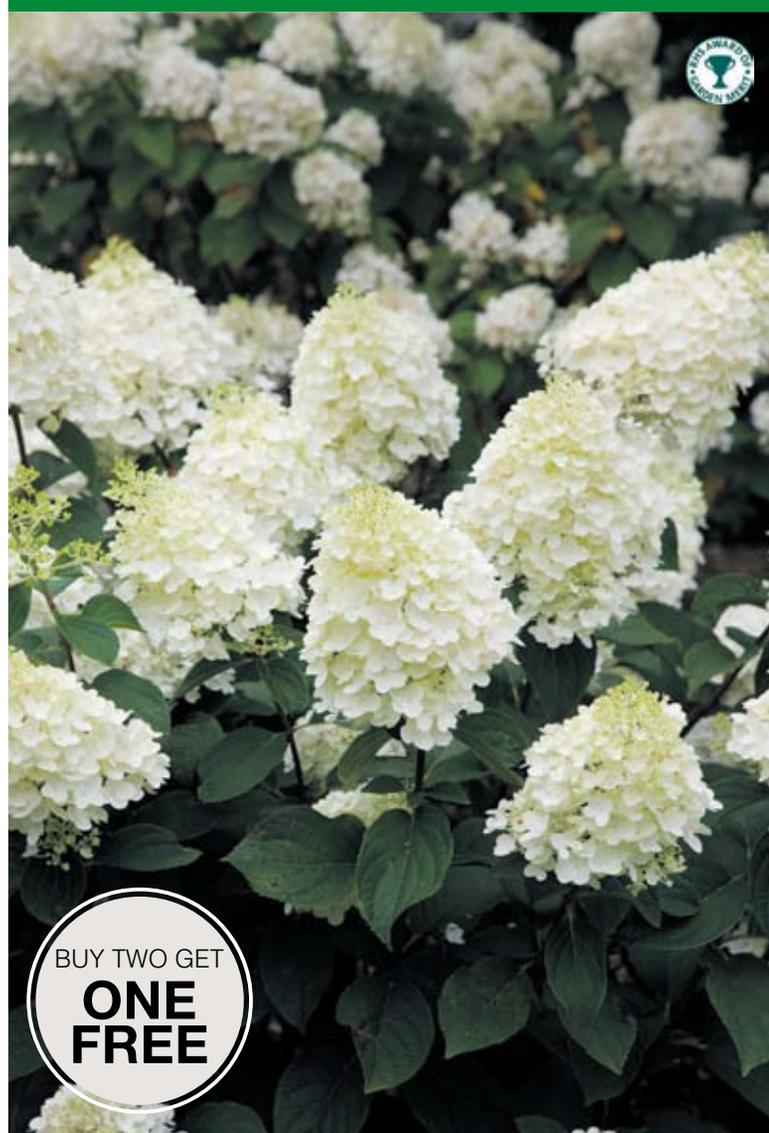
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Mandarin
duck**



Foreign visitors flourishing here

Joni Mitchell sang about the trees being uprooted and put in a museum so people could pay a dollar and half to see them.

In reality, things are the other way round. Exotic birds that should be behind the wire in zoos and wildfowl collections are flourishing in the British countryside.

Mandarin ducks from China, Egyptian Geese from the African savannah and spectacular Indian peafowl are some of the non-native species that escaped captivity and are now firmly established as official breeding birds.

Undoubtedly the most successful colonist from the tropics is the ring-necked parakeet whose screeching cries ring out today from the grounds of Buckingham Palace to gardens in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Sadly, while non-native species are spreading their wings, many of our iconic birds of field and forest have a teetering perch-hold on existence. Numbers of nesting turtle doves have crashed by 97% since I began writing my newspaper nature column in 1994. Willow tits have declined by 90% and there are 81% fewer breeding wood warblers.

Over the same period, ring-necked parakeet numbers have soared by 2,154% and Egyptian Geese by 1,835%.

Scanning the data set from the recently published UK Breeding Bird Survey Report 2023 provides an insight into the success foreign interlopers are enjoying in an environment increasingly impacted by human influences.

One look at the 119 species monitored by the BBS's small army of British Trust for Ornithology volunteers shows 42 have declined since surveying began in 1994 while 35 have increased.

You have to accept non-native species do add a dash of colour to the countryside. The brilliant greens and crimsons of the ring-necked parakeet and the smorgasbord of browns, cinnamons, greys and reds of the Egyptian goose make them stand out birds.

Yet for sheer beauty, the drake mandarin with its fluffy whiskers and orange 'sails' ranks as the fanciest duck on the water. Since the BBS began, its numbers have risen by 600% to today's estimated population of more than 4,400 pairs.

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IN THE

GRACEFUL
Foxgloves
are a
wonderful
addition to
any garden



BRIGHT
Digitalis
var albiflora

With their striking shape and choice of colours, foxgloves look stunning

One of my favourite sights in June is that of a bee burrowing deeply into a purple spotted foxglove flower.

It epitomises the start of summer and the grace and beauty of this native wildflower is a joy to be savoured.

A staple of cottage garden planting with its romantic and rustic appearance, it also can hold its own in the contemporary garden.

If you're planning a white area, then Digitalis var

albiflora, will add a statuesque glamour and are also a great way to brighten up a shady corner.

The native foxglove Digitalis purpurea is a biennial, meaning it takes two years to complete its lifecycle. In the first year it puts energy into root formation and a rosette of leaves. In the second year it diverts energy into sending up a spike of flowers and setting seed. The seed is fine and will blow around, settling and growing in expected spaces

GARDEN



with DIARMUID GAVIN

gardening@express.co.uk
Sorry, Diarmuid cannot reply personally



Gloves are a perfect fit



PASTEL
Digitalis lutea



VIBRANT
Digitalis illumination pink

where you would never have thought to plant them.

But did you know that there are also perennial foxgloves? These you plant in one spot and they will reappear there year after year. One such is *Digitalis ferruginea*, the rusty foxglove. It looks similar to the classic foxglove with its rosette of leaves and flower spike, but has much smaller flowers which are a rusty brown in appearance.

While perennial foxgloves can be relatively short lived, say up to four years, I have found *ferruginea* flowered for me under the birch trees for many a year and is starting to spread a little as well. 'Gelber Herod' is a more dramatic cultivar of this, with bigger and more orchid-like flowers which are yellow with brown veining.

Digitalis lutea is also a perennial and



RUSTY
Digitalis ferruginea

has pretty pastel yellow flowers. Also known as the Small or Straw Foxglove, it's more compact and delicate than the traditional version, growing to around two feet in height and the flowers are like narrow trumpets.

Like their cousins, they like to grow in a humus rich soil, one that is moist but well drained. Dappled shade is best for all foxgloves and they

mingle well with other shade lovers such as hostas, hellebores and ferns.

For something a bit more showy and really good as a central "thriller" plant for your summer pots, look no further than the perennial *Digitalis 'Illumination Pink'*. The trumpet flowers are a zingy combination of orange pink on the

outside with a coral interior dotted with orange. It's a sterile cultivar which means it doesn't produce seed but keeps producing flowers.

It's still a bee magnet for nectar and its branch habit will produce more flowers through the summer.

Finally, there are the Dalmatian foxgloves – these are notable for flowering in their first year and they come in a range of beautiful colours from a very soft peach, cream, white, purple and rosy pink. As the name suggests, the throats of the flowers are strongly spotted. So if you like growing from seed, this would be a good variety for quick results.

A word of caution with foxgloves – they contain digoxin which is used to treat heart conditions but should never be ingested, so bear that in mind with children and pets.

“
Dalmatian foxgloves, as the name suggests, are strongly spotted

JOBS for the week

- Most houseplants are in active growth now so need regular watering and fortnightly feeding.
- Check your cabbages for butterflies laying their eggs – often you will find them on the underside of leaves. Remove by hand as their baby caterpillars can completely denude your plant.
- Fruit bushes need lots of water in dry periods to allow fruit to swell. Plums, pears and apples can be thinned out this month. This happens naturally as well – it's called June drop – but if you want bigger fruit, remove some of the smaller fruitlets.
- Ornamental lemon trees can vacation outdoors for the summer.



■ Plant some seeds – nasturtiums are easy to grow and can go straight in the ground now or into pots for a cascade of flowers in late summer.

■ Continue successional sowing of salads and sow outdoors cucumber, sweetcorn, squash, French, runner and broad beans.

■ Earth up your spuds. New potatoes may be ready to harvest, depending on when planted.

■ Prune spring flowering deciduous shrubs such as kerria, forsythia, ribes and weigela as soon as they finish flowering.

PLANT of the week



Verbascum Dark Eyes

This is a compact *Verbascum*, growing to around one foot in height. It has a central spike of cream yellow flowers with a maroon-red centre, held above crinkly green foliage. It has a long flowering period from early to late summer and is easy to maintain.

Plant in full sun and well-drained soil – *Verbascum* is quite drought tolerant and suitable for a dry gravel garden. It's ideal in mixed and perennial borders, or in pots and containers.



So things have turned out well – hooray! For Rupert and his chum to play.



The chums enjoy just hunting round. To see what treasures can be found.

Rupert

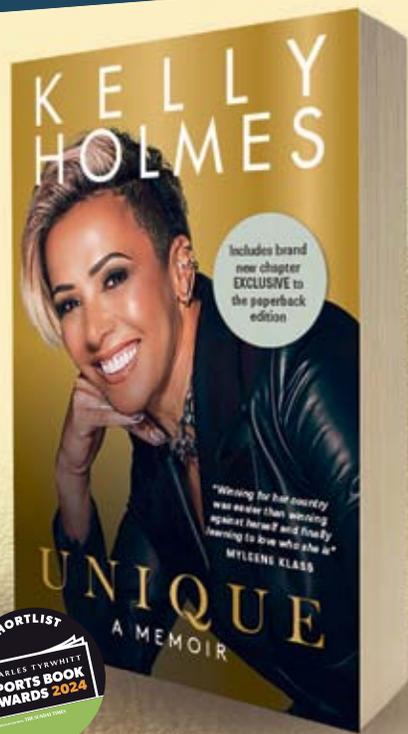
Rupert at Rocky Bay
EPISODE 30

For the rest of the holiday the little pals search for strange creatures in the rock pools, while the others sun themselves on the shore and discuss deep matters. "I don't understand the catching of the crab," says Grandpa Mouse. "You all tell me that my Rastus is clever, but all I can say is that if he has any brains they must be in his tail." But Rupert smiles happily. "Everything has come out all right," he says. "I wanted a pal to share my holiday with and now I've got one!"

To order a copy of the Rupert Annual 2024 (£10.99) visit www.expressbookshop.com or call Express Bookshop on 020 3176 3832. Free UK P&P on online orders over £25.



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EXPRESS

IN GOOD

Watching TV, drinking coffee, doomscrolling on our phones and even sipping water can all have a negative effect on our sleep. Here the experts tell us what time we need to stop each habit in order to achieve the best quality kip.

Drinking water Cut off o'clock: One to two hours before bed

Staying hydrated is essential but according to the experts it's a good idea to drink most of your fluids early in the day as too much water before bedtime can cause nocturia, the need to urinate at night. One study showed that 76% of women and 69% of men in the UK, US and Sweden have nocturia episodes that wake them up at night.

"Aim to stop drinking fluids one to two hours before bedtime," advises Dr Hana Patel (time4sleep.co.uk). "However, if you find yourself waking up in the night due to thirst or dehydration, a small sip of water will help."

Using our phones Cut off o'clock: One hour before bed

Surprisingly, one recent study, published in Sleep Medicine Reviews, shows that being on your phone at bedtime isn't quite as bad as originally thought but, even so, the blue light your phone emits mimics daylight and can throw off your natural body clock.

Dr Lindsay Browning, sleep expert for andsobed.co.uk, recommends switching off an hour before you try to sleep.

"Our brains need to be calm to fall asleep and if we spend the hour before bed on our phones there will be too much adrenaline and cortisol pumping through our bodies and keeping us awake," she says.

"An hour's gap allows our brains and bodies to calm down, so falling asleep is easier."

Having sex Cut off o'clock: Never

"For a good night's sleep, have as much sex before bedtime as you like," says Dr Deborah Lee (doctorfox.co.uk). That's because research published in the Journal of Sleep Research has shown that having sex that leads to orgasm at night not only improves sleep quality but also reduces the time it takes to fall asleep.

"At orgasm, hormones such as oxytocin and prolactin are released, making you feel relaxed and in a pleasurable state," explains Dr Lee. "Levels of the stress hormone cortisol are also reduced. All of this is conducive to good sleep."

Eating Cut off o'clock: Three hours before bed

"Food and sleep have a very complex relationship, with poor sleep affecting food choices. Also, what and when we eat affects sleep," says Dr Browning.

"When we should stop eating before bed is also complex, depending on how much food we eat, and what we are eating. Eating a large meal right before bed can cause indigestion which disrupts sleep, so studies show you shouldn't eat your evening meal within three hours of bedtime.

"However, a light snack, especially those high in protein, tryptophan or melatonin, can promote sleep by reducing hunger and preventing low blood sugar."



Caffeine Cut off o'clock: 2pm

Research in the Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine shows that even if you stop your caffeine intake six hours before you go to bed, it can still reduce sleep by more than an hour. "That's because caffeine has an average half-life of six hours which means that six hours after your cup of coffee, half of the caffeine is still in your system," explains Dr Browning.

"Caffeine is not only found in tea and coffee, but also in chocolate and some soft drinks. A 2pm cut off is a helpful guideline as it's just after lunch and helps people remember to stop for the rest of the day."

Listening to music Cut off o'clock: Just before you doze off

You might think listening to music would keep you wide awake but research shows it can actually help you nod off. One study published in the Journal of Community

Health Nursing asked women with insomnia to listen to their own playlist in bed for 10 nights and the results showed that doing so reduced the time they took to fall asleep from 27-69 minutes to just 6-13 minutes.

"This may be because listening to music causes the release of dopamine, the feelgood hormone, and also lowers cortisol levels," says Dr Fox. "Music dampens down the autonomic (involuntary) nervous system, resulting in a lower heart rate, slower breathing rate and lower blood pressure."

Alcohol Cut off o'clock: Three hours before bed

Drinking alcohol can make you fall asleep more quickly but studies show that no matter how little of it you drink, it still reduces the amount of NREM (non-rapid eye movement) sleep, or lighter sleep, you get. It also increases your chance of suffering from sleep apnoea, which also disrupts sleep.

"Many people have issues staying asleep and getting good quality sleep after drinking



HEALTH



with AMY PACKER



Bed times

Natasha Holt reveals which activities you should stop – and when – to maximise the quality of your sleep

so it's always best to avoid alcohol three to four hours before bed," says Dr Patel. "This is so your body has plenty of time to metabolise the alcohol and get it out of your system before you sleep."

Chatting

Cut off o'clock: One to two hours before bed

It's tempting to enjoy some pillow talk at bedtime but while this may help strengthen your relationship, sadly it could also be the reason you're struggling to sleep.

"You need verbal and social media silence 1-2 hours before bedtime," insists Dr Fox.

"You can only drift off to sleep when your brain is in a relaxed and peaceful



state. This means winding down for sleep a couple of hours before bed."

Exercise

Cut off o'clock: One hour before bed

"Research shows we should avoid vigorous activity for at least one hour before bedtime as it can lead to us taking longer to fall asleep, while also diminishing our overall sleep quality," says Dr Patel.

One Harvard study suggests this is because intense exercise leads to physiological excitement and it then takes our brains and bodies time to settle back

down. "High intensity workouts in particular should ideally be earlier in the day," advises Dr Patel.

Being outside

Cut off o'clock: Two hours before bed

As summer finally sets in most of us can't wait to enjoy those long, warmer evenings. But, according to Dr Fox, we should head inside long before bedtime.

"Wait at least two hours to go to bed after being outside in daylight," she advises. "Your brain needs to take note of the arrival of darkness, or the absence of daylight, and become aware of a drop in air temperature. Darkness stimulates the production of the sleep hormone melatonin, which is vital for your body's natural clock which governs your sleep-wake cycle. It takes around

two hours to produce enough melatonin to give your body the correct signals it's time for sleep."

Watching TV

Cut off o'clock: One hour before bed

It's common to watch TV to unwind in the evenings but, as with our phones, the blue light emitted can leave us feeling wide awake.

US research shows that binge watching in particular had an adverse effect as viewers took longer to switch off.

"Always aim to stop watching TV at least one hour before bedtime as this will help encourage REM sleep which is important for our overall health and immune systems," advises Dr Patel. "When we're in the REM part of our sleep cycle, our brains are truly resting and repairing themselves, while also processing any emotions from the day."

RETAIL THERAPIES

■ Want a smoothie with your lunch but don't want all the goodness to turn to sugar while it sits in your bag? Make yours on the go instead with the cordless and rechargeable Nutribullet Portable Blender (£39.99; nutribullet.co.uk). Light enough to carry around but still a whizz at blitzing using a six-point stainless steel blade.



■ In fun prints and vibrant colour, Step One boxers (from £19; John Lewis) are made from eco-friendly and ultra-soft bamboo, making them super comfy for your nether regions... Whether you like boxer briefs or trunks, there's something for every man, including the Boxer Brief Plus, designed with extra support to keep you secure while playing sports.

■ Keep your eye health tip-top with MacuShield Original+ Omega 3 (£28.99; Boots). With three quarters of Brits lacking vital fatty acids, it's never been more important to boost your intake – and these are ideal even if you're vegetarian, as the supplement's omegas are sourced from natural algae, a sustainable alternative to fish oil.



■ We've known for a long time olive oil brings heart health and anti-cancer benefits, but did you know bones could get a boost too, with rates of osteoporosis lower in the Mediterranean than elsewhere in Europe?

Benefit the tasty way with Uneathed Olives With Chilli (£4.75; Waitrose) which come in a Calabrian chilli marinade.



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TRAVEL



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An Abu Dhabi do

Virginia Blackburn
channels her inner
Bedouin on a luxury
stay in UAE's capital



MOSQUE READY
Virginia models
her scarf

Many moons ago, I was sitting in the middle of the Sahara, luxuriating in the heat, making eyes at the camels and wondering if the rug I was lying on had any magical properties.

One of my co-travellers noticed this. "You were a Bedouin in a former life," he said. I was delighted and ever since have

tried to combine my Bedouin tendencies with those of, shall we say, a more worldly lifestyle. And where better to do that than Abu Dhabi, one of the most high-profile cities in the Middle East?

Its younger sister, Dubai, might be flashier, but Abu Dhabi is the one who bailed her out after her finances hit the skids and AD is now rapidly catching her up as a

CONTINUED OVER THE PAGE

EPIC
Sheikh
Zayed
Grand
Mosque

Budget
long-haul airline
Norse Atlantic Airways is celebrating its second anniversary with cut-priced fares from Gatwick. Return flights to New York, LA, Miami, Orlando, and Las Vegas are from £279. For travel between September and March. Book by June 18. flynorse.com

Cruise news

BY VICKY LISSAMAN

Game of Thrones prequel House of the Dragon season two hits our screens tomorrow - and fans can live the fantasy on Marella Cruises with excursions to filming locations in Croatia and Spain. Jump aboard Marella 2 for the seven-night Adriatic Delights round-trip from Dubrovnik including a King's Landing Game of

Thrones Location Tour of the city. Departing July 25, with flights from Bristol, the all-inclusive cruise calls at Zadar and Split in Croatia, Trieste and Ancona in Italy, and Kotor, Montenegro. From £1132pp.

And Marella 2's all-inclusive seven-night Sights and Delights round-trip cruise from Malaga, Spain, features the Explore Granada Tour visiting 14th century Castillo de La Calahorra in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada which is mythical city Pentos. From £931pp, the

cruise includes return flights from Bournemouth on November 14, and calls at Cadiz, Casablanca, Gibraltar, Motril (for Granada). tui.co.uk/cruise
■ MSC Cruises' new Southern Caribbean winter itineraries offer seven nights aboard MSC Virtuosa from £699pp. Fly-cruises are available from Heathrow to Bridgetown, Barbados, for the 2024/25 season.

Stop-offs include Pointe-a-Pitre, Guadeloupe, and Fort de France, Martinique. msccruises.co.uk

Warner Hotels is offering £1 million-worth of discounts on its adults-only breaks spanning two or more nights. Book before midnight on June 24 to get 25% off selected breaks at 15 locations taken until December 31. warnerhotels.co.uk/drop



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TRAVEL

Hotel of the week

BY DAVID McDONNELL



Titanic Spa, Huddersfield, West Yorks

WHERE AND WHY

Set in a restored 20th century textile mill, Titanic Spa is the perfect place to unwind. With a wide range of treatments and luxurious apartments, it is perfect for stepping off the treadmill of your daily routine.

It's situated in the village of Linthwaite in the Yorkshire Pennines a few miles from Huddersfield, and you feel a sense of relaxation as soon as you walk through the doors.

My wife and I were booked in for an overnight stay, with spa packages starting at £184 per person which includes a one-course light lunch and a two-course evening meal in a bistro serving locally sourced produce.

The package also includes access to steam and sauna rooms, an outdoor hot tub and a 15-metre, salt-regulated swimming pool. There is also a breakfast hamper.

ON THE MENU

For lunch, I chose the chicken penne pasta, served with wild mushrooms and Yorkshire blue cheese, while my wife went for porcini mushroom, cashew nut and spinach penne pasta. We both had a dessert of chocolate cheesecake. My evening main course was braised ox cheek with creamy mash with a red wine jus, while my wife chose baked hake, topped with a black olive tapenade. The food was outstanding.

WHILE YOU'RE THERE

The 55-minute Elemis men's high performance skin energiser facial (£99) pledges to revitalise dehydrated skin and tired eyes - ideal for a jaded, middle-aged father of two. My wife chose the 55-minute deep tissue massage (£104), her masseuse tailoring the treatment to her specific needs, focusing on muscle pain and stress relief. Both of us felt revitalised and energised afterwards.

After stints in the steam room, hot tub and a swim in the pool, we returned to our room, an impressive split-level apartment that sleeps up to six people. Equipped with a kitchen, lounge, two bathrooms and a balcony overlooking the River Colne, it had everything we needed.

The spa also houses the Heat and Ice Experience, which includes an aromatherapy room, crystal steam bath, sauna cabin, foot bath, ice room and plunge pool, while there is also a mud chamber, which costs £35pp.

WAKE UP CALL

Spa packages start at £184pp for an overnight stay, which includes a one-course lunch, two-course dinner and full use of the spa facilities. Treatments are extra.

Call the Titanic Spa reservations team on 01484 843544, titanicspa.com

MOTORING

Ferrari World on Yas Island



IMPOSING

Yas Marina in stunning Abu Dhabi



AMAZING

Inside the Grand Mosque

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

tourist destination in its own right. A more sophisticated destination, too, for while Dubai (which I like) is all about the tallest building and the biggest mall, Abu Dhabi is shaping itself as the cultural hub of the UAE, understandably as it is also its capital.

But we Bedouin like our shopping and good hotels, or at least, this one does, and there's no shortage of those too. We also do not just travel by camel these days, and so it was British Airways that stood in for the magic carpet on its newly reopened route to AD, a route that had been closed for some years due to Covid.

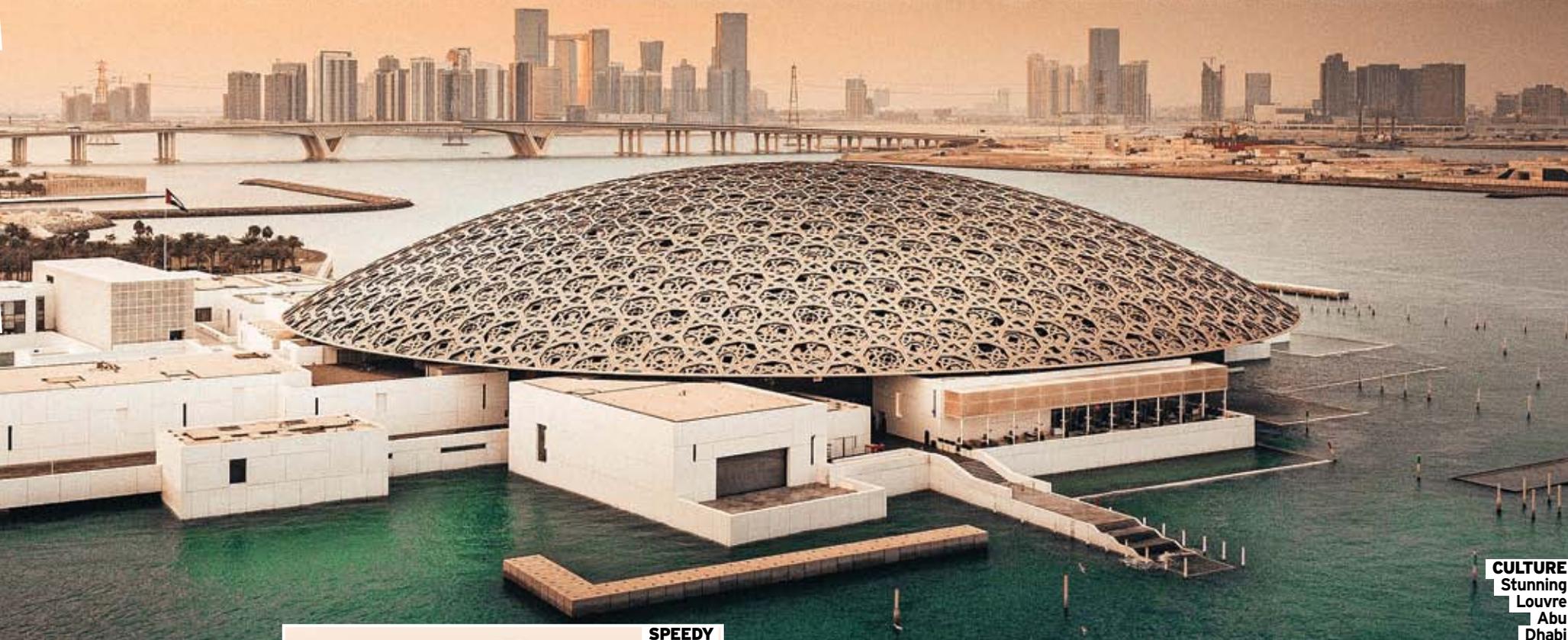
The very welcome sunshine and heat hit you as you get off the plane. Escaping from the dreary British spring into the vibrant Middle Eastern one, which is hot but entirely manageable, makes it one of the very best times of the year to go.

Our first stop was the glamorous Jumeirah hotel at Saadiyat Island, which meant enjoying lunch overlooking the beach before heading off to the Louvre. Yes, the Louvre. Saadiyat Island is a manmade construction which will be home to some of the biggest names in museums in the world.

The Louvre, which is already up and running, and houses a collection of objects as well as paintings, designed to showcase the history of mankind, is dominated by a huge silvery dome, constructed of geometric shapes and designed to reflect the night

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It's a Yas from me



CULTURE
 Stunning
 Louvre
 Abu
 Dhabi

sky. Many more museums are already there or scheduled to be opening, and one in particular will lure this traveller back to see it alone – the Guggenheim, designed by the extraordinary American architect Frank Gehry. If the designs are anything to go by, it will be even more spectacular than the Guggenheim in Bilbao, and is due to open next year, nearly 20 years after plans were first unveiled.

But it wouldn't be the UAE without a bit of fun and so the following morning it was off to Yas Island, another manmade construction that is ideal for visiting families. It houses the Yas Marina Circuit, which hosts the Formula One Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, Ferrari World, Waterworld and Warner Bros, the world's largest indoor theme park – clearly, AD is not allowing Dubai to get away with all of the 'world's largest' around here. It features various gut-churning rides, but plunging rollercoasters aren't my thing so I headed off to nearby Yas Mall.

There you will find western shops alongside locals, including Ether, a department store that specialises in brands from the region. I am a shopaholic and bought a maxi dress and scarf, perfect for visiting mosques.

But it was that afternoon that my inner Bedouin really came to the fore, because it was out into the desert, for a spot of dune bashing, namely



SPEEDY
 A 4x4
 in the
 desert

making like a Formula One driver in the middle of the sand. About an hour out of the city, our driver stopped at a camel farm to let some of the air out of his tyres before we started our adventure, where we spotted a flock of baby camels, prompting some revolting gushing from the females present and yes, I do mean me. Show me a baby furry anything and I'm done for, although these ones were quite as capable as their parents at looking down their noses at us with undisguised contempt. Did you know that another collective noun for camels is a "scorn"? There's a reason for that.

We weren't racing camels that afternoon, but 4x4s. "I'm going to start now," said our driver and it was as well he gave us notice because the speed at which we raced up and down those dunes would have put the rides on Yas Island to shame.

A certain amount of screaming ensued. I was praised for my British reserve but the fact is that I was so

paralysed with fear not even a squeak could come out. But it's a great way to have fun in the desert, followed up by climbing a dune to watch the sun set, an open air feast and a show that included belly dancing and fire eating.

Not sure that these are entirely Bedouin pursuits (belly dancing comes from Egypt), but my Bedouin heart swelled.

The next day we moved to the incredibly glamorous Emirates Palace, Mandarin Oriental, a building so spectacular it's listed as a sightseeing destination in itself. It is in a huge site right at the heart of the city, beside the Qasr Al Watan, the presidential palace that opened nearly a decade ago. Made of white granite and sandstone, it is so big you may well be able to see it from space and has interiors that are, to be honest, pretty bling.

That is OK by me, because I might



HUMP DAY
 Camels
 are ideal
 desert
 transport

be a Bedouin, but I do like my bling – think gold, everywhere, and chandeliers the size of battleships. It is open to the public, but is still used for the official purposes for which it was built. And then it was on to that other must-see, the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, which can hold more than 40,000 worshippers.

Nothing is done on a small scale in this place.

About 30 years old, its inspiration was various bits of Islamic architecture around the world and indeed, with its curving shapes and pietra dura decoration, it was slightly reminiscent of the Taj Mahal. Remember to dress modestly (my Yas Mall purchase was just the thing) and cover your head with a scarf.

All too soon it was time to go home. The final evening started with drinks at the Emirates Palace Broadway bar. "I have one serious complaint about this place," I informed our host.

He was alarmed.

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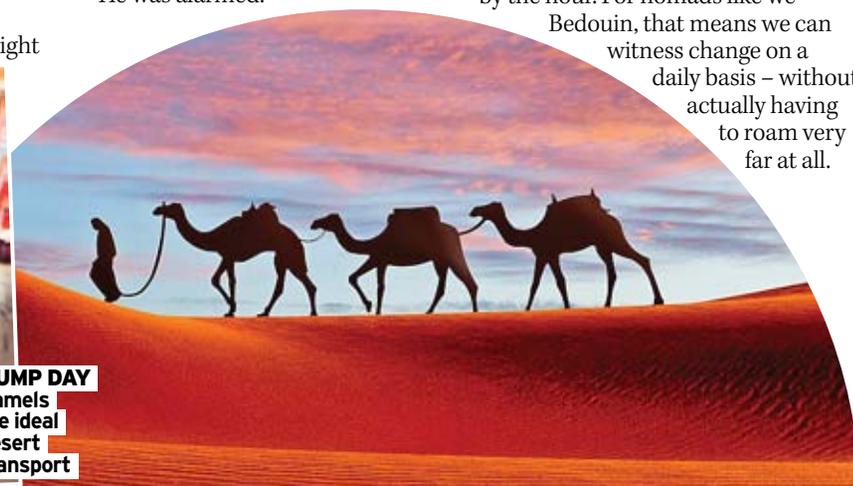
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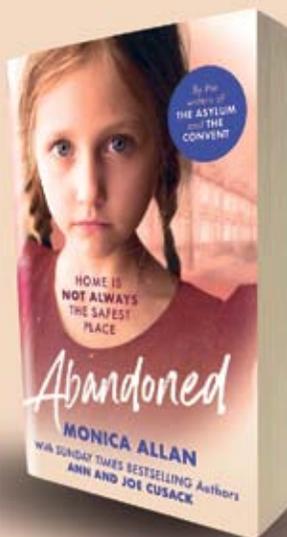
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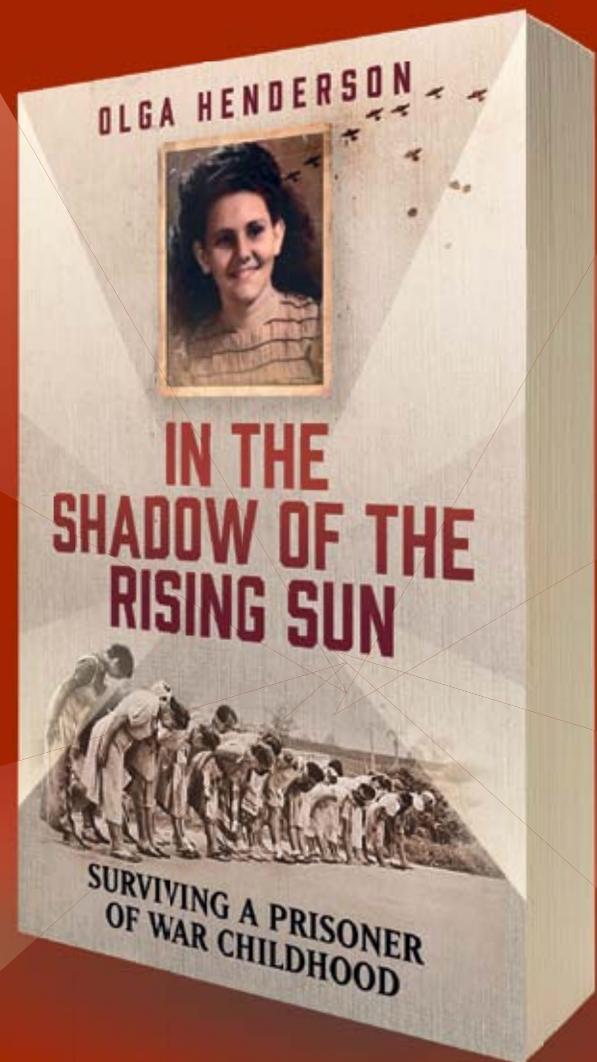
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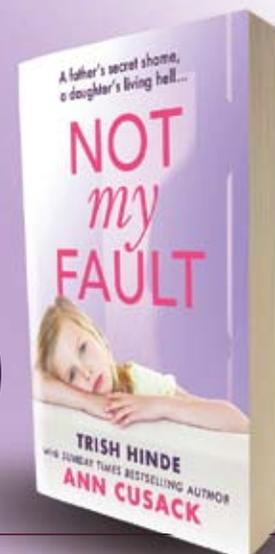
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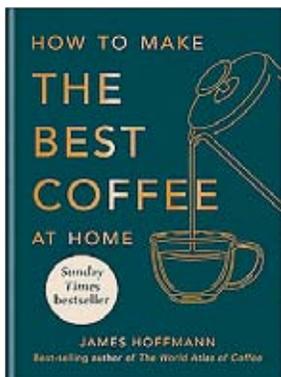


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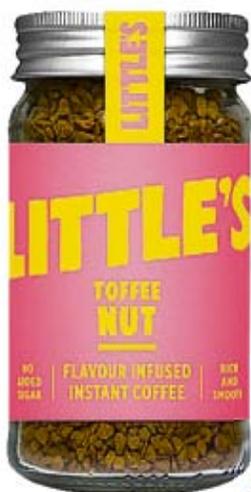


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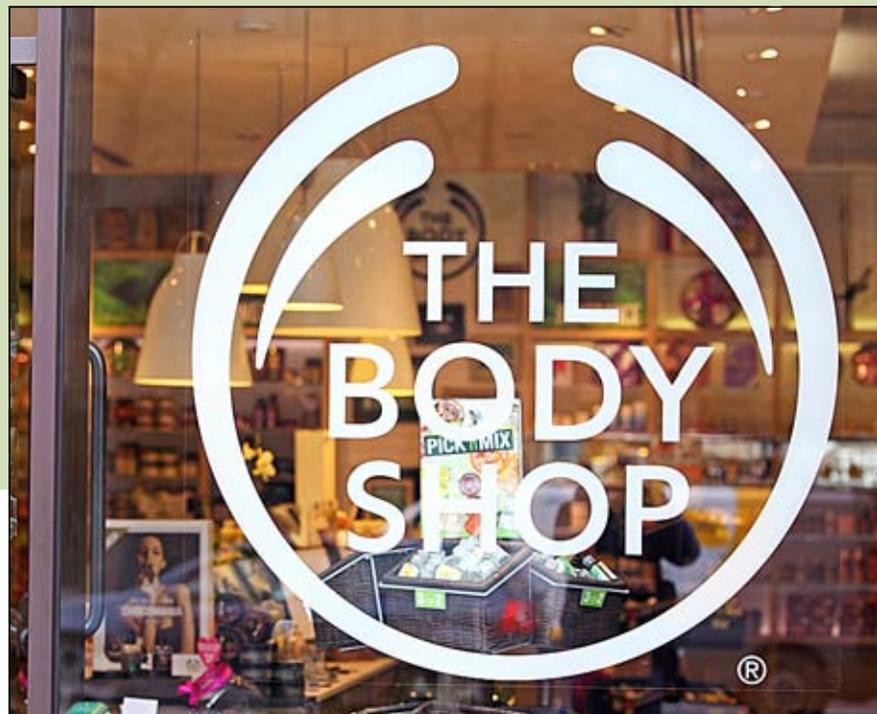
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FINANCIAL

SUNDAY EXPRESS

EDITED BY GEOFF HO



Crumbs of comfort for Body Shop creditors

THE BODY Shop's unsecured creditors could recoup nearly £5million more back from the embattled beauty chain than initially expected, according to administrator FRP.

Based on an analysis of the statement of affairs FRP prepared for its creditors, which outlined its updated financial position, unsecured creditors could get back 17p in the pound.

Initially, FRP thought they would get 15p for every

pound they were owed by the fallen high street giant.

FRP estimates the business has £52.7million of realisable assets, with a book value of £484.6million to pay creditors. That compares to its forecast of £47.6million in April.

HMRC, along with other preferred creditors, are owed £6.8million and have first claim on any money recovered by FRP. That would leave £45.9million for unsecured creditors, who are owed

£269.9million. The Body Shop has 652 creditors.

The precise returns creditors will ultimately receive hinges on whether or not FRP can find a buyer for the business.

FRP abandoned its plan to agree a Company Voluntary Arrangement, an insolvency process to help companies slash debts, after creditors objected. Instead, FRP is trying to sell the Body Shop and the deadline to lodge bids expired last week.

TROUBLE:
The Body Shop has 652 creditors who could receive more than initially thought

PM 'won't see pre-election base rate cut'

THE Bank of England is set to dash any hopes Prime Minister Rishi Sunak may have had of a pre-election cut in its base rate.

The Bank's Monetary Policy Committee is likely to vote 7-2 on Thursday to keep the base rate at 5.25 per cent.

The Bank is expected to say that between a stronger than expected performance from the economy and sticky wage growth, there is not enough evidence to say inflation has been sufficiently tamed to justify a cut.

At the same time, economists say the MPC is likely to hold fire on rates to avoid any appearance of favouring the incumbent Conservative Government.

"Unless a rate cut is obviously required right now, and it is not, there's an incentive for the BoE to do nothing to avoid any unjustified suspicion of it being politically motivated," said Capital Economics' deputy chief UK economist Ruth

By **Geoff Ho**

Gregory. In order to tame runaway inflation, the Bank raised its base rate 14 consecutive times from 0.1 per cent to its current level, where it has been since August. Although markets believe the Bank will make its first cut in November, by a quarter of a percentage point, economists say it could happen as early as August.

Robert Wood, chief UK economist at Pantheon Macroeconomics, said although the inflationary pressure on the economy is easing more slowly than expected, official data due before the MPC's August 1 meeting should contain enough in it to justify a rate cut.

"We think the MPC is itching to follow the European Central Bank and cut rates, so we continue to look for a first rate reduction in August," he said. Bank of America Europe

economist Ruben Segura-Cayuela said that while it expects the MPC to be cautious in its rate cutting approach, it still expects six cuts between now and the end of 2025.

"The near-term path is likely to reflect a cautious reduction of restriction, given the upside risks posed by wage growth and services inflation," he said. "We expect two cuts from the Bank this year, in August and November, and four cuts in 2025, such that the Bank Rate reaches 3.75 per cent by end 2025."

On Wednesday the Office for National Statistics is tipped to say that annualised consumer price index inflation fell back to the Bank's official 2 per cent target in May. In April it was 2.3 per cent. At the end of the week economists expect it to say that the Government borrowed £15.4billion last month, versus £14.3billion for the same month last year.

HELEN LEDERER

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COMMENT



GEOFF HO

TESLA chief Elon Musk made headlines for winning his fight to get a \$56billion (£44billion) from the board, which I fear sets a bad example for companies around the world. Shareholders in Tesla backed plans to give Musk his multi-billion payday after the board warned he could quit. Musk had threatened to take parts of Tesla's business with him and place it in a separate company unless he was given more control of the business. Now

while Musk may have hit the targets set in 2018 which enabled him to claim his £44billion payout, the board should have refused on account of his ridiculous behaviour.

For a start, he is not focused on his job, which is running an electric car pioneer that is struggling to keep up with its Chinese competitors.

Second, he is spending too much of his time destroying value at Twitter (X), which he overspent on by billions. Third,

his threats to spin off Tesla's AI arm should have triggered a harsh response.

Basically, by allowing Musk his payday, Tesla's shareholders have said that he can act how he wants and even threaten the company's prospects if he feels like it.

What they should have done is called his bluff and reminded him he works for the company and its shareholders, and not the other way around.

● geoff.ho@express.co.uk

Sale of major packing firm 'will not fold'

By **Geoff Ho**

BRITISH packaging giant DS Smith will try to reassure shareholders that its £5.8billion sale to International Paper is still on track on Thursday, when it presents its annual results.

Back in April, DS Smith agreed to sell itself to International Paper in an all-share deal that would leave its shareholders with 33.7 per cent of the combined company. As part of the deal, International Paper would take a secondary listing of its shares on the London Stock Exchange.

However, since then, International Paper has found itself fighting off a £12billion-plus takeover bid from Brazilian giant Suzano. It is thought that Suzano's offer is contingent on the DS Smith deal being abandoned.

Aside from trying to reassure shareholders about the International Paper deal, DS Smith chief executive Miles Roberts is expected to say the

business is in good shape, even though weaker consumer sentiment has hit key clients like Amazon and inflation has increased its costs.

For the 12 months to the end of April, DS Smith's revenues are tipped to be down 14.6 per cent to £7billion, while its pre-tax profits are forecast to drop 18 per cent to £542.2million.

AJ Bell investment director Russ Mould said: "Any comment on the International Paper-Suzano-DS Smith love triangle may dominate how the market sees the results."

Matt Britzman, equity analyst at Hargreaves Lansdown, said DS Smith is a solid business: "Price hikes and volume improvements should help support earnings this year. Demand shifts like the move from plastic to paper should hold it in good stead."

EXPRESS | GARDEN



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Damp start for Premier Inn UK



HOSPITALITY giant Whitbread is expected to blame poor weather and the timing of public holidays for a weaker than usual first quarter on Tuesday – with slow accommodation sales at Premier Inn UK.

The seven weeks to mid-April saw sales down one per cent, but Whitbread is believed to have seen a modest upturn since then. As a result, it is expected to post weak growth for the quarter. Last year it grew 18 per cent. Premier Inn's UK food and beverage sales could turn negative, due to soft trading at its restaurants. Chief Executive Dominic Paul is likely to say it expects a big improvement in fortunes in the key summer season, with Premier Inn's German arm close to breaking even.

That's the spirit! Hoxton's £4m target for foreign expansion

PREMIUM flavoured spirits group Hoxton is looking to raise millions from investors to fund its overseas expansion, founder and chief executive Gerry Calabrese says.

He said that Hoxton aims to raise £4million by selling shares to investors in a deal that values the company at £35.5million. Aside from funding the development of new products, he said it will finance its entry into "lighthouse" overseas markets that will serve as a springboard for international growth.

Those markets include Italy, Thailand and Australia, where it has sealed a deal for its spirits to appear

on the shelves of Coles, the largest supermarket group in the country.

Available through its online store, Amazon and specialists such as Master Of Malt, Hoxton's range is comprised of three flavoured gins, a London Spritz, a banana rum and a spiced whisky. This year it secured a listing for its London Dry Gin at selected branches of Sainsbury's.

Hoxton was founded in 2011 by hospitality veteran Calabrese, who said: "Targeting international markets is a goal as we believe that, while our roots lie in east London, there is demand everywhere and a gap for an expertly created product like ours."

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By Harvey Jones

TAXPAYERS face a grim choice this general election between the Conservatives, who have driven the tax burden to a 70-year high, and Labour, which looks set to drive it higher still.

Despite last week's manifesto launches, we still do not really know what will happen after July 4, with Labour's lengthy tome particularly low on detail. Sir Keir Starmer's party may have a huge lead in the polls, but the nation will be voting blind as far as tax is concerned.

Even when they have given us an indication of what they will do, we cannot rely on them giving us a full and accurate picture. The best policy might be to expect the worst.

HIDDEN

Starmer has sought to reassure worried voters by making it clear that Labour will not increase the three most punishing taxes of all – income tax, National Insurance and VAT.

That doesn't mean income tax and NI bills will stop rising though. Quite the reverse.

Repeated hikes to both levies are already baked in thanks to PM Rishi Sunak and Chancellor Jeremy Hunt, whose six-year freeze on income tax and NI thresholds is set to continue all the way through to 2028. In that time, the personal allowance will be held at £12,570, and the higher rate 40 per cent tax threshold at £50,270.

If they had been allowed to rise with inflation, the personal allowance would climb to £15,989 by 2028, more than £3,500 higher, while the higher rate band would have risen £13,674 to nearly £64,000.

This means that as earnings rise taxpayers will hand even more of their hard-earned money to HMRC.

So much for Starmer's no tax hikes claim.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies has calculated that the freeze is the equivalent of an income tax increase of 6p in the pound.

That is a figure that will not appear in any manifesto, yet we will pay it whoever wins.

By the 2028/29

tax year, the freeze will have created a staggering four million extra taxpayers, according to the Office for Budget Responsibility, while another 2.7 million will pay higher rate tax and 600,000 will pay additional rate tax at 45 per cent.

By maintaining the freeze, both parties will be "bringing tax hikes in through the back door", said Laura Suter, director of personal finance at AJ Bell. Given the parlous state of the nation's finances, we should not expect any early respite, she added: "The freeze on tax bands is baked into the budget for future years.

"Unwinding this would come with a large price tag."

Labour has even less of an incentive to end the freeze, since it can blame it all on the Tories.

PLUS

Yet there are two clear differences between Conservative and Labour policy. First, the Tories will increase the personal allowance if they win, although only for pensioners.

It will do this by increasing the personal allowance in line with the state pension triple lock each year. It

'Whoever is elected, you'll pay more tax'

will therefore increase either by inflation, earnings or 2.5 per cent each year, whichever is highest.

This has been dubbed the triple-lock-plus and will save eight million pensioners around £100 next year, rising to £275 by 2030.

But it will not benefit the poorest pensioners with incomes below the personal allowance. Also, as Paul Johnson, director at the Institute for Fiscal Studies, has pointed out, it isn't a tax cut anyway. Pensioners are merely avoiding a £100 tax increase, rather than receiving an actual giveaway. Still, this is better than they will get under Labour, which has declined to match the policy.

CUT

The second big difference is that the Conservatives pledged in their manifesto to cut a further 2p off NI by 2027. That is on top of the two cuts of 2p each made this year. This year's cuts have already knocked

£900 off the tax bill of an employee on £35,000 a year.

A third bite of the cherry would save them a further £450. Sunak has also pledged to gradually abolish NI for the self-employed.

By contrast, Labour will not be offering an NI cut.

However, a Conservative NI cut

will mean little to pensioners, as the vast majority do not pay the levy.

MISERY

These NI cuts will only partly alleviate the misery of frozen tax thresholds, said Sarah Coles, head of personal finance at Hargreaves Lansdown: "They mean whoever is elected, you're set to pay more tax."

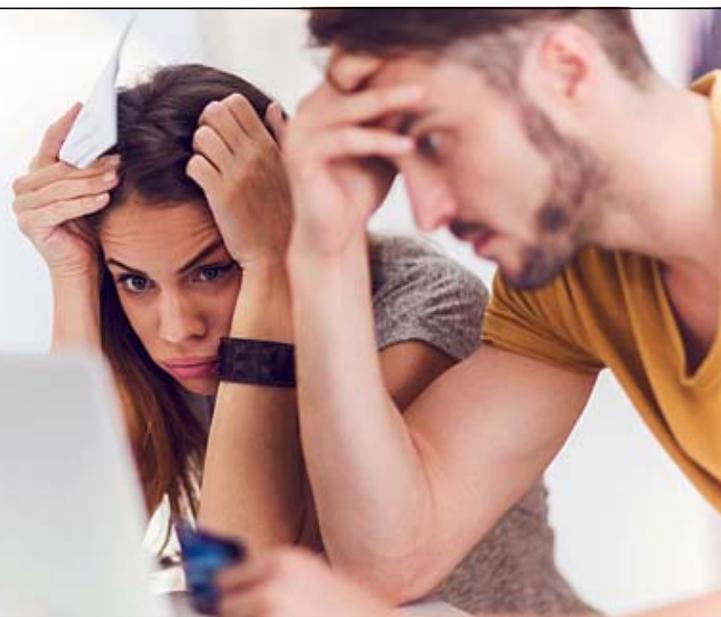
Freezing tax allowances does not just mean bigger income tax and NI bills, Coles added: "It pushes you into paying higher rates on everything from capital gains to savings and dividends held outside of an Isa."

We also know Labour will scrap the VAT exemption on school fees, target wealthy non-doms and hike stamp duty on overseas property buyers.

What we don't know is what will happen to inheritance tax and capital gains tax, as the manifesto was vague.

We can't rely on the things politicians do tell us. We should be even more worried about the things they are refusing to tell us.

The Tories have a rotten record on taxes but with Labour set to hike more, some voters may decide it is better the devil you know.



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FIVE-MINUTE GUIDE TO... THE LIFETIME ISA

By **Harvey Jones**

MANY parents and grandparents will have encouraged younger family members to start saving to buy their first home by putting money into a Lifetime Isa, to take advantage of a government-funded bonus on contributions.

Some will be having second thoughts as new figures suggest the scheme is not as attractive as originally thought, with many paying penalties running into hundreds of pounds after falling foul of rules on withdrawals.

The Lifetime Isa, or Lisa, was launched in April 2017. The tax-free scheme is open to savers aged between 19 and 39, although after setting one up, savers can continue to contribute until age 50.

For every £4 saved in cash or invested in shares, the government adds £1. Savers can pay in up to £4,000 a year, which would give them the maximum £1,000 annual bonus.

Someone who took out a Lisa at age 18 and contributed every year until 50 would get £32,000 of free money, assuming rules stay the same.

Lisas have been popular, with more than £4billion held in more than one million accounts. Yet the rules can make withdrawing money needlessly difficult.

Account holders must use Lisa money as a deposit towards buying their first home. Withdrawals made for any other



DEAD DUCK: Lisas in need of new life

reason before age 60 will be termed an "unauthorised withdrawal", and incur a 25 per cent penalty charge on the full sum. Effectively, this means savers repay the government bonus, plus all the growth on top.

More than 185,000 Lisa savers have been fined £127million for "unauthorised withdrawals" of their own money, according to a Freedom of Information request by lender MPowered Mortgages. The average penalty was £684, including interest.

Numbers have more than doubled in three years, and thousands more could fall into the trap as house prices rise.

The Lisa isn't doing the job it was supposed to do, said Stuart Cheetham, chief executive of MPowered Mortgages. "Too many people have been fined for

daring to withdraw their own money." Many savers have been penalised after falling victim to another rule. Lisa savings can only be used to purchase properties costing under £450,000. Withdrawals to buy pricier homes are also classified as "unauthorised withdrawals".

This cap has been frozen since 2017 and is increasingly "unfit for purpose", particularly in places such as London, where the average home costs £500,000. "In some areas the average price paid by a first-time buyer has risen 42 per cent since Lisa rules were written."

As part of the general election campaign, PM Rishi Sunak has promised to relaunch a "new and improved" Help to Buy scheme, as well as abolishing stamp duty for first-time buyers on properties less than £425,000. Labour has proposed a Freedom to Buy mortgage guarantee scheme for first-time buyers.

Cheetham said the next Government should forget reheating the failed Help to Buy scheme or tinkering with stamp duty, and act fast to reform Lisa rules instead: "The £450,000 cap should be index-linked to reflect rising house prices."

Kate Smith, head of pensions at Aegon, would like to see another outdated rule modernised. "The annual £4,000 contribution limit is restrictive and has not been increased since 2017."

She would also like to see the maximum age for taking out a Lisa lifted to 50, with contributions continuing to 55. "This could enable Lisa savers to build up larger sums, particularly if using the product for retirement savings."

Politicians need to breathe new life into the Lisa, before first-time buyers treat it as a dead duck.

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Best personal finance and mortgage deals

Source: Moneyfactscompare.co.uk

Rates correct at 8:00am 14th June 2024

Current Accounts

CURRENT ACCOUNTS WITH CREDIT INTEREST OR REWARD

Provider	Account	AER or Amount Paid
Halifax	Reward Current Account	£5 pm A
TSB	Spend & Save Plus	£5 pm
Nationwide BS	FlexDirect	5.00% B
Kroo Bank	Current Account	4.35%

Personal Loans

PERSONAL LOANS - BASED ON £10,000 OVER 5 YEARS

Provider	APR	Monthly Repayment	Total Amount Repayable
TSB	6.2%	£193.47	£11,608.20
M&S Bank	6.2%	£193.47	£11,608.20
Santander	6.2%	£193.47	£11,608.20
Tesco Bank	6.5%	£194.79	£11,687.40

Credit Cards

PURCHASE CREDIT CARDS

Provider	Product Name	0% Period	APR
Barclaycard	Platinum All-Rounder Visa	21 mths	24.9%
Sainsbury's Bank	Dual 20 Month Credit Card MC	20 mths	23.9%
Lloyds Bank	Platinum 0% Purch & BT CC MC	20 mths	24.9%
NatWest	Purch & Balance Transfer CC MC	19 mths	24.9%

Mortgages

SHORT TERM FIXED RATES

Provider	Initial Rate	Period	Max LTV	Fee	Redemption Charge
first direct	4.83%	for 2 years	60%	£490	1st 2 yrs
first direct	5.23%	for 2 years	90%	£490	1st 2 yrs
The Co-operative Bank	4.85%	to 30.9.27	60%	£0	to 30.9.27
first direct	5.18%	for 3 years	90%	£490	1st 3 yrs



Moneyfacts
compare.co.uk

A = Paid net of income tax. **B** = Introductory rate for a limited period.

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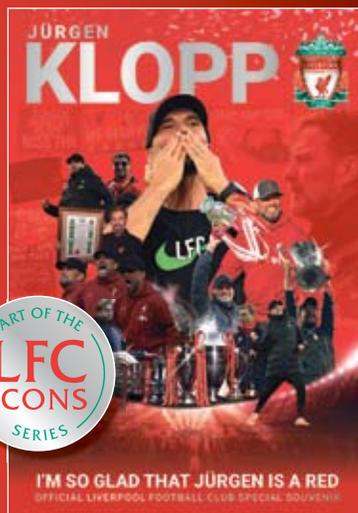
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The Severn Swivel Recliner is a compact and stylish chair that boasts an easy to use swivel function, with an adjustable recline function as well. The chair is also supplied with the matching footstool.

The chair is constructed from a solid, hard wooden frame and upholstered in a durable bonded leather with some faux leather used on low stress areas - including, but not limited to, the back and sides of the chair.

The seat is filled with a combination of serpentine springs and foam to give excellent balance between both comfort and support and ensuring ultimate relaxation.

The chair swivels on a central spindle section which is housed in the star shaped wooden base and gives a full 360 degree rotation.

The recline function is operated by body movement and can be secure in place by tightening a tension handle under the seat.

This chair has been our long established best selling swivel recliner for over 10 years and boasts endless positive reviews from so many customers.

This chair is perfect for those with limited space as the overall width and depth of the chair is quite narrow, owing to the slender arms, but still providing ample seating space.

This chair, along with most swivel recliners, does require some self assembly to ensure the chair and stool are protected in transit. The assembly is designed to be carried out by those with limited DIY skills and full instructions, along with all required tools, are provided in the box along with care instructions for the chair.

Our sales and customer service team are extremely knowledgeable about all of our products and so if you do have any queries prior to order, or any concerns during assembly, then contact us on the telephone number below, 7 days a week.

We process our orders at 11:00am each morning and ship these products on a next working day service and so orders placed before 11:00am can be with you the following working day. Orders after this point will be shipped the following day on the same service.

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Ryobi's Cordless Patio Cleaner easily removes weeds, moss and grass from your paths and patios

With Summer now upon us it's time to tackle all those outdoor cleaning jobs that have been neglected over the summer months. But don't let unsightly weeds, overgrown grass, and nasty moss get in the way of your beautiful outdoor space.

With the Ryobi 18V ONE+™ Cordless Patio Cleaner, you can power through even the toughest outdoor mess with consummate ease.

No more bending or kneeling down

Say goodbye to bending or kneeling down to clean your paths and patios. The ONE+™ Patio Cleaner with wire brush spins at an incredible 1350rpm to power through the task effortlessly! Whether you need to clear weeds, grass, or moss from your patio, paths, driveway or bricked areas, this patio cleaner is the tool for the task.

Innovative design for easy cleaning

The Ryobi 18V ONE+™ Patio Cleaner features an innovative telescopic height adjustment handle, which means easy upright cleaning for any user.

The two-handed design ensures it is ergonomic and easy to use, while the wire brush



guard protects the user from any debris. Plus, with the tool-less brush changing mechanism, you can quickly and easily switch between different types of cleaning brushes for hard or delicate surfaces, even with gloves on.

And when it's time to put it away, the handle design allows for quick and easy storage, taking up less space in your shed or garage.



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SWIVEL HANDLE FOR HOLD-STEADY COMFORT

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BEFORE

Incredible results in no time without stooping or scraping!

AFTER



The wire brush wheel spins at high speed to leave surfaces clean and debris-free

Ryobi 18V Cordless Patio Cleaner Kit
What you get

- Patio Cleaner (RY18PCA-120)
- Ryobi ONE+ 2.0Ah Battery
- Ryobi ONE+ 2.0A Charger
- 3-Year Warranty*
- Free Delivery (GB mainland only)

Owners of this 18V Cordless Patio Cleaner couldn't be happier! "I was so impressed with the Ryobi ONE+™ Patio Cleaner," says Jenny. "It made cleaning my patio so easy, and I loved the wire brush that just powered through the weeds and overgrown grass. I'm so glad I added this to my collection of Ryobi tools." Jenny P (verified buyer).

Another regular customer

said: "It's powerful, easy to use, and perfect for keeping my outdoor space looking great." Dave R (verified buyer).

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ON THIS DAY WITH SHAUN WALLACE

June 16,
1963



RUSSIAN cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova became the first woman to travel into space, aged just 24. She was launched on a solo mission aboard Vostok 6 and spent two days, 23 hours and 12 minutes in space. She still holds records for the youngest woman in space, the first civilian to fly in space and the only woman to have flown solo.

Two years earlier, aboard Vostok 1, Yuri Gagarin had become the first human in space. He completed one orbit of Earth in 108 minutes on April 12, 1961.

Keen to ensure the first woman in space was a Soviet citizen, the government authorised the selection of female trainees.

Out of 400 applicants the textile worker and skydiver was among five selected to join the cosmonaut corps in February 1962.

She passed the final exams in November 1962 and was honourably inducted into the Soviet Air Force with the rank of lieutenant.

Initially it was envisaged two women

Also on this day...

1487: Henry VII defeats the remaining Yorkists at Stoke Field, the last battle of the Wars of the Roses

1912: Enoch Powell born in Birmingham

1976: Soweto Uprising sparked by police shooting at protesting students

would launch on solo Vostok flights on consecutive days, but the plan changed in March. Male cosmonaut Valeri Bykovsky, on board Vostok 5, launched two days before Tereshkova.

After a two-hour countdown, Vostok 6 lifted off without fault and within hours, with the radio call sign Chaika which translates as seagull, she was in communication with Bykovsky, call sign hawk.

This also marked the second time two manned spacecraft were in space at the same time. Television images of her were broadcast throughout the Soviet Union and she spoke with Russian president Nikita Khrushchev over the radio.

Her photographs of Earth and the horizon were later used to identify aerosol layers within the atmosphere.

Both cosmonauts returned to Earth on June 19. Tereshkova had made 48 orbits, while Bykovsk completed 81 and spent nearly five days in space.

Question: Who was the first chancellor of a unified Germany since 1945, who died on this day, aged 87, in 2017?

Last week I asked: Which engineer, known as the "Father of the Railways", was born in Wylam, Northumberland, on this day in 1781? The answer is GEORGE STEPHENSON.

LETTERS

Write to: The Editor, Sunday Express, One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5AP
Email: sunday.exletters@express.co.uk
Please include your name, address and daytime telephone number

Sunak cuts NI funding to our NHS at his peril

THE NHS has for years relied on National Insurance contributions to fund it ("Farage launches all-out attack on 'Tory snobs' who 'betrayed Britain'", June 9).

If Rishi Sunak reduces contributions how will it be funded, or is this just another step on the road to selling it to US private health companies?

Sunak also talks about not taxing working people any more, but it seems he doesn't mind the increasing number of pensioners who are being drawn into the tax bracket because of the freeze on their taxable allowance.

Douglas Higgins,
Liverpool

Farage supporters will hand Keir keys to No 10

Already several times a loser when standing as a potential MP, it is difficult to understand the appeal of Nigel Farage.

His rictus-like grin is a reminder of when Tony Blair came to power and led us astray. Is Farage's recent abandonment of Donald Trump's campaign distancing himself from another possible failure?

Any votes for Reform UK can only increase the likelihood of a Labour success in this election.

Michael Carter,
Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire

Electoral system gives us what nobody wants

The BBCTV political debate earlier this month laid bare the flawed first-past-the-post electoral system forced on our nation by the Westminster elite.

The bitter catfight between Labour Deputy Leader Angela Rayner and Tory post-election wannabe-leader Penny Mordaunt demonstrated they both know only their two parties can possibly win.

And the majority of UK citizens neither want Rishi Sunak nor Sir Keir Starmer to lead Britain, yet we are stuck with one of them for the next five years.

Jim Sokol,
Minehead, Somerset

A Labour Government will tax us into oblivion

Labour says it will not raise taxes. Let's look at its record (Sophy's choice, June 9). In 1978, with Jim Callaghan as PM and

JACOB'S WEEKLY WISDOM

'To be turned from one's course by men's opinions, by blame, and by misrepresentation shows a man unfit to hold an office.'
QUINTUS FABIUS MAXIMUS, Roman politician and general, c 275 to 203 BC

Jacob Rees-Mogg says:
"I fear Sir Keir Starmer has not studied Quintus Fabius Maximus with due diligence."



Denis Healey as Chancellor, basic income tax was at 34 per cent, higher rate tax rising to 83 per cent and investment income surcharge at 15 per cent on investment income above £5,000.

In the late 1990s, with Tony Blair as PM and Gordon Brown as Chancellor, there was no increase in direct taxation but to cover spending Brown sold our gold reserves at a knockdown price.

He also introduced taxation on dividends received within pension schemes thus devastating the defined benefit pension.

The Labour Party is now as far to the left as it was in the 1960s and 1970s. Its major funders are the unions. Think carefully before you vote. Do you want to go back to the chaos of the 60s and 70s?

Bill Peake,
Swindon, Wiltshire

None of our politicians are worth voting for

In reply to Dr Steve Brennan (Letters, June 9), who said we should use our vote because our forebears fought for the right, what if there is no one worth voting for?

All politicians promise things in the run-up to a general election knowing full well that they will never be able to carry out their promises.

I've never known such a despicable bunch of politicians as we have now.

Martin Hall,
Bognor Regis, West Sussex

Have our potential new leaders got magic wand?

The Sunday Express has been running a series of articles where questions raised by

members of the public are answered by Conservative and Labour candidates ("Defending the realm in a new world of danger", June 9).

It is amazing how patriotic Labour is regarding our military and the need to retain and improve our nuclear deterrent.

Equally Labour has hammered the 14 wasted years under the Conservatives. From this I take it that if it forms the next government, Labour will hit the ground running and all will be well?

Bill Young,
Winsford, Cheshire

It's criminal rapists and paedophiles get payouts

I really could not believe what I was reading ("Payouts to paedophiles after prison wing blaze", June 9), as paedophiles and sex offenders receive thousands of pounds in compensation for "psychological damage" after an inmate intentionally set fire to a prison wing.

These men have raped children and women, for heaven's sake.

I find this situation totally and utterly unacceptable, so God knows what the victims' families think.

Annette Hale,
Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset

No cost-of-living crisis at Taylor Swift shows

The poverty in the UK was obvious last weekend at Murrayfield Stadium in Edinburgh, Scotland ("Taylor's swift £200m boost for Edinburgh", June 9).

Tens of thousands of people in the venue had come from far and wide to hear Taylor Swift sing and perform.

We have in this country a humongous amount of the public complaining they can't afford the necessities of ordinary life such as food, bills, feeding the family and other essentials.

Yet it seems they can afford to buy concert tickets, expensive travel and overnight accommodation.

People make themselves poorer with their priorities in life.

Kenneth Burton,
Chilwell, Nottinghamshire

TELEPHONE VOTE RESULT

Last week Defence Secretary Grant Shapps and his Labour opposite number John Healey went head-to-head to answer your questions, and we asked:

Would Britain be more at risk of attack under Labour?

YES: 99% NO: 1%

JAMES BOND in CASINO ROYALE by Ian Fleming DRAWN BY JOHN McLUSKY

Casino Royale © Ian Fleming Publications Ltd 1953/The James Bond Strip © Express Newspapers Ltd 1987.



MOTORING



with COLIN GOODWIN

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The shadow of Battersea Power Station seems an appropriate place to be starting our test drive of the Mini eMastered by David Brown Automotive.

The renowned coachbuilder has been remanufacturing classic Minis since around 2019 but they've been powered by conventional combustion engines. Now the company, based in Silverstone, has turned its attention to electrification.

Out from under the bonnet has gone the original four-cylinder A Series engine, replaced by a 98hp electric motor and tech that controls it and deals with charging. This motor is supplied juice by a 18.8kWh battery, not much bigger than one fitted to a typical plug-in hybrid, which explains why the range is only 110 miles. But this car is very much a city vehicle anyway, and small battery equals lower weight, and the Mini eMastered tips the scales at 640kg – the same weight as the original.

David Brown Automotive takes a donor car, removes its identity or VIN number, and starts from scratch with a brand new shell from British Motor Heritage. Enthusiasts will have already spotted that the body has been de-seamed.

This was a common modification in the day as it reduces drag and looks cleaner and more modern. I like my Minis with seams and never considered de-seaming any of the



Mini eMasterpiece

THE FACTS

Mini eMastered

Price: £150,000

Engine: Electric motor

Power: 100PS

Torque: 175Nm

Top speed: 92mph

0-62mph: 8.5 seconds

Range: 110 miles

For: Looks, coolness and nippiness

Against: For millionaires only

Sum up: A wonderful rethink of an icon

four that I owned when I was a prog.

Not that the Mini eMastered doesn't look terrific. This is a truly bespoke car and as a customer you can specify virtually any colour you like, inside or out. Our test car's cream and gold top combo isn't to my taste but looks striking. I can't remember driving a car that's attracted more attention than this one, certainly not in London where Lamborghinis and Bentleys outnumber black cabs.

Slip inside and you see a different world to an original Mini. At the

centre of the dashboard there's a touch screen where you can connect your smartphone.

Under it are nicely machined aluminium knobs, a start button and two switches that operate the electric windows. In front of the steering wheel is a trademark round speedometer and next to it several small gauges including one for battery level. All made by Smiths just like the originals. The steering wheel is wood rimmed supplied by Moto Lita. It's all rather lovely. Slip the equally taste-

fully made gear selector into D and off we go. There's electric power steering which was never seen on the 60s original or even up until the car's demise in 2001. It's not necessary in such a light car but it can be adjusted to your own taste.

It was always the handling and performance of the Cooper S Minis that appealed, not its engine which was rather rough. Swapping in an electric motor works perfectly and 0-62mph in 8.5 seconds in Sport mode is more than adequate. As is a top

speed of 92mph, which no Mini I owned could achieve. It is a joy to drive, nipping through city traffic, its handling exactly the same as a classic Mini but virtually silent.

And how much for this gloriously nostalgic little machine? A cool £150,000. A ridiculous amount, but making a big deal of it is like wandering along the Monaco waterfront tutting about the price of superyachts. The people who own those are the sort who'll buy the Mini eMastered. And Hollywood stars.

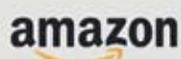
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5x more powerful than a standard garden hose: For a powerful clean.

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Perfect for cleaning cars, bikes and more while you're away from home: If you're on a long distance bike ride, have driven on some muddy tracks or just want to clean your wellies before putting them back in your boot you can get a deep pressure washed clean in moments without looking for a power source.

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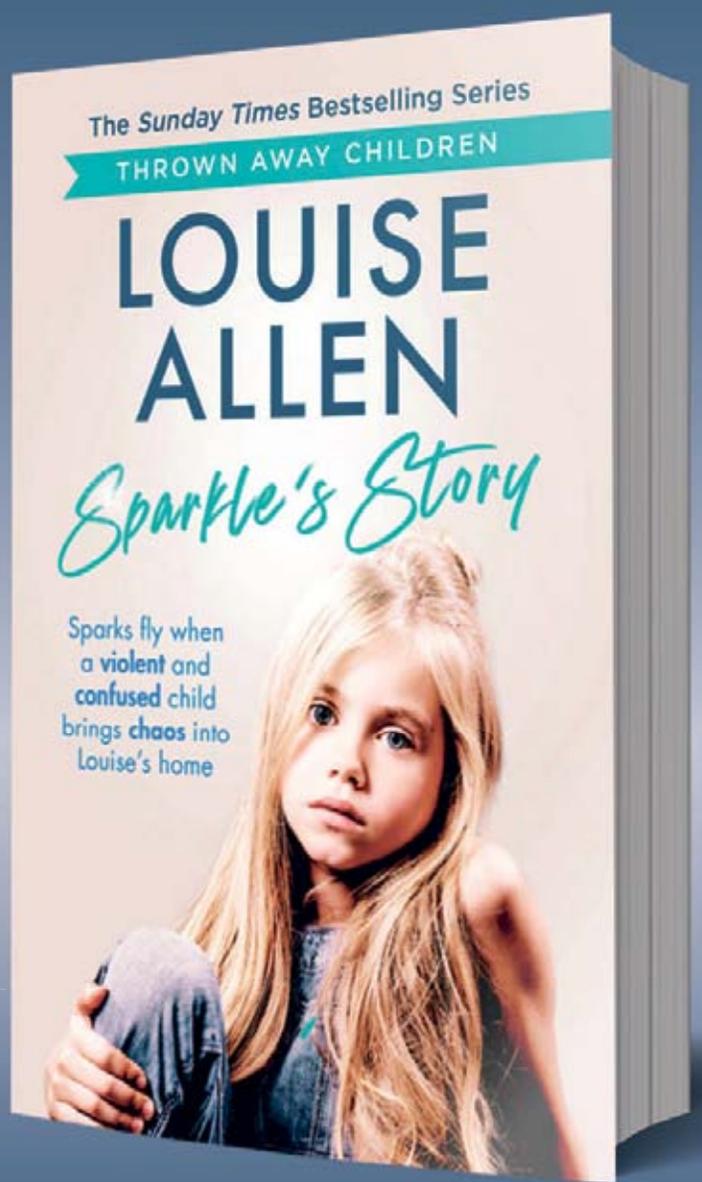
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26												
			C																					
A	B	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

For extra letter clues, call: **0907 181 2603***

(Deduct two minutes from Target Time for each extra letter used).

Full solution: **0907 181 2602***

Across only: **0907 181 2600***

Down only: **0907 181 2601***

*Calls cost 80p a minute plus your telephone company's network access charge.

Alternatively, for six extra letter clues direct to your mobile, text:

SXALPHA to 64343

Texts cost £1 plus your standard network rate.

SP: Spoke - 0333 202 3390

Last Sunday's solution

ACROSS: Fragile, Perk, Mewl, Aquiline, Deform, Draper, Oozing, Breach, Activity, Roam, Bide, Conjure.

DOWN: Effete, Orchid, Bail, Orifice, Disarm, Glitch, Refund, Beyond, Pillage (clue), Roux, Cringe, Chapel.

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ULTIMATE ALPHABEATER

Can you crack the super-tough Ultimate Alphabeater? Each grid number represents a letter – or black square. As in Alphapuzzle, every letter of the alphabet is used. But you have to complete the grid too! Use the given letters and black squares below the main grid to start. Alphabeater is 'rotationally symmetrical' – in other words it looks exactly the same if you turn the page upside down. Solution next Sunday.

A	17	22	24	29	8	18	34	10	22	7	35	1	37
B													
C	38	34	37	8	39	12	23	13	6	18	25	22	20
D													
E	20	16	32	18	33	23	19	7	30	12	39	18	3
F													
G	26	32	23	11	35	25	32	20	20	30	29	15	20
H													
I	14	5	11	15	9	40	15	3	5	13	18	13	21
J													
K	21	6	13	9	37	28	22	25	30	17	11	3	17
L													
M	36	9	22	3	30	12	36	4	34	12	27	22	31
N													
O	4	39	2	35	36	30	30	14	39	27	7	24	35
P													
Q	13	3	5	7	28	26	24	17	8	5	2	2	9
R													
S	18	6	29	8	5	28	22	20	13	31	38	18	12
T													
U	17	18	12	37	30	3	20	17	30	31	30	34	22
V													
W	36	5	19	30	32	39	35	21	37	11	40	33	4
X													
Y	39	11	21	4	20	1	5	34	10	22	6	20	35
Z													

Target time: 42 minutes
Stuck getting started?
Try one of our helplines *Calls cost 80p per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge.

Full solution:
0907 181 2598
Across only:
0907 181 2596
Down only:
0907 181 2597

Last Sunday's Solution:
Black squares: 6, 7, 10, 12, 15, 16, 21, 25, 26, 30, 32, 34, 37, 40.
Across: Prime, Minister, Vibe, Defacing, Globe, Oxen, Opulent, Know, Scowl, Aquarium, Yeti, Chipmunk, Waltz.
Down: Gawk, Arcs, Rival, Mob, Blowlamps, Fungi, Jive, Urns, Faxed, Psychotic, Era, Whist, Frog, Null.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
				T			V												

For up to six extra letters call 0907 181 2599 (Deduct five minutes from Target Time for each extra letter heard). Callers will also hear two black squares clues free of any Target Time penalty. *Calls cost 80p per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390

Alternatively, for six extra letter clues direct to your mobile, text **SXBEAT to 64343**. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network rate. Reduce Target Time by five minutes for each extra letter

● Puzzle phone and text services SP: Spoke, London W1B 2AG *SP: Spoke - Helpline 0333 202 3390

THE ULTRA ALPHAPUZZLE®

Here's the Ultra Alphapuzzle® – Sunday's extra tough version of Britain's favourite wordpower challenge.

Each grid number represents a different letter. All 26 letters are used.

Target time: 30 minutes Solution next Sunday.

10	21	19	18	1	7	3	6			17		26												
6		6		7		15		19	15	7	9	12												
16	15	16	15	17	15	13	13	18		25		18												
18		17		20		13		5		12	15	10												
15	12	21	2		22	19	21	7	10	6		4												
		10		17		6		6				6												
9	6	2	10	6	17		24	7	3	3	6	17												
21				15		3		17		15														
3		15	19	19	7	17	6		25	17	21	26												
3	18	14		18		18		15		19		18												
6		14		10	21	23	6	17	6	18	9	14												
10	1	6	15	8		6		18		14		25												
10		11			1	17	18	15	14	9	19	6												
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13												
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26												
										V														
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	Y	W	X	Z

For up to six extra clue letters call:

0907 181 2607*

(Deduct two minutes from Target Time for each extra letter used).

Full solution: **0907 181 2611***

Across only: **0907 181 2609***

Down only: **0907 181 2610***

*Calls cost 80p a minute plus your telephone company's network access charge.

Alternatively, for six extra clues direct to your mobile, text:

SXALPHAU to 64343

Texts cost £1 plus your standard network rate.

Last Sunday's solution

ACROSS: Delicacy, Clunk, Frogmarch, Tap, Read, Jungle, Tedium, Simmer, Pulpit, Hemp, Axe, Bulldozer, Decry, Internal.

DOWN: Defer, Towards, Leopard, Pence, Came, Lullaby, Circus, Violin, Chagrin, Idle, Quote, Muezzin, Skipper, Peril.

THINKING SPACE

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BRAIN TEASERS

- Four friends took part in a monster truck race. Emily was leading until she had a bad landing after jumping off the ramp, and came last. Jenny started in pole position, but didn't finish there. Alice only just made it onto the podium after Georgie ran her off the track. What order did they finish in?
- What links a policeman, a US coin, a thermometer and a valley in San Francisco?
- Remove the letters of a character from Great Expectations, then those of a character from A Christmas Carol, then those of a character from Oliver Twist: G G O P S A I R N O P F C I E
- What is the probability of drawing two consecutive aces from a pack of cards?

ANSWERS: 1 Georgie first, Jenny second, Alice third, Emily fourth. 2 Elements: copper, nickel, mercury, silicon. 3 Pp, Scrooge, Fagin. 4 One in two hundred and twenty-one.

SUDOKU

Fill the small squares so that every column, every row, and every 3x3 square includes all of the digits from 1 to 9

	5	7				6		8
6					5	7	4	
	9		6					7
8		1						7
	3				1			4
					8		5	2
3					1		6	
	2	6	4	7				9
		9			5	2	3	

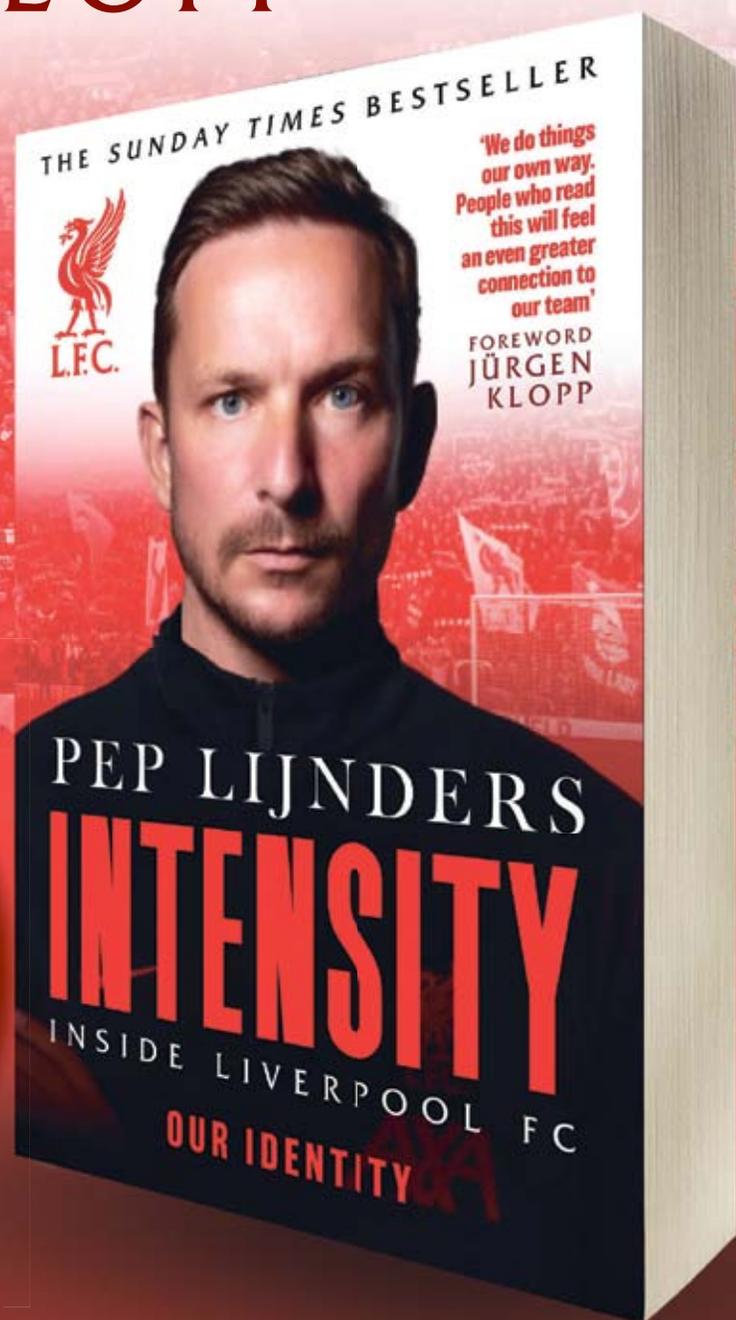
Level: Gentle
Target: 16 minutes
For extra clues call
0901 322 5600
(Calls cost 77p per call from a BT landline plus network extras, other networks and mobiles may vary)
For today's full solution call
0907 181 2606
(Calls cost 77p per minute from BT landlines plus network extras, other networks and mobiles may vary).

LAST SUNDAY'S SOLUTION

2	3	7	8	5	6	4	9	1
6	4	5	1	2	9	7	3	8
1	8	9	4	7	3	5	6	2
4	6	3	7	9	8	1	2	5
8	7	1	2	6	5	3	4	9
5	9	2	3	1	4	8	7	6
7	2	4	9	8	1	6	5	3
9	1	6	5	3	7	2	8	4
3	5	8	6	4	2	9	1	7

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SPORT FOOTBALL



EURO

GROUP C: SERBIA v ENGLAND TODAY, 8PM

TRENT WILL BE Southgate planning to hand

City hoping to tie up Guardiola deal

From Back Page for a meeting that was planned before the Spaniard announced next season could be his last as boss.

Guardiola's current contract expires in 12 months' time and he admits he could leave the club.

But the Premier League champions will not let the six-time title winner walk away without a fight.

Chairman Khaldoon Al Mubarak (right) has promised to do all that he can to persuade Guardiola to sign an extension.



City are hoping the prospect of taking his team to the expanded Club World Cup in the United States next summer will be too tantalising to resist.

Guardiola's existing deal runs out on June 30 – just two weeks before the 32-team tournament's final is scheduled to take place. If the 53-year-old decides to leave,

then City would have little time to appoint his replacement before the new domestic season begins.

Guardiola can name his price when it comes to contract negotiations.

But even though Mansour is willing to give Guardiola a handsome increase on his current £20million-a-year

deal, Guardiola will not base his decision on financial reasons.

The 2022-23 Treble winners fear that

if Guardiola leaves, close friend and director of football Txiki Begiristain will also depart.

Guardiola has admitted he might find it a struggle to motivate himself after eight years of glory.

City are also fighting 115 Premier League charges, which have provided a troubling backdrop to all of Guardiola's success.

MIDFIELD MAESTRO: Alexander-Arnold is set to be deployed in the middle against Serbia tonight



Simon MULLOCK

REPORTS FROM GELSENKIRCHEN

GARETH SOUTHGATE has confirmed that Trent Alexander-Arnold will start England's Euro opener against Serbia.

The Three Lions boss is set to ignore a warning from England legend Wayne Rooney that Alexander-Arnold's defensive flaws will make him a liability against the best teams in the tournament if Southgate opts to deploy the Liverpool star in midfield.

Southgate said: "Everybody's more than entitled to their opinion. That's our world and we have to accept it – but then we have to go and show what we can do."

"I'm really happy. I spoke to Trent about playing in this role over a year ago. It's something he's been really keen to do."

"He's been really receptive to feedback and every bit of information. We know he can be a really special player."

"Equally we know it's not something he's been doing for the last five years. There is an element of the unknown to it but I think it's an opportunity that's worth grasping."

Alexander-Arnold is likely to start next to Declan Rice after being used as an inverted full-back by Jurgen Klopp

Declan Rice after being used as an inverted full-back by Jurgen Klopp

Cancelo funding

By Harry Pratt

BARCELONA plan to buy Joao Cancelo outright from Manchester City – once they offload Spanish forward Ferran Torres to the Premier League.

Newcastle, West Ham, Aston Villa and Tottenham are among the English top-flight clubs on standby after being informed Torres, 24, is up for grabs this summer.

Barca want close to £30million for the winger as they attempt to fund a permanent £20m move for 30-year-old full-back Cancelo (right), who was on loan last season.



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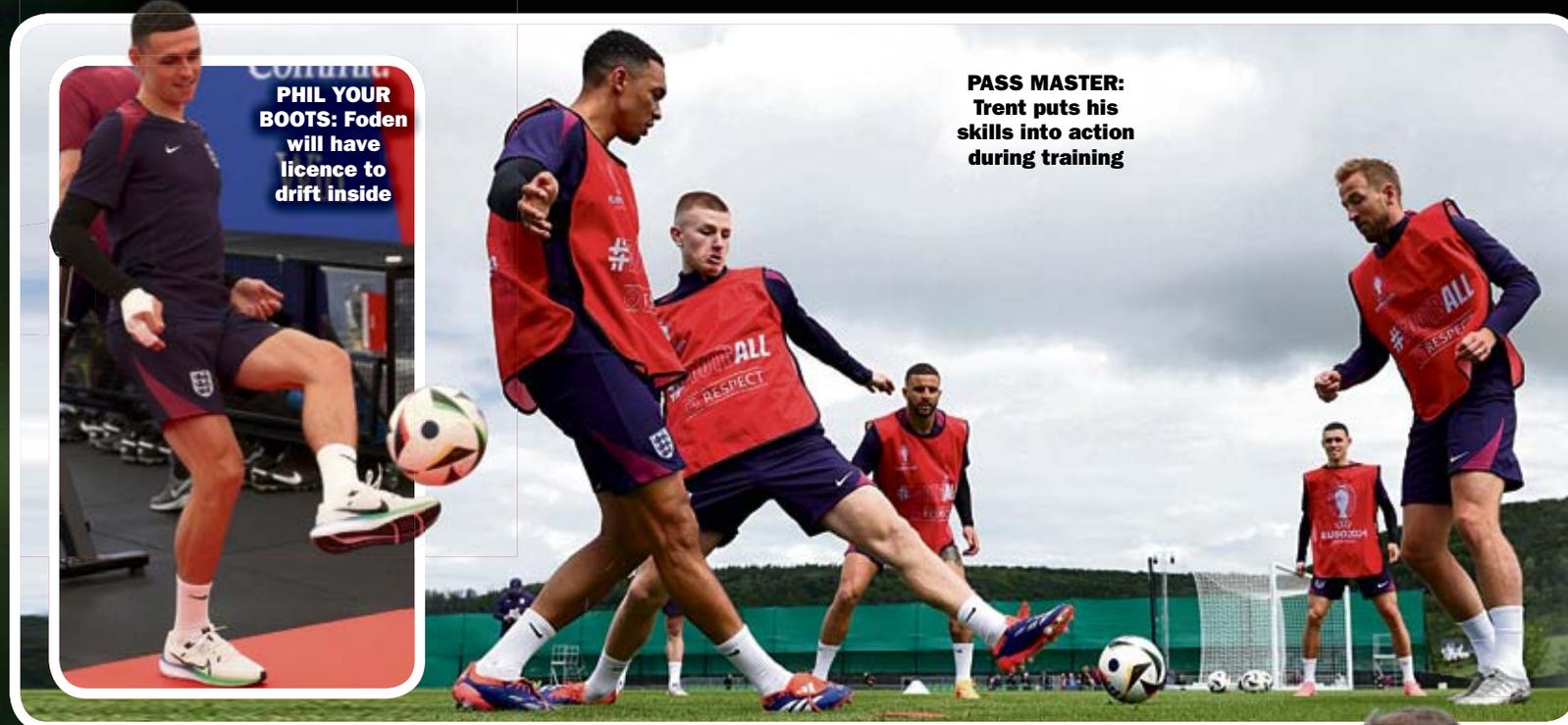


FOOTBALL SPORT

THREE LIONS CHIEF SETS HIS STALL FOR SERBIAN OPENER

THE MIDDLE MAN

central role to Alexander-Arnold



PHIL YOUR BOOTS: Foden will have licence to drift inside

PASS MASTER: Trent puts his skills into action during training

last season. The 25-year-old's passing accuracy and excellence in dead-ball situations appear to have convinced Southgate (right) that his inclusion is a risk worth taking.

That means Phil Foden will start wide on the left despite impressing for Manchester City in a more central role, with Jude Bellingham operating behind skipper Harry Kane.

Captain Kane can't wait for Alexander-Arnold to demonstrate his eye for a pass.

Kane said: "Trent has shown his abilities over many seasons now. That's from right-back or dropping into that

midfield role. He's got amazing delivery from wide areas, amazing vision with his passes – and I think as a striker you can only love that if you are making runs there is someone there looking for you.

"You might not always get the ball but it's always important that the midfielders and the strikers have that connection, where you are willing to make the runs because they have the ability to put the ball in behind."

Southgate believes he has got the balance right and that both Bellingham and Foden will have a stage to shine. He added: "It's less

about where they start or where they defend. It's about where they end up with the ball, about them having the freedom to go where they want with the ball – in the areas where they can do the most damage and be at their most productive.

"I think if you speak with any individual player, that's always been the messaging from us to the team. They've always had the freedom to be where they like to operate.

"We've got some exciting players but we can't get them all on the pitch, so we are trying to find the best balance."



GARETH'S GOING TO GO ONE BETTER

From Back Page game tonight and Southgate said: "I think there is an opportunity for people to make a name for themselves.

"We have got a balance of players who have had some really big nights together – and others who have a rawness, an energy and an excitement about them being in their first tournament. Both things, I think, are adding to the group.

"I said to them last night, when we had a meeting about tournaments and lessons we can take from the past, that there are things from that past we should discard.

"To have the experiences we've had are really, really important – and irrelevant in equal measure. We have to go and play and get it right."

Meanwhile, Bellingham's influence on the England team has seen the 20-year-old become part of a four-man leadership group in Southgate's Euro squad.

The England boss has asked the Real Madrid midfielder to join captain Kane, vice-captain Kyle Walker and Declan Rice in a bid to give all of his players a voice.

Southgate said: "We've put a small leadership group together for this tournament now with Harry, Kyle Walker, Declan Rice and Jude Bellingham because there is a different dynamic to this group. There's a lot of younger players.

"I want to make sure that I'm really in touch with the voices of the younger players. It's always important to know what the players are thinking."



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EURO 2024 GROUP C SERBIA V ENGLAND



Today, 8pm, Arena AufSchalke, Gelsenkirchen



2 PULLOUTS INSIDE TODAY



OPTIONS: City boss Guardiola

City eye Pep deal

By **Jeremy Cross**

MANCHESTER CITY owner Sheikh Mansour wants Pep Guardiola to sign a new contract.

And the billionaire has launched a major charm offensive in a bid to keep Guardiola at the Etihad.

Mansour invited Guardiola to his home in Abu Dhabi
Turn to Page 66

WE WILL GO ONE BETTER THIS TIME



MAN WITH A PLAN: England boss Gareth Southgate

From **Simon Mullock** in Gelsenkirchen

GARETH SOUTHGATE last night urged his England players to grasp the chance to become legends.

The Three Lions boss has called on Harry Kane, Jude Bellingham and Co to wipe away the memory of agonising near-misses by returning home from Germany as European champions.

England face Serbia in their opening group
TURN TO PAGE 67

Southgate's vow after Euro 2020 heartbreak

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SUNDAY EXPRESS Sport

England captain Kane's looking for the next step

SILVER SURFER REPORT: PAGES 2-3

Respect is great but now I need trophies

GER IN THERE: Harry Kane switched to Bayern Munich at the start of the season





SIR DAVID KEPT ERIK AT UNITED

By Harry Pratt

MANAGER Erik ten Hag's surprise stay of execution at Manchester United came down to the support of Sir David Brailsford.

Without the backing of Ineos sporting director Brailsford (below), Ten Hag would not have survived the end-of-season review into the Old Trafford playing set-up, which included his own position.

Before the FA Cup final win against Manchester City, the Dutchman looked doomed – with the club's new billionaire co-owner Sir Jim Ratcliffe deeming a change in the hotseat imperative.



That followed United's worst season in the Premier League as they slumped to a desperate eighth-placed finish.

However, the unexpected Wembley triumph and the support of high-profile figures like Sir Alex Ferguson gave ex-GB cycling boss Brailsford the opportunity to convince Ineos supremo Ratcliffe to stick with the manager.

TEN HAG DEMANDS AN INPUT

By Simon Mullock

ERIK TEN HAG has told the Old Trafford hierarchy that he can work with Manchester United's new chief executive and technical director – but only as equal partners.

After finding out last week that his job is safe, Ten Hag (below) made it clear to Sir Jim Ratcliffe and his Ineos Group that he must be allowed to help shape the club's playing style and transfer policy alongside Omar Berrada and Jason Wilcox.



The Dutchman, 54, was unimpressed to hear that United had spoken to several potential successors since he guided the Reds Devils to a shock FA Cup final triumph over Manchester City.

But after being told by Ratcliffe that he would not be sacked, Ten Hag said he was not prepared to relinquish control when it comes to identifying potential transfer targets and making decisions on how his team will play.

GROUP C: SERBIA v ENGLAND TODAY, 8PM STRIKER

HARRY KANE TARGETS

Kane aiming to be top scorer but

ALL THOSE YEARS OF HURT: Harry Kane hopes he'll be smiling until the very end of Euro 24



HARRY KANE feels he is finally being recognised as one of the best strikers in the world – but he desperately wants to be known as a winner.

Kane's move to Bayern Munich last year may not have realised the glut of trophies everyone expected when he quit Tottenham.

But the England captain still scored 44 goals to claim the European Golden Shoe – and it would be ironic if the first piece of silverware he lifts is the European Championship on German soil.

Kane is tough enough to take on the cynics who have revelled in his failure to lift a cup in Bavaria. He feels at the peak of his powers.

He said: "I'd say that from an outside point of view I'm probably now respected more as one of the top strikers in the world."

"When you're at a club like Bayern Munich, that comes if you have a great season. It's similar to Real Madrid, Barcelona and all the top, top clubs around the world."

"Maybe I now have a different kind of aura. Nothing's really changed in how I prepare, how I go into games and my confidence is still the same as it's been throughout my career."

"But maybe when you play for a club like Bayern, you get looked at in a different light."

"It's good for me because it raises my profile and helps me to really compete to be one of the best players in the world."

"I am extremely proud of what I

Simon MULLOCK
REPORTS

have achieved in my career so far – but I also know that I want to have trophies to show for it.

"I feel like I've got many years ahead of me. I feel like I'm at a real peak in my career and hopefully for the next four or five years that will be the case."

Kane, 30, has a record 63 goals for his country. Six years ago, he went to the World Cup in Russia insisting he could be the tournament's top goalscorer – and came home with the Golden Boot.

Kane, who will lead his country in their opening group game against Serbia today, said: "I know what I am capable of. I know what I have done year after year. There is no reason why I cannot be the top scorer at this tournament."

"If we do well, I expect myself to be up there. To be scoring goals means I will be helping the team. That confidence is still there."

"I'm at my peak – not just my physical peak, it's also my mental peak in terms of understanding the game, tactics and the space to run into. I am in a really comfortable place in terms of what I am capable of – but as always in these tournaments I will be judged on goals so hopefully I will get a few."

"I think we're all at that stage now where we want to have a great tournament, want to make everyone proud – but we want to win."

"We've definitely had talented squads throughout my time as an England player but I think what separates this one is how good everyone is playing leading up to this tournament."

Fears in Dragan's den over

SERBIA coach Dragan Stojkovic is running scared of Jude Bellingham after tipping the England midfielder as a future Ballon d'Or winner.

Stojkovic warned his team they will have to keep a watchful eye on Bellingham when they open their Euro campaign against the Three Lions in the Veltins Arena.

He reckons the 20-year-old is typical of the talented technicians Gareth Southgate

By Simon Mullock

has in such abundance that he could leave Marcus Rashford, Jack Grealish and Raheem Sterling at home.

Stojkovic said: "Bellingham is a great boy. He's a future golden ball winner, definitely."

"It's very impressive what he has already shown in a Real Madrid jersey. He's young but so powerful. We have to be careful not to give him



2024

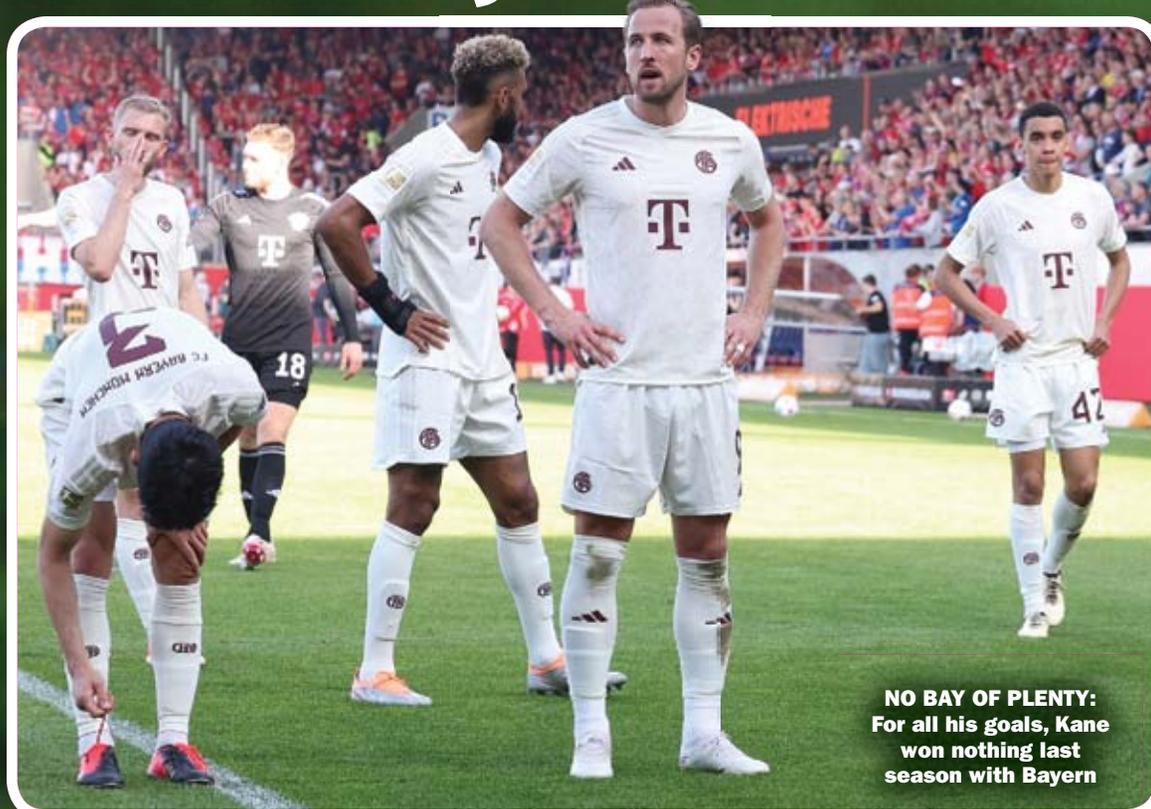


FOOTBALL 3

BIDS TO END WAIT FOR WINNER'S MEDAL

HUGE GOAL

it's team glory he needs



NO BAY OF PLENTY:
For all his goals, Kane won nothing last season with Bayern

LOOK BUT DON'T TOUCH:
2019 final with Spurs



WORLD'S END:
Defeat in Qatar after penalty miss



ferocious firepower of Bellingham and Co

too much space. Bellingham is already a very important player for England. It's better he doesn't play!

"Defensively we will have to show what we have done in training to stop him. He is very, very young but he has shown some unbelievable performances. It is good for England and bad for us."

Stojkovic (right) is envious that Southgate has been able to overlook players of outstanding

ability and added: "This English team is really, really talented regarding performances of (Phil) Foden, (Bukayo) Saka, Bellingham, and (Harry) Kane. If you leave Rashford, Sterling and Grealish out, you can see how they are strong."

"England will have a million different opinions, like always. Yes, the team has changed compared to two years ago but this is a new generation

of players, who proved their quality in the Premier League and during qualification.

"Some of our players were not even born the last time we participated in the Euros. We have been waiting a long time and I think we deserve it."

"It is up to us to now make the further step. We are going to fight until the end and give even more than the maximum."



HOSTILE: Danny Rose abused in 2012 game against Serbia Under-21s

It's time to banish the racists from game, says Rose

By Dan Burnham

ENGLAND'S black players will be expecting racist abuse if they make a mistake at the Euros, says Danny Rose.

The former left-back foresaw the torrent of abuse headed the way of Bukayo Saka, Marcus Rashford and Jadon Sancho after their penalty shoot-out heartache of three years ago.

And he fears more of the same if similar scenes unfold in Germany in the coming weeks.

Speaking on Reach's new Euro Thrash podcast – which you can find on YouTube, Apple and Spotify – Rose said: "Even now, I have group chats with my friends and if something happens at the weekend or whatever, and if it's a black player the first message will be, 'Watch, I bet he gets racially abused in his DMs on Instagram'."

"That is just the mentality these days – that it is the norm and it is to be expected."

"You just want the players just to be focused on winning the trophy for their country and not potentially having to worry about, if I make a mistake, what's waiting for me when I go on my phone."

"We all have to just work together and find a solution on how to eradicate that."

Rose knows all too well what the trio who missed penalties endured in 2021.

He was among those targeted in discriminatory chants during a Euro 2020 qualifier in Montenegro.

But that was far from his first such experience – seven years earlier, a trip to today's

opponents Serbia saw their fans throw stones and make monkey gestures at him.

It was a harrowing experience for a player aged just 22 and Rose said: "It was tough. It was away so it was hostile."

"I just remember we'd gone into the tunnel first and they told us that we were on their side, so we had to cross over in the tunnel and they'd be hitting us and starting then."

"I think that we needed to win to qualify for the Under-21s Championships and it was a real difficult game."

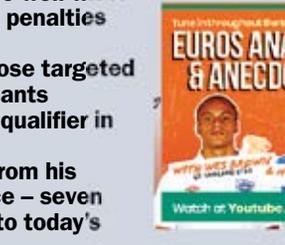
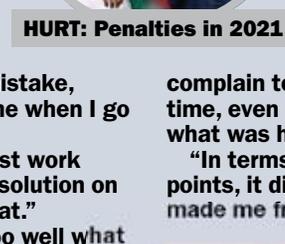
"It was so hostile. That is one of the harshest atmospheres I have ever played in."

"It was probably the first time I had experienced anything like that. It did affect me a little bit because I remember that if there was a 50-50 challenge, I'd try to be a little bit naughty and let my frustration out."

"I didn't ask to come off. I didn't

complain to the manager at the time, even though it was evident what was happening."

"In terms of wanting three points, it didn't affect me but it made me frustrated."



HURT: Penalties in 2021





GROUP C: SERBIA v ENGLAND  **Today, 8pm** **BELLINGHAM A STAR**

JUDE HAS MESSI MAGIC IN ABUNDANCE

GROUP C FIXTURES	
TODAY	
Serbia v England	8pm
Slovenia v Denmark	5pm
THURSDAY, JUNE 20	
Slovenia v Serbia	2pm
Denmark v England	5pm
TUESDAY, JUNE 25	
England v Slovenia	8pm
Denmark v Serbia	8pm

THE REAL DEAL:
Madrid and England ace Bellingham



JUDE BELLINGHAM can be England's answer to Lionel Messi in Germany, says Luther Blissett. The midfielder, 20, enjoyed a stunning debut campaign at Real Madrid.

He bagged 23 goals in all competitions for Carlo Ancelotti's men – and won La Liga and the Champions League – having signed from Borussia Dortmund only last summer.

Real handed over in excess of £100million to secure his services.

And the move came just three seasons after Dortmund coughed up £25m to draft him in from Birmingham in a deal that made him the most expensive 17-year-old ever.

Blissett (above), who moved to AC Milan from Watford for £1m in 1983, reckons Bellingham's European adventure is helping him to develop into one of the finest midfielders of his generation.

"Playing abroad gives you another insight into the game," said the former striker, who holds Watford's all-time records for appearances and goals, having played 503 games and scored 186 goals.

"In Italy, I found it was all about not giving goals away and the Italians were brilliant at that.

"For the Spanish, it's about creativity and movement across midfield.

"Bellingham will understand that, having been an absolute star for Real Madrid last season.

"He's arguably the best attacking midfielder in the world. Bellingham makes goals

Alex WOOD

EXCLUSIVE

but he certainly scores them as well.

"That's a massive threat to any team you're playing against.

"He's almost like our own Lionel Messi in midfield, in the deeper-lying attacking role.

"Having a player like that in your team can be a really motivating factor too.

"The squad know if he's on song you've got a good chance of beating anybody.

"The biggest challenge for Gareth Southgate is making sure you've got the right blend of players around him in midfield and attack."

Harry Kane will lead the line for the Three Lions against Serbia.

But unlike Bellingham, the England skipper suffered a disappointing season abroad as he looked to pick up silverware.

Bayern Munich failed to secure Bundesliga glory for the first time in over a decade despite Kane bagging a whopping 36 top-flight goals in 32 games.

The Bavarian giants also crashed out of the Champions League to Real and were stunned in the German Cup against minnows Saarbrücken.

But Blissett believes the former Tottenham man will still have learned plenty of new

tricks at the Allianz Arena that can benefit his England team-mates.

"It had looked like he was going to have an amazing season with Bayern but it felt like the team lost its way," added Blissett, who was capped 14 times for England and scored a hat-trick on debut against Luxembourg.

"It was such a shame for him personally because if he'd won the Bundesliga we'd have all seen another side to him.

"He still scored a lot of goals, though, and his game has developed even more. He's added a little something else to his overall play in Germany.

"Kane will come deep so that means your wide players need to get on the opposite side of him. When I was playing with John Barnes, if I went short I wanted him to go the other way.

"Good teams will always find a way to work a system and England have the ability to do exactly that.

"I don't think the players are fully aware of how great they can be. Southgate needs to go out and tell them.

"It's not a case of being overconfident – they just need to have that belief."

TAKING FLIGHT: Bellingham and Kane (below) have enjoyed success overseas



STAR MAN: Argentina great Lionel Messi led his nation to glory

The UEFA EURO 2024 Official Tournament Magazine includes a big interview with Gareth Southgate, plus team profiles, quizzes, venue guides and a FREE giant wallchart. On sale from reachsportshop.com.



SCAN ME



2024



FOOTBALL 5

GROUP C: SLOVENIA v DENMARK Today, 5pm **ENGLAND RIVALS**

STRIKE IT RICH: Hojlund has the expectation of a nation on his shoulders

Boss backing Hojlund to end goal shortage

DENMARK boss Kasper Hjulmand is backing Rasmus Hojlund to upstage Benjamin Sesko against Slovenia.

The two highly-rated young strikers are set to go head-to-head in their Group C opener in Stuttgart and Manchester United forward Hojlund has a point to prove.

Not only was he benched for the FA Cup final triumph over Manchester

City but he has scored only once in his last eight games for Denmark.

Hjulmand (right) said: "You have this

From Ryan Taylor in Stuttgart

period where you score a lot of goals but thankfully Rasmus makes a big impression in all of the games. He always makes a big difference so it's not a concern and I am sure the goals will come."

The coach has been doing his homework on red-hot Slovenian frontman

Sesko, adding: "He's a big star and a great attacker.

We are ready for him. I'm happy we played our friendly games against similar opponents that reminded us of him."



SLOVENIA boss Matjaz Kek says he always knew striker Benjamin Sesko was destined for the top.

The RB Leipzig star comes into Euro 2024 with seven goals in his last seven Bundesliga matches and a bumper new deal.

Kek, who has been in charge since 2018 and handed the 21-year-old his debut, said: "He is one of the big pieces of the mosaic."

"When he joined the national team aged 17, he showed he has the quality and attitude and positive energy that makes him deserve his place."

Slovenia are making only their second appearance in the Euros, 24 years after their first, and Kek added: "It's nice to be a footballer in Slovenia these days. It's been too long."

Ras can be great Dane

RASMUS HOJLUND can help the Danes continue their Euros love affair in Frankfurt on Thursday against England – and remind Manchester United fans just how far he has come this season.

That's the message from former Old Trafford favourite Jesper Olsen as Gareth Southgate's side prepare to take on Denmark in a Group C clash that could decide the Euros fate of both countries.

Ex-winger Olsen (below) said: "Hojlund will be looking forward to getting away with Denmark after an interesting first season at Manchester United.

"It hasn't been the easiest team for him to be part of but the FA Cup will have given him a lift.

"We don't have the depth of the bigger countries. We need everyone to be pulling in one direction and you need

Richard EDWARDS
EXCLUSIVE

your big players, like Hojlund, to be at their best.

"He's still so young and when you come to a huge club like United, you often have more experienced players helping you fit in. He hasn't really had that this season. He has had to come in and really hit the ground running.

"That's never easy but he's a good player, a goalscorer."

Olsen, who won 43 caps for Denmark, warned England not to take the 1992 winners lightly.

"Expectations are probably fairly low but this is the Euros.

Anything can happen – we've shown that before," he added. "A game against England is as big as it comes. It's one of the biggest games any Danish player plays in."



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6 FOOTBALL

PREMIER LEAGUE

Hurzeler impressed by Brighton vision

FABIAN HURZELER says Brighton's ambition was the clinching factor as he became the Premier League's youngest-ever permanent manager.

The Texas-born coach, 31, will swap St Pauli for the south coast this summer, after being appointed last night to take over from Roberto De Zerbi.

Hurzeler (below) has agreed a deal through to 2027.

"I am thrilled to be the new head coach of Brighton & Hove Albion," he said.

"After speaking to

Tony (Bloom), Paul (Barber) and David (Weir), it was clear that they are highly ambitious. The club has a unique history and bold vision for the future, so I am truly excited to be part of the project."

Owner Bloom said: "From the start of the process to appoint our new head coach, Fabian was always a standout candidate and one who had caught our attention with his exceptional work at St Pauli."

Hurzeler, who took his first coaching role in 2016, guided St Pauli to promotion to the Bundesliga.



Kevin Campbell 1970-2024

REMEMBERING A SUPER MAN

Chris McKenna

REPORTS

It was a few years ago that Kevin Campbell was reminiscing about his famous winner at Anfield for Everton.

"I remember seeing the Blues in the Kop end celebrating the goal," said the former Toffees striker.

"I will take that memory to my grave."

It is with great sadness that day has come all too soon for 'Super Kev' – just 54 years old – but it is one of the great memories that will also stay with Blues fans forever, too.

The Lambeth-born goalscorer had made his name at youth level with the Gunners due to his strike rate.

He would make his first-team debut in 1988 and scored eight goals in Arsenal's run to the league title in the 1990-91 season under George Graham before claiming a League Cup, FA Cup and Cup Winners' Cup for the Gunners.

When he left North London in 1995, he had amassed 55 goals in 210 appearances alongside the likes of Alan Smith, Paul Merson and the prolific Ian Wright.

Campbell moved to Forest, where he suffered relegation but led them back to the top flight the following season with 23 goals.

He then took the bold move to go to Turkey and play for Trabzonspor in 1998. It was a horrible time where he was racially abused by the club chairman, Mehmet Ali Yilmaz.

But it opened the door to a return to England on an initial loan to Everton in March 1999. It began a love affair with the Blues that remained until he passed away.

He helped them move



HAPPY DAYS: Campbell with a young Wayne Rooney at Everton, pal Ian Wright at Arsenal (right) and (below) commentating



away from a relegation battle with nine goals in his first eight games under Walter Smith and his move was made permanent that summer.

Then came that moment in September 1999 when he scored an early goal in a heated derby that gave Everton a rare Anfield victory. It would be the last winning goal at their rivals'

home until 2021. Years later, Campbell revealed a meeting in a city centre nightspot's toilet later that evening with Steven Gerrard, who had been sent off for a nasty lunge on the Everton striker.

Gerrard thought he was in bother. Campbell dropped his trousers to show the 19-year-old Liverpool man the stud mark he'd left on his leg but he laughed it off. "I

wished him well, I was just happy we got the win and you leave those things on the pitch," he said in an interview in 2021.

He went on to become the Toffees' first black captain. They'll never forget him at Everton, having left with 51 goals after six years.

"Super Kev" really was a super man as well as a fine footballer.

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Shock at sudden death of Millwall's Sarkic, 26

MILLWALL goalkeeper Matija Sarkic has died aged 26.

His death yesterday morning in Budva, Montenegro, has shocked the world of football.

The talented shot-stopper came through the ranks at Anderlecht before joining Aston

By Ryan Taylor

Villa in 2015. His other clubs included Wigan, Livingston, Wolves, Shrewsbury, Birmingham and Stoke before he shone at The Den last season.

Just 10 days ago, Sarkic impressed for the Montenegro national team

in a 2-0 defeat by Belgium in Brussels.

He won eight caps for his country.

The Montenegro Football Association said Sarkic died suddenly, describing him as a "beloved member" of the national squad and an "eternally smiling guy"

whose "untimely death has caused great pain to the Sarkic family".

Millwall said they were "completely devastated" and a Lions statement read: "Everyone at the club sends their love and condolences to Matija's family and friends at this immensely sad time."



SARKIC

CRICKET - T20 WORLD CUP: Vaughan looks ahead



GOOD OMAN:
Archer and
Buttler celebrate
during victory
over Oman

Pace ace Archer has the summer X-factor

JOFRA ARCHER'S impressive return to the England white-ball firing line bodes well for a hot and fiery Test summer from the fit-again speedster.

Jos Buttler and his men may have huffed and puffed to prove their T20 champions status and to thrill the Caribbean locals during this World Cup.

Yet Archer sending down the kind of rapid missiles, mixed with real accuracy and penetration, has at least given the management and supporters a reason to smile and be optimistic for the red-ball months to come.

Archer wiped away some cobwebs in the opening game against Australia to put the frighteners up the Oman

Gary FITZGERALD
REPORTS

batsmen as he, Mark Wood and Adil Rashid skittled the minnows for just 47.

They managed to boost the run-rate and send them into the clash with Namibia still hoping to qualify for the Super Eight stage.

But former captain Michael Vaughan believes Archer will be even more potent next month onwards when the West Indies arrive for a three-Test battle, followed by Sri Lanka.

The international summer ends with 50-over clashes with the Aussies.

And Vaughan (right) said: "We talk of Jofra in the same

breath as Jasprit Bumrah in Indian cricket, who is world-class because he can bowl in all formats.

"We've seen from Jofra that spell he bowled to Steve Smith in Test cricket will live long in the memory. We want Jofra fit and firing in 18 months time.

"Archer is the X-factor, no matter what form of cricket England are playing. We've seen that here in the T20 World Cup.

"He's still clearly not lost any of his pace and I've been impressed with his consistency so far.

"This summer is going to be very emotional, especially at the Lord's Test against the Windies with

Jimmy (Anderson) finishing. If Jofra stays fit this summer, the fans will have plenty to look forward to."

Vaughan also believes that while England will miss Anderson, just as they have done Stuart Broad, the door is open for younger, fresher bowlers to stake a claim in the clashes with the Windies and Sri Lanka.

He added: "England are going to somehow find a way of replacing both Jimmy and Broady. It is going to be near impossible.

"There is now a great opportunity for all those young bowlers to put their hands up and try and emulate the greatest of all time... Jimmy Anderson."



OLYMPICS BOXING



BACK TO HER BEST: Reid in action in January

Reid's golden goal is back alive again

CHANTELLE REID thought her career was over.

Not long after winning bronze at the 2015 World Youth Championships, the middleweight was diagnosed with degenerative disc disease, a debilitating back injury that meant doctors warned her to put the gloves away. Boxing, however, remained a core part of her life. Both parents and her grandad run gyms in the East Midlands, meaning the natural course was to begin coaching as well.

Yet being in the corner for her younger brother Duane Jr. provided too much temptation and after a six-year break, she could not watch outside the ring much longer.

So Reid embarked on a stunning return, ditching the desk job she hated, and in 18 months she has gone from tentative sparring to Olympic gold medal hopeful.

"I was working at a mortgage advice centre in Derby and then teaching kids boxing in the evenings," she said.

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Brown building big

PAT BROWN says an eye-opening stint on building sites across Manchester was the motivation for his assault on the Olympics.

The heavyweight contender (right) spent two years scaffolding by day and sparring by night, having previously worked as a gardener.

But the physical toll was "so gruesome" it left him with a choice - to either

EXCLUSIVE by Alan Smith

"Going from boxing all my life to being in an office was a very different life. I didn't enjoy it at all.

"Boxing is for me. I couldn't really imagine going back to that career."

After being put back in the England team, it was not long before Reid was at the Olympic qualifiers and, crucially, receiving National Lottery funding. Boxing alone has received more than £100million in funding from the organisation since 1994.

"That was massive," she said. "I wouldn't be able to train full-time if it wasn't for funding. I train three times a day, so I need income support."

Reid is determined to reward the faith shown in her and make up for the lost years - by winning the gold medal.

She said: "I don't really think I've got any challengers. They are all beatable. Once we get the draw it's just about getting the tactics right to make it happen."

By Alan Smith

double down on his commitment to boxing or say goodbye to his dream.

Brown, 24, said: "With the scaffolding I was around people trying to feed their families.

"That job made me realise a lot. It gave me more hunger to chase my boxing dream. It gives out a message to kids that anything is possible."



No Canada dry as India clash is washed away

INDIA'S final T20 World Cup Group A match against Canada in Lauderhill, Florida was abandoned without a ball being bowled because of a wet outfield.

Friday's game between the USA and Ireland at the same venue had also been a complete washout.

With the pitch still

CRICKET

carrying plenty of surface water, the scheduled start on Saturday morning was delayed and a second inspection then set for 11.30am local time.

However, given there were no signs of rapid improvement in the gloomy

conditions, the umpires made the decision to call the match off, with both teams taking one point.

India had already made the Super Eight stage with three wins, while Canada were eliminated after losing to USA and Pakistan.

And it was a similar story in the UK as only five

overs were possible before Nottinghamshire's home Vitality Blast clash with Durham was abandoned.

There was no result and the sides shared the points. Play had finally got under way following a rain delay with the match reduced to 17 overs a side, before a thunderstorm arrived.



WET: Durham

8 SPORT

RUGBY LEAGUE



OFF AND RUNNING: Lewis Martin scores for Hull

Smith disappointed as Hull shock Rhinos

FRUSTRATED Leeds boss Rohan Smith admits his players were saddened at losing on a day when they hoped to honour Rob Burrow.

Rhinos aimed to put on a show in their first game since the death of their legendary former player from MND.

Under-pressure Smith said: "They're frustrated, disappointed, sad... all those negative emotions." Hull scored

Hull 18 Leeds 10
By David Craven

through Lewis Martin, Denive Balmforth and Cam Scott, with Ben Reynolds converting all three tries. Leeds'



Ash Handley and Harry Newman (left) landed tries while Rhyse Martin added one conversion. Interim Hull head coach Simon Grix finally got his first victory and he said: "The main feeling is relief."

Impressive Amone seals win for Leigh

LEIGH LEOPARDS are "back in the game" says coach Adrian Lam after victory in Perpignan.

"We had a tough start to the season but we're working hard to turn it around," said Lam.

"Performances like this show that we can match anyone."

A record number of travelling Leigh fans saw Dragons full-back Arthur Mourgue start the scoring with a



Catalans 2 Leigh 10
By Steve Brady

17th-minute penalty. Matt Moylan levelled the scores when Dragons' hooker Michael McIlorum was penalised for a high tackle but Leigh took the lead when prop Tom Amone (left) forced his way over, Moylan tagging on the conversion.

Moylan converted a second-half penalty and terrific resistance sealed Leigh's victory.

Paasi just glad to be back after injury hell

AGNATIUS PAASI has spoken of his emotional return – and delight at seeing the controversial tackle technique that crocked him finally outlawed.

The big Tongan prop (right) faces London today having recently made his comeback against Catalans after TEN months out.

He suffered major knee and ankle injuries after a tackle from Leigh captain John Asiata in last



London B v St Helens
Today, 3pm

July's Challenge Cup semi-final.

Paasi, 32, said: "Those kinds of tackles can end careers."

"Unfortunately, I was one of those who had a long spell out of the game due to it. "But I don't hold any grudges. The standing ovation I got when I got on the field, I had a teardrop in my eye. I'll cherish that forever."

GOLF - US OPEN: Woods to play once more in 2024

TIGER BITTEN BY OPEN MISSED CUT

TIGER WOODS confirmed next month's Open Championship will be his last appearance in 2024 after the 15-time Major champion missed the cut at the US Open.

Heading into the second round at four over par, Woods failed to get any breaks around the unforgiving Pinehurst No. 2. He carded a 73 to add to his 74 to finish seven-over-par and miss the cut for a second successive Major.

Addressing his future,

Andrew GAMBLE

REPORTS FROM NORTH CAROLINA

and then I'll come back whenever I come back."

Earlier this week, Woods warned that facing the infamous Pinehurst greens would be a 'war of attrition'. It was a war the three-time US Open champion ultimately lost here in North Carolina.

While he landed the first blow with a birdie to open his round on

yards off the tee on the fast-running fairways.

After navigating through 14 holes in two over par, Woods eyed a birdie on 15 to claw back to the projected cut line. Instead, his putt agonisingly lipped out.

"Yeah, 15 hurt," Woods admitted. "That was a sweet little seven-iron in there and a good putt, high-side lip. If I make that putt, it flips the momentum and I'm looking pretty good on the last three holes."

"And instead I'm on the wrong side of the cut line and having to do something good on the last three holes,

which I end up hitting a sweet shot out of trouble on 16 and I thought I holed my bunker shot at 17."

Until he tees it up for the last time, the 48-year-old's future will always be a topic of conversation. Shrouded in sweat, Woods remained vague when quizzed over his participation at the Majors going forward, given he needed a special exemption from the USGA to feature this week.

"As far as my last Open Championship or US Open Championship, I don't know what that is. It may or may not be."

Woods revealed the next round of professional golf will come at Royal Troon in July.

He said: "I've only got one more tournament this season, so I'm not going to, I don't think, even if I win the British Open, I don't think I'll be in the (FedEx Cup) play-offs."

"Just one more event

Thursday morning, any hopes of challenging faded towards the end of his first round.

One of the sport's most revered figures, Woods battled to the end but couldn't deliver on a sweltering Friday.

"Well, it was probably the highest score I could have possibly shot today," he added.

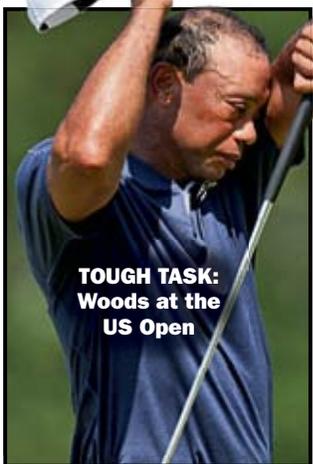
"I hit a lot of good shots that just didn't quite go my way, or I hit good putts, and then I put myself in a couple of bad spots with some bad lag putts."

"I thought I played well enough to be up there in contention."

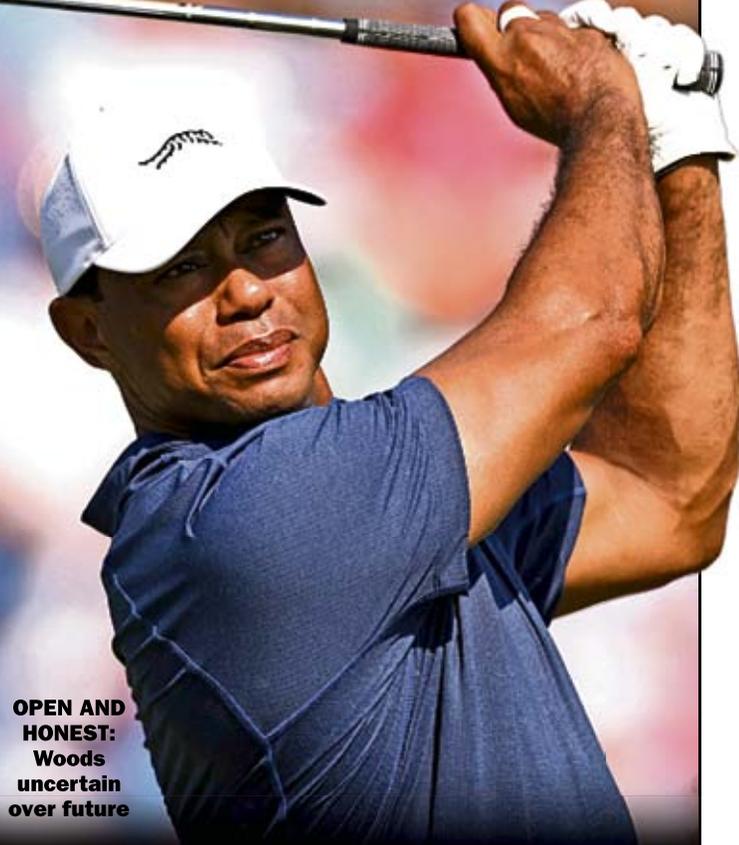
"It just didn't work out."

Woods has now missed the cut four times in his past five appearances in the US Open after only missing it once in his first 16 career starts.

But he showed fight, hitting 21 of 28 fairways and averaging a massive 314.2



TOUGH TASK: Woods at the US Open



OPEN AND HONEST: Woods uncertain over future

Fitzpatrick trailing in last after round to forgive

MATT FITZPATRICK wilted in the North Carolina heat as the former champion carded a frustrating nine-over 79 in the third round of the US Open.

Two years on from his dramatic win at Brookline, Fitzpatrick could not tame the Pinehurst greens that have inflicted headaches across the field this

By Andrew Gamble

week. But it was his erratic ball-striking and inability to hit the fairways that truly derailed his efforts.

Fitzpatrick carded back-to-back bogeys on the opening two holes to set the tone.

The Sheffield native (right) then posted successive double-

bogeys at the fifth and sixth and added another bogey before the turn, while the back nine featured another two.

The birdie-less third-round nightmare left Fitzpatrick at 14 over.

When he signed for a third-round 79, the 29-year-old sat last among the 74 players remaining.

The Englishman wasn't

the only former US Open champion to struggle

Brooks Koepka also found it difficult and the five-time Major champion posted a one-over 71 to sit six over.

World No.1 Scottie Scheffler could not get a putt to drop en route to a one-over-par 71 that leaves him five over.



TENNIS: Spanish legend stalls on retirement plans

Nadal: I'm having fun again

Neil
SQUIRES
REPORTS

RAFA NADAL has hinted he could reverse his retirement plans and play on into next year – raising the possibility of a Wimbledon farewell.

The Spanish legend had announced that he intended to call time on his glittering career in 2024 and decided to skip the championships to concentrate on the Paris Olympics.

But having rediscovered “the pleasure of playing again”, the 22-time Grand Slam champion has now rowed back on the timing of his departure from the game.

“I have never made a hasty decision and that will not be the case this time either,” Nadal told *L'Equipe*. “My feelings over the last few weeks have made me want to explore a little more, to see what can happen.

“I feel like I'm finding the pleasure of playing again, of having fun. I want to give myself a chance to see if my physique stays at this level or if this is just a passing moment and it starts to go bad again.

“I'm giving myself time to see how I'm going to feel after the Olympic Games and then we'll see what happens, what decisions I make.

“But always with great serenity, with the satisfaction of having always done my best.

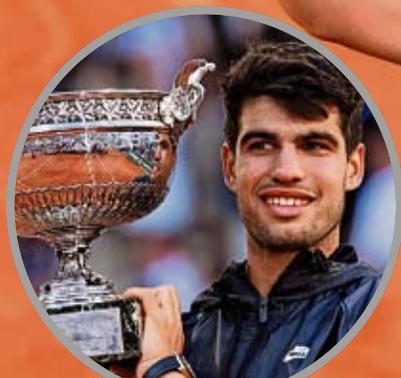
“And when I have to make a decision, in the end, I will make it without problem.

“I always said I thought this would be my last year but I can't be sure because, at the end of the day, you don't know what's going to happen in the future.”

Nadal made his comeback from a career-threatening hip injury in January before further physical problems struck.

The 38-year-old returned only to lose in the first round of the French Open to Alexander Zverev.

However, he turned down an offer of a farewell tribute at Roland Garros, which suggested that he might be having second thoughts



DOUBLES TROUBLE: Carlos Alcaraz

on retirement. “The tournament offered me one and discussed it with my team. At first I said, ‘Okay, let's do it!’ – but at the last minute, I didn't want it,” he said.

“I understand that Roland Garros wants to honour me because of what I have accomplished and, given what the tournament means to me, of course it will be great. But there's nothing stopping you from waiting a year.”

Nadal will play in the ATP clay court event in Sweden next month before heading to the Olympics, where he will compete in both the singles and the doubles – with compatriot Carlos Alcaraz.

“This is the opportunity to try to win a medal.

“That is the ultimate goal,” he said.

ACE IN THE PACK: Nadal may play on into 2025 and go out in style at Wimbledon



FINALIST: Jack

Dominant Draper set for first Wimbledon seed

JACK DRAPER is on course to be a Wimbledon seed for the first time after powering through to the Stuttgart Open final.

The 22-year-old, bidding to win the first ATP Tour event of his career, brushed aside America's Brandon Nakashima 6-3, 6-3 in 72 minutes in the

TENNIS NOTTINGHAM

semi-final. It moved him up to a provisional career-high No.32 in the world rankings – the last spot for a Wimbledon seeding.

He will also be confirmed as Britain's No.1 tomorrow. “I have always wanted to be British No.1 and it

is an honour to be in that position and, hopefully, I can carry the flag forward,” said Draper.

“It is truly an amazing feeling to be playing this level of tennis.

“If I come out playing the way I have been, I will give myself a good shot (in the final).” Draper, who

has previously reached two finals, will face former Wimbledon finalist Matteo Berrettini today.

He then moves on to Queen's, where he will play Roland-Garros winner Carlos Alcaraz in the second round – if both clear their first-round hurdle in West Kensington.

FORMULA ONE



NEED FOR SPEED: Mercedes driver Hamilton

Hamilton hoping to slip up a gear after upgrades

LEWIS HAMILTON and Mercedes will hope to take the fight to Red Bull at the Spanish Grand Prix next weekend.

The Silver Arrows will debut a new floor at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya as they look to build on the success of their recent front-wing upgrade at the Canadian Grand Prix.

Heading into the race in Montreal, the Brackley-based outfit were nothing more than also-rans in the fight for victories.

However, at the end of Friday's running at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, it was clear that this was no longer the case.

Mercedes' promise carried over into the rest of the weekend too.

Hamilton was nearly four-tenths quicker than the next fastest driver in FP3 and George Russell claimed his second career pole position later in the day.

Then, on race day, Russell fought bravely against Max Verstappen (right) and McLaren's Lando Norris before eventually settling for a P3 finish, just ahead of his team-mate.

Despite the disappointment emanating from the Mercedes camp, their progress was clear to see.

Assessing the state of his team, Toto Wolff said: “I

By Harry Smith

think definitely, since Imola, we've taken the right steps and put parts on the car that are working, something that we were struggling with in the past couple of years.

“Now directionally we seem to be adding performance every weekend and we have new parts coming in Barcelona that should help us.

“So I would very much hope that we can continue this positive trajectory.”

Hamilton could also see the progress made by the Silver Arrows.

“On a positive note... big, big thank you to everyone back at the factory, because it is becoming a car we can fight with,” he said.

“And that's the real positive going into this next part of the season.

“I know we'll have hopefully some more upgrades coming along the way, so it's

going to be a close battle. And if I get my head on right, I'll get better results.”

Mercedes had both cars on the podium in Barcelona last season, and Hamilton is a six-time winner of the event, with five of those victories coming in succession between 2017 and 2021.

F1 STANDINGS

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP		CONSTRUCTORS	
1	Max Verstappen 194pts	1	Red Bull 301
2	Charles Leclerc 138	2	Ferrari 252
3	Lando Norris 131	3	McLaren 212
4	Carlos Sainz Jr 108	4	Mercedes 124
5	Sergio Perez 107	5	Aston Martin 58

10 RUGBY UNION

SPORT IN BRIEF

European Championships
Group A

HUNGARY (0).....1 SWITZERLAND (2) 3
Varga 66 Duah 12, Aebischer 45,
Embolo 90

Group B

SPAIN (3).....3 CROATIA (0).....0
Morata 29, Fabian 32
Carvajal 45

CRICKET

Group A: **Lauderhill: India v Canada.** Match abandoned without a ball bowled (1pt each).

Group C: **Tarouba: Uganda 40** (18.4 overs; T G Southee 3-4); **New Zealand 41-1** (5.2 overs). New Zealand win by 9 wickets.

Group D: **St Vincent: South Africa 115-7** (D S Airee 3-21; K Bhurteil 4-19); **Nepal 114-7** (T Shamsi 4-19). South Africa win by 1 run.

T20 BLAST - NORTH GROUP—Nottinghamshire v Durham (Trent Bridge): Durham 58-0 (5 overs). Nottinghamshire. No result. Nottinghamshire (1pts) Durham (1pts).

	P	W	L	T	NR	Pts	Rr
Lancashire	6	5	1	0	0	101.69	
Yorkshire	5	3	2	0	0	60.50	
Derbyshire	6	3	3	0	0	60.48	
Warwickshire	5	3	2	0	0	60.43	
Leicestershire	6	3	3	0	0	60.23	
Northamptonshire	5	3	2	0	0	60.17	
Durham	6	2	3	0	1	51.09	
Worcestershire	6	2	4	0	0	40.47	
Nottinghamshire	7	1	5	0	1	31.84	

GOLF

U.S. OPEN (North Carolina)—early 3rd rd scores (US unless stated): **214** (a) Luke Clanton 76 69 69, **215** S Lowry (Irl) 74 71 70, T Fleetwood (Eng) 70 75 70, **216** B Koepka 70 75 71, T McKibbin (Nrl) 74 71 71, S Scheffler 71 74 71, **217** M Greysenman 71 74 72, S Theegala 77 68 72, **219** J Lower 72 73 74, B Todd 74 71 74, **220** C Young 73 72 75, G Sigg 76 69 75, **221** D Burmester (Rsa) 74 71 76, R Fox (Nzl) 73 72 76, B Kohles 77 68 76, **222** F Molinari (Ita) 73 72 77, **223** B Wu 74 71 78, **224** M Fitzpatrick (Eng) 73 72 79.

NETBALL

Vitality Superleague: Cardiff Dragons 58 Team Bath 41, Leeds Rhinos 32 Manchester Thunder 68, Loughborough Lightning 72 Severn Stars 60, Saracens Mavericks 54 London Pulse 54, Sirens 51 Surrey Storm 58.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Betfred Super League

CATALANS D.....2 LEIGH.....10

Catalans Dragons—G: Mourgue, Leigh—T: Amoné, G: Moylan (3).

HULL.....18 LEEDS.....10

Hull—T: Martin, Balmforth, Scott, G: Reynolds (3).

Leeds—T: Handley, Newman, G: Martin.

Wigan.....13 11 0 2 367 164 22

St Helens.....13 10 0 3 353 136 20

Hull K R.....14 10 0 4 370 189 20

Warrington.....14 9 0 5 334 195 18

Salford.....14 9 0 5 275 270 18

Catalans D.....14 8 0 6 266 202 16

Leeds.....14 7 0 7 256 260 14

Huddersfield.....14 6 0 8 280 295 12

Leigh.....13 5 1 7 254 208 11

Castleford.....14 3 1 10 226 416 7

Hull.....14 2 0 12 180 450 4

London B.....13 1 0 12 134 510 2

Betfred Ch'ship—Barrow 28 Halifax 38, Toulouse 52 Doncaster 0.

RUGBY UNION

United Championship

Semi-Finals

BLUE BULLS.....25 LEINSTER.....20

Blue Bulls—T: Goosen, Petersen (2). C: Goosen (2). P: Goosen (2).

Leinster—T: Lowe, Doris, C: R. Byrne (2). P: R. Byrne (2).

MUNSTER.....10 GLASGOW.....17

Munster—T: Frisch, C: Crowley, P: Crowley, Glasgow—T: Steyn, Cancelliere, C: G. Horne (2). P: G. Horne.

TENNIS

ATP BOSS OPEN (Stuttgart)—Semi

Finals: **J Draper** (Gbr) bt B Nakashima (USA) 6-3 6-3; **M Berrettini** (Ita) bt L Musetti (Ita) 6-4 6-0.

TODAY'S DIARY

Group C

Serbia v England (8pm, Live on BBC 1)

Slovenia v Denmark (5pm, Live on ITV 1)

Group D

Poland v Netherlands (2pm, Live on BBC 1)

CRICKET

ICC World Twenty20 - Group B:

Pakistan v Ireland (Lauderhill, 3.30pm). **t20 Blast - North Group:**

Derbyshire v Warwickshire (Derby, 4pm). Durham v Lancashire (Riverside, 2.30pm). Worcester-

shire v Northant's (New Road, 2.30pm). Yorkshire v Leicestershire (Headingley, 3pm). **South Group:**

Kent v Gloucestershire (Canterbury, 3.30pm). Somerset v Glamorgan (Taunton, 3pm).

RUGBY LEAGUE

Betfred Super League (3pm):

London Broncos v St Helens.

Betfred Ch'ship (3pm): Dewsbury v

York, Sheffield v Featherstone, Swinton v

Batley, Whitehaven v Bradford, Widnes v Wakefield.

INTERNATIONAL - JAPAN v ENGLAND: Saturday, 6.50am

STEVE READY TO GET DOWN WITH THE KIDS

Adam HATHAWAY

REPORTS FROM TOKYO

STEVE BORTHWICK has urged his England side to connect with the younger generation after their clash with Japan on Saturday was blanked by regular TV firms.

Borthwick is set for a head-to-head with his coaching mentor and former England boss, Eddie Jones, who is now in charge of the Brave Blossoms, this coming weekend in Tokyo.

It should be a box-office showdown between Jones, wanting to get one over the country that gave him the bullet in 2022, and Borthwick, aiming to build on third place in the last World Cup.

Amazingly, the game is only being shown on a website and app owned by World Rugby.

Sky Sports are covering the two Tests in New Zealand, on July 6 and 13, but will be commentating from back home off the box.

Last week, the BBC were staging a last-ditch attempt to secure radio rights for the games against the All Blacks but have written off sending a broadcasting team to Japan.

The nosedive in coverage has alarmed England boss Borthwick who has encouraged his squad to interact with rugby's next generation of fans over social media.

Borthwick said: "I spoke with a group of players a short time ago

SOCIAL GAINS: England boss Borthwick and (right) Japan chief Eddie Jones



and we want to make sure that we help rugby grow in this country.

"One of the challenges we have is in the younger age groups and attention on rugby. The players are the ones who are going to connect with that younger age group, so I am encouraging the players and have been trying to find different ways they can connect with those younger age groups.

"We have got some great role models in this team, so the more exposure the better for us. "The number one thing we can do is build a successful England team

"The more exposure the better for us"

and that is what we are striving to do and at the same time having a positive impact on the fans."

The RFU have helped players engage with fans by setting up an app for the squad where they put clips of stars online and the likes of Ben Earl, Jamie George, Joe Marler and Maro Itoje can cherry-pick it for their own social media channels.

Borthwick would rather stick pins in his eyes than go on X or TikTok but the England boss has seen the way the media landscape has changed since his playing days.

Borthwick added: "We are looking to increase the eyes on the team.

"This is a very diverse, and young, England team that has an ability to connect with people that follow media in different ways and we have got to be able to allow our players to be able to connect with fans."

Sharks star Carpenter blessed with chance to progress

SALE'S Joe Carpenter is flying the flag for the opposite side of the Pennines on England's current tour of Japan and New Zealand.

Yorkshireman Carpenter, who started out at Stuart Lancaster's old club, West Park Leeds RUCF, was in the Leeds academy when his world fell apart. The club

By Adam Hathaway

went down the tubes and full-back Carpenter (right) thought rugby was done for him before he was rescued by Sharks in 2020.

And he admits he was one of the lucky ones, as many of his contemporaries were forced out of the game

while he is challenging for an England cap.

The 22-year-old said: "It's quite sad for me. I grew up there and came through the academy and my transition into the first team was kyboshed when they went under.

"Luckily, I landed on my feet at Sale but there are a lot of boys I know who had the potential

but didn't manage to get anywhere and are not playing the rugby they could have been."

Carpenter's form has seen him catapulted into the England reckoning and he will be competing for the full-back spot with Freddie Steward and George Furbank.

And he has thanked club-mate George Ford,

injured for this trip, for showing him what the game at the top level is all about.

He added: "He's the ultimate professional.

"He's been in this environment for so long and him coming to Sale has been huge for us."



RACING 11

THIRSK PREMIER MEETING (TV4 & RTV)

THE SCOUT: 3.45 Ripple Effect 4.15 Gargin Bhui 4.45 Mercedes Diva 5.15 FOX LEGACY (Nap) 5.45 American Affair 6.15 Letsbefrank 6.45 Lettuce Leaf.

3.45 FILLIES' NOVICE STAKES 2YO £10,360 (Class 4) 6f (15 declared) ITV4

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like ALICE FAIRFAX (15) K Ryan 9-2, AURORA'S DOUBLESIX (29) M Walford 9-2.

4.15 SKY BET BUILD A BET HANDICAP 3YO £15,462 (3) 7f (13) ITV4

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like TELEMAR (58) D S & E Cristof 9-9, PABORUS (27) D F E Bethell 9-7.

4.45 SKY BET FOR THE FANS FILLIES' HANDICAP £15,462 (3) 7f (6) ITV4

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like FIVER FRIDAY (14) Paul Traynor (IRE) 4-9-9, MEZZO SOPRANO (249) C D F S & E Cristof 4-9-5.

5.15 SKY BET EXTRA PLACES HANDICAP 3YO £15,462 (3) 1m 4f 8yds (12) ITV4

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like VICTORY SHOUT (14) K R Burke 9-9, ALIGN THE STARS (14) F C Johnston 9-9.

5.45 SKY BET REQUEST A BET HANDICAP £38,655 (2) 5f (17) ITV4

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like VINTAGE CLARETS (22) D R Fahey 5-9-12, SPIRIT (8) D Adrian Nicholls 6-9-12.

6.15 SKY BET CLUB HANDICAP £10,360 (4) 1m 6f (15) ITV4

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like HOPE YOU CAN RUN (14) D C Johnston 4-9-10, GEREMIA (14) D J Jardine 6-9-8.

6.45 SKY BET ACCA FREEZE HANDICAP 3YO £10,360 (5) 5f (19) ITV4

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like WILLOLARUPI (34) F D Carroll 9-10, LOCHABER (20) D K R Burke 9-8.

2.10 SPEEDY GONZALES SAM HAY HANDICAP (DIV 1) £4,397 (Class 5) 7f 6yds (10 declared)

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like PRISCILLA'S WISH (25) D F P McBride 6-9-11, RED MAIDS (25) D F Rimell 6-9-9.

2.40 SPEEDY GONZALES SAM HAY HANDICAP (DIV 2) £4,397 (5) 7f 6yds (10)

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like COLD STARE (18) D D O'Meara 9-9-10, SNAZZY JAZZY (33) S Spencer 9-9-9.

3.10 ICE CREAM DIRECT EBF MAIDEN STAKES 2YO £3,672 (5) 7f 6yds (10)

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like CABELLEROSSO (12) H Palmer 9-7, FUEL THE FIRE O Pears 9-7.

3.40 'CONFINED' NOVICE STAKES £4,320 (5) 1m 3f 197yds (12)

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like SUNBELT (607) J & T Gosden 4-10-4, GRAZE ON PHOENIX (24) F J & S Quinn 5-10-2.

4.10 FIVE RIVERS FOSTERING HANDICAP (RND) £5,832 (4) 7f 213yds (16)

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like ON THE RIVER (36) D H Bethell 5-9-11, REGUE SEA (17) B Smart 4-9-9.

4.40 GRACE AND DOTTY HANDICAP 3YO £7,768 (6) 7f 6yds (12)

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like LUMENBOURG (20) J Camacho 9-9, PROFITEER (17) F Easterby 9-8.

5.10 GET RACEDAY READY HANDICAP 3YO £7,768 (6) 6f 2yds (12)

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like STARS AWAY (78) Fionn McSharry 9-11, PROFIT STREET (23) N Tinkler 9-10.

5.40 RACEDAY-READY.COM HANDICAP 3YO £7,768 (6) 5f 3yds (13)

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like WARRENDALE WAGYU (172) J & S Quinn 9-11, MUSICAL DIVA (17) D D O'Meara 9-10.

2.25 AL BASTI EQUIWORLD APPRENTICE HANDICAP 3YO £9,226 (Class 6) 6f 213yds (9 declared)

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like OTTOMAN FORCE (23) Darryll Holland 9-10, ORBITAL (10) D F M Prescott 9-10.

2.55 GEORGE JEFFERY MEMORIAL HANDICAP £4,580 (5) 6f 213yds (9)

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like PUMALIN PARK (16) Sir M Stoute 4-9-11, TWILIGHT DANCER (19) C D F J Portman 4-9-9.

3.25 LAFLINS BARBERS 'CONFINED' HANDICAP 3YO £4,580 (5) 1m (8)

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like MAGNA VEGA (22) Mrs N Evans 9-7, VALADERO (30) Brian Toomey 9-7.

4.00 BYERLEY STUD EBF NOVICE STAKES 2YO £7,560 (3) 6f (8) ITV4

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like AN OUTLAW'S GRACE R Hannon 9-7, AYSGARH (36) C Cox 9-7.

4.30 DARLEY EBF FILLIES' NOVICE STAKES £20,616 (2) 1m 1f 201yds (9) ITV4

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like EAJABIYAH (29) F R Varian 3-9-9, CATCH THE LIGHT (23) A Balding 3-9-2.

5.00 H S LESTER MEMORIAL HANDICAP £4,580 (5) 1m 1f 201yds (9) ITV4

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like CROESO CYMRAEG (27) C D H Evans 10-9-11, CHIPS AND RICE (24) D J Fanshawe 5-9-10.

5.30 MOLSON COORS HANDICAP £4,580 (5) 1m 4f 5yds (8) ITV4

Table with 3 columns: Rank, Name, Jockey, Trainer, Odds. Includes entries like TARITINO (9) D J Tickle 4-9-12, MASOON (25) H Evans 6-9-11.

+++ AFTERNOON RESULTS +++

BATH: Good 1.45-AL SAYAH (C Hutchinson, 5-4 fav) 1; Thahab Ifraj (40-1) 2; Uther Pendragon (20-1) 3. 2.20-VIOLET LOVE (P Cosgrave, 4-5 fav) 1; Miss Show Down (10-1) 2; Havana Dance (7-2 fav) 3.

YORK: Good to soft 1.50-LORD MELBOURNE (Miss Serena Brotherton, 9-2 fav) 1; Whimsy (7-1) 2; Gibside (17-3) 3. 2.25-TOLSTOY (R Nelson, 10-3 fav) 1; Quest For Fun (14-1) 2; New Image (11-2) 3.

+++ YESTERDAY'S EVENING RESULTS +++

HEXHAM: Good-good to soft in places 4.17-HUIT REFLETS (T Midgley, 15-8 fav) 1; Kopa Kilana (9-1) 2; Foxwood (11-1) 3.

+++ YESTERDAY'S EVENING RESULTS +++

Accidental Rebel (50-1) 3. 9 ran. (Ewan Whillans, 7-4 fav Hartur D'oudairies). 7.00-DINONS (Craig Nichol, 16-1) 1; Shantou Moon (9-1) 2; Minniemum (4-1 2nd fav) 3.

+++ YESTERDAY'S EVENING RESULTS +++

Cola Kid. (Race 1) 4, 7, 3; (2) 3, 9, 5; (3) 2, 5, 1; (4) 10, 5, 1; (5) 2, 5; (6) 11, 10, 3. 6.18-SIEMPRE ARTURO (Dyfan Hogan, 7-2 2nd fav) 1; Giselles Defiance (2-1 fav) 2; Royal Dream (8-1) 3.

+++ YESTERDAY'S EVENING RESULTS +++

Milan Echo. 6.40-BARRAKHOV (K Woods, 9-4 fav) 1; Jean Genie (18-1) 2; Our Zebo (5-1 co 2nd fav) 3. 9 ran. (D Killahena & G McPherson). Non-runners: Gamalou D'alene, Methodothemagic, Unwanted Attention.

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12 EXCLUSIVE

MANCHESTER UNITED legend Sammy McIlroy hopes the club's loyal supporters rally round embattled boss Erik ten Hag – and inspire him to shine at Old Trafford.

United confirmed early this week that Ten Hag will remain in charge after a post-season review by the club's board.

That followed prolonged speculation about the Dutchman's future as a result of a troubled season.

The 54-year-old steered United to FA Cup glory with a memorable victory over Premier League champions Manchester City in the last game of the season at Wembley.

But last season's league campaign was United's worst top-flight finish since 2014, as the club finished in eighth spot, a staggering 31 points behind City.

The writing looked on the wall for Ten Hag, with former Chelsea and Bayern Munich boss Thomas Tuchel, ex-Brighton manager Roberto De Zerbi and former Blues and Tottenham coach Mauricio Pochettino all understood to have spoken to United's hierarchy about replacing Ten Hag.

However, after what the club described as "constructive conversations", Ten Hag stepped back from the brink when he was given a third season to prove what he can do.

"At the end of the day they've decided to keep Ten Hag, so good luck to him," said McIlroy, who enjoyed a distinguished 11-year career at United, playing in star-studded sides that included George Best, Denis Law and Sir Bobby Charlton.

"The club have decided to back him and I think the support is behind him now as well, so get on with it.

"Ten Hag is our manager for next season and I hope that the fans back Erik.

"It would be great if all the fans could get behind him in that capacity.

"The decision is done and dusted and all the speculation has gone away but the pressure is on now, so I'd hope the fans get behind him and back him all the way.

"They finished very strongly last season by beating Manchester City in the FA Cup final.

"They're giving him a new contract, new players will hopefully be coming, so we'll just have to see how it goes.

"I've got no qualms with that and he said he's going to give it his best shot.

"But obviously next season is a massive season."

Ten Hag impressed in his first season in charge and led United to the League Cup crown and a commendable third-place Premier League finish, as well as reaching the FA Cup final.

But the former Ajax boss, United's fifth permanent manager since Sir Alex Ferguson retired in 2013, suffered a stressful second season, citing a string of injuries as the main reason for the club's worrying form.

"He's won two cups in two years, so they've probably thought let's see what he can do next season," added former Northern Ireland international McIlroy, who made

'I HOPE THE FANS BACK ERIK NOW'

Says Sammy McIlroy

Neil GOULDING
REPORTS

419 appearances for United and scored 71 goals for the club.

"But now you have to forget the FA Cup, that's gone. Manchester United have got to be pushing hard in the Premier League and European Cup. The club needs to be competing for those titles. Ten Hag knows that.

"He knows what he's got to do – he knows exactly what United are after.

"He said he can do that, so they've backed him.

"Everyone knows Manchester United don't finish eighth like they did last year.

"OK, we've won the FA Cup but Manchester United are always

competing for a top-four place – because we have to.

"Finishing eighth disappointed a lot of people but Ten Hag knows that as well.

"He blames it on injuries but he knows that can't happen again.

"I'm sure he's had plenty of talks with Mr Ratcliffe – and he'll be under no illusion what's required.

"He'll be aiming for a top-four finish as a minimum and making sure we get back into the Champions League.

"Let's not forget, Louis van Gaal won the FA Cup and Jose Mourinho won the Europa League and League Cup – and they both lost their jobs.

"Ten Hag knows that, he knows this type of season can't happen again."

United lost six of their opening 10 games in all competitions last

season and crashed out of the Champions League at the group stage.

And one of the most worrying trends for United fans was how they lost games from winning positions, notably 4-3 to Chelsea having led 3-2 only to concede two stoppage-time goals.

"We lost so much ground in the early season, that just can't happen again," said McIlroy (above).

"Everyone expected us to kick on after his first season but through injuries it didn't happen.

"He knows he can't have the start he had last season, otherwise it will cost him his job."



TROPHY HUNTER: Erik ten Hag (above) landed his second piece of silverware as United boss with FA Cup win



BACKED: Ratcliffe has kept the faith with his manager

EURO 2024 **Sport**

SUNDAY EXPRESS

YOUR EIGHT-PAGE TOURNAMENT SPECIAL IN ASSOCIATION WITH **William HILL**

MORATA & CO MAKE EARLY POINT

MOR OF THAT: Alvaro Morata celebrates his opener for Spain



Spaniards get off to a real flyer with thumping win over Croatia

GROUP B ACTION
SEE PAGES 2-3

EPIC Odds Serbia v England
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ENGLAND TO BEAT SERBIA



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GROUP B



SPAIN.....3 CROATIA.....0

MORATA 29, RUIZ 32, CARVAJAL 45



MATCH RATINGS Spain

Simon.....	8
Cucurella.....	7
Le Normand.....	7
Nacho.....	6
Carvajal.....	7
Ruiz.....	8
Rodri.....	6
Pedri.....	7
Williams.....	6
Morata.....	7
Yamal.....	7

SUBSTITUTES

Olmo	
(for Pedri, 59).....	6
Oyarzabal	
(for Morata, 67).....	5
Merino	
(for Williams, 68).....	6
Zubimendi	
(for Rodri, 78).....	5
Torres	
(for Yamal, 86).....	5

NEXT GAME

v Italy (N) **Thurs**

Croatia

Livakovic.....	6
Gvardiol.....	5
Pongracic.....	5
Sutalo.....	5
Stanisic.....	6
Kovacic.....	5
Brozovic.....	5
Modric.....	5
Kramaric.....	4
Budimir.....	5
Majer.....	6

SUBSTITUTES

Perisic	
(for Budimir, 56).....	5
Sucic	
(for Kovacic, 65).....	5
Pasalic	
(for Modric, 65).....	6
Petkovic	
(for Kramaric, 72).....	4

NEXT GAME

v Albania (N) **Weds**

REF: Michael Oliver (Eng) 5



STAR MAN

Fabian Ruiz - Brilliant pass created the first, superb footwork and finish for the second.



OPENING ACT: Alvaro Morata gets Spain off to a flying start



SIMPLY FAB: Ruiz shows his class for their second goal

TIKI-TAKA is dead. Long live tiki-taka.

Rodri told his Spain teammates ahead of their Euro 2024 opener that style no longer mattered and winning was all that was important.

And they duly battered Croatia in Berlin with the kind of physical and direct display rarely seen from them in the past 15 years.

These two are familiar foes, this being the fourth successive European Championship in which they have met.

But this is not the Spain that Luka Modric and Co remember.

In recent tournaments they have looked like a team clinging on to past glories, still trying to play the same way that brought them such great success with Xavi, Andres Iniesta and Sergio Busquets.

Too often it has sent them home far earlier than expected, having failed to go past the last 16 in four of the last five major tournaments.

New head coach Luis de la Fuente wants his side to be less predictable, more direct and decisive when key moments present themselves.

To aid that plan he has promoted the unpredictable and thrilling wingers Nico Williams and Lamine Yamal - Barcelona's 16-year-old prodigy, the youngest Euros player ever - into his attack, with another Barca sensation, Pedri, given licence to roam in midfield.

But in the Olympiastadion, it was the old dogs and their new tricks that put Croatia down by half-time.

Rodri bullied his way into possession in midfield and fed Fabian Ruiz, who instead of looking to keep it going wide took one touch and slipped a cutting pass through the heart of the Croatian defence to send Alvaro Morata racing clear.

Spain captain Morata, now 31, coolly slotted past Dominik

By Alex Richards

AT OLYMPIASTADION, BERLIN

Livakovic. For a player who has so often looked an ill-fit during what is now a 10-year international career, it was his 37th goal in 75 caps.

Two minutes later, their lead had been doubled. Ruiz, the tall, languid and largely unheralded Paris Saint-Germain midfielder started the move with a superb diagonal ball out to Yamal.

And when it was eventually worked back to him on the edge of the penalty area, he showed wonderful footwork to engineer half a yard before firing low into the bottom corner.

Croatia almost responded immediately but Unai Simon made an excellent one-handed stop to deny Marcelo Brozovic, before Lovro Majer fired the follow-up into the side netting.

Josko Gvardiol (below) fizzed an effort just wide too, as this new-look Spain showed that their new-found unpredictability extends to their game management too.



However, in injury time at the end of the first half, they nabbed a third.

Dani Carvajal showed a poacher's instincts, meeting Yamal's inswinging cross to turn the ball in.

Rodri controversially escaped a late red card when referee Michael Oliver gave a penalty but elected to only book the Manchester City man.

Even then, Croatia couldn't take advantage.

Bruno Petkovic's penalty was saved by Simon, and while Ivan Perisic met the rebound and crossed for Petkovic to tap home, it was disallowed for encroachment by Perisic.

Certainly this Spain side do not and perhaps cannot dominate like previous incarnations.

But on this evidence, that may be a good thing.

Spain Tik-ing STYLE SWAPPED FOR RUTHLESSNESS



■ Spain's Lamine Yamal became the first 16-year-old to play in a men's Euros tournament. He was born on July 13, 2007.

■ Croatia's biggest-ever defeat was against Spain - a 6-0 thrashing during the Nations League in Elche in 2018.

■ This was Croatia's seventh appearance at the European Championship, having missed just one (2000) since their debut in 1996.

■ Spain used 40 different players during their Euro 2024 qualifying campaign - a joint-high alongside Italy.



WARNING: De La Fuente

Fuente is thrilled by Roja's gol fiesta

By ALEX RICHARDS

SPAIN boss Luis de la Fuente warned their Euro 2024 rivals they have now seen just how dangerous his side can be.

Physically powerful and playing with a directness rarely seen in recent years, La Roja put Croatia to the sword with three goals in 16 first-half minutes as they claimed a 3-0 win in their opening group fixture in Germany.

And while De La Fuente sought to ensure calmness remains around his side, he made it clear they had laid down a marker.

"We know we can be very dangerous and that's the message we send out," said the Spanish coach.

"Our opponents know we can hurt them with possession, or positional play and now know we can hurt them on the break too.

"We have a group here with a relentless desire to improve, to keep getting better. "But our target is still far away, so we have to keep our feet on the ground."

Special praise was reserved for player of the match Fabian Ruiz, after he scored one and made another in an outstanding display, with De La Fuente insisting the Paris Saint-Germain star's efforts typically go unsung.

"He's an exceptional player, at the top level," he declared.

"We should recognise the quality that he has. He's the embodiment of the players who have come through in the shadows."

Croatia coach Zlatko Dalic apologised to their huge travelling contingent.

Berlin was awash with Croatian fans and the majority in the Olympiastadion were wearing the Vatreni's red and white colours.

But Dalic had no excuses, saying: "I apologise for this bad show today.

"Thank you to the fans for their great support, but I apologise to them."



DANI & DUSTED: Carvajal makes it 3-0 just before the half-time break

MATCH STATS

Spain	Croatia
2.11	Expected goals 2.27
46	Possession 54
5	Shots on target 5
3	Shots off target 7
4	Blocked shots 3
5	Corners 0
2	Offsides 0
14	Fouls 13
480	Total passes 565
10	Tackles 11
1	0
0	0
0	0

along nicely

AS TEEN YAMAL MAKES HISTORY

GROUP A



GERMANY.....5 SCOTLAND.....1

WIRTZ 10, MUSIALA 19, HAVERTZ 45 (PEN), FULLKRUG 68, CAN 90 ▶ RUDIGER 87 (OG)

WE'VE LET YOU DOWN



McGinn: This one hurts

JOHN MCGINN admits Scotland's players feel like they've let the country down after being mauled by Germany at Euro 2024.

But the Aston Villa midfielder still thinks Steve Clarke's men can recover their form to reach the knockout stage.

The Scots suffered an embarrassing 5-1 opening night defeat at the Allianz Arena in Munich on Friday.

Clarke's boys must now compose themselves before facing Switzerland in Cologne on Wednesday – where another defeat is unthinkable.

McGinn (above) knows the wave of optimism across the nation pre-tournament has been squashed by a poor display.

But he is convinced they can turn it around against the Swiss.

He said: "You see the massive support, the optimism around the whole country – and we feel like we've burst that bubble a bit.

"But we still have an opportunity to get through this group and we'll do everything we can to achieve it.

"We know we need to find our levels again over the next couple of days.

"But we can talk about it – ultimately there are a lot of us in here who need to up it.

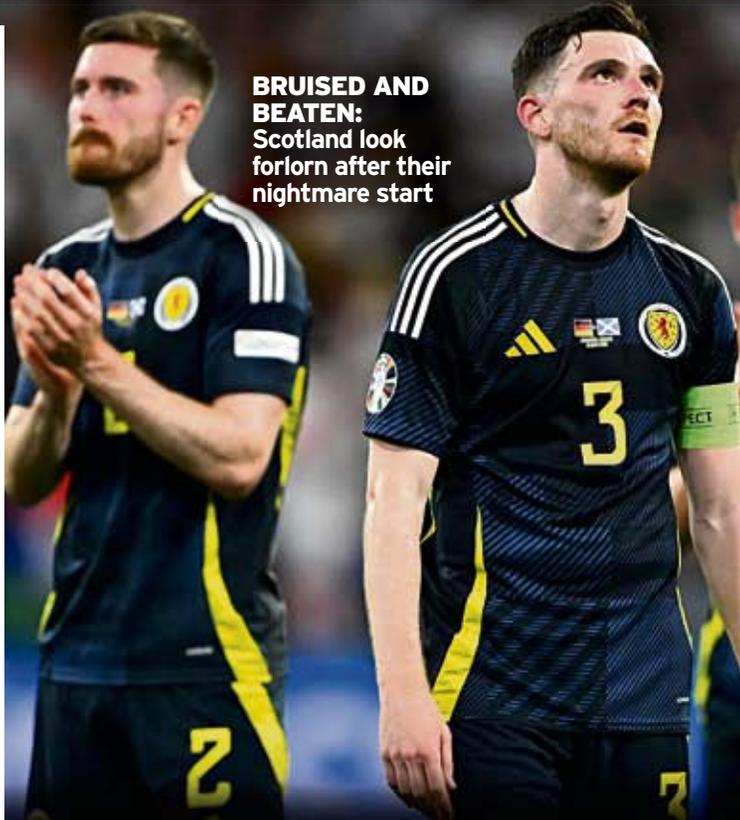
"We know that."

McGinn is well aware Friday night's debacle was nowhere near good enough – and a long way from their quite brilliant qualifying campaign.

Defensively, Clarke's side toiled against an incredibly threatening German attack.

Scotland will now be without Ryan Porteous for the second game after his red card. While their backline will face criticism,

BRUISED AND BEATEN: Scotland look forlorn after their nightmare start



By Scott McDermott
IN MUNICH

McGinn admitted Scotland's forward players must start scoring again.

He said: "It's easy to talk about the goals we're losing but myself and others are now in a massive goal drought. So it kind of works both ways.

"Collectively, you can't point fingers at one or two players.

"As a group, we need to improve. We need to concede less and create more chances.

"I don't think we had a shot on Friday, which is worrying.

"But we know we can compete with these teams. We've gone

toe-to-toe with Spain and Holland recently. For a long time Scotland wasn't on the end of those types of scorelines so we need to get back to what we were doing.

"We have had bumps along the road so it's up to us now.

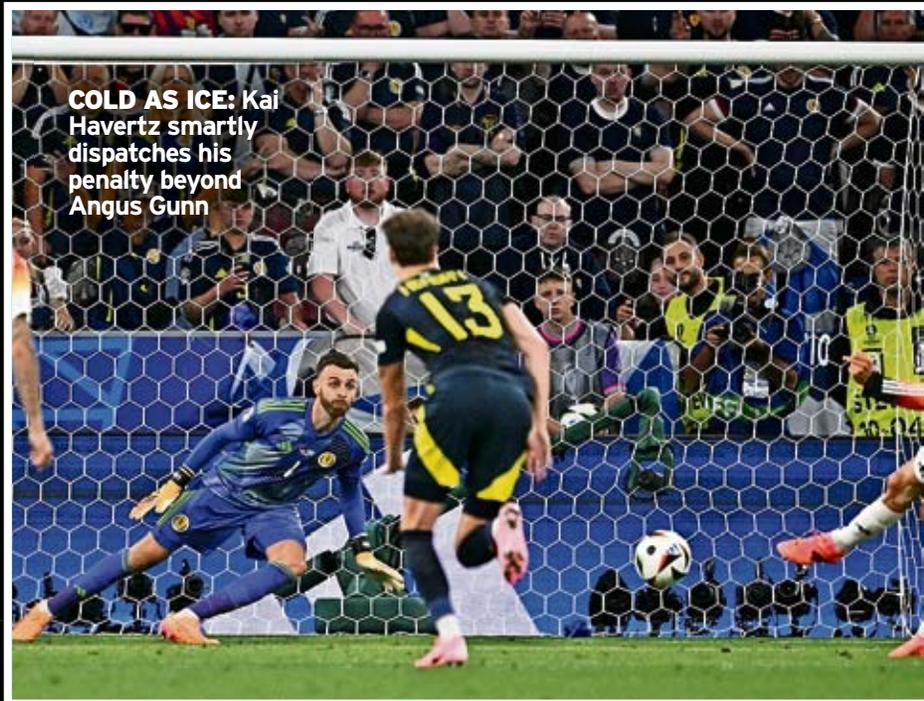
"The older ones in the group have to keep us going and get ready for Wednesday."

As the Scotland midfielder, who has so often been Clarke's talisman, tried to unravel their disastrous Euros start he said: "It's tough to try to speak about it but we have no choice.

"The objective on Friday night was to try to get at least a point.

"So it hurts. It still hurts now. It hurts the way it did when I lost a game like that at St Mirren.

"Your pride is dented."



COLD AS ICE: Kai Havertz smartly dispatches his penalty beyond Angus Gunn

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PLAYED
FRIDAY



HUNGARY...1 SWITZ'LAND...3

VARGA 66

DUAH 12, AEBISCHER 45, EMBOLO 90

McFadden's Scot hope

SCOTLAND still have the quality to make it out of Group A - despite their embarrassing 5-1 collapse against Germany.

That's the view of former assistant manager and forward James McFadden.

The ex-Everton man (below) said: "They now need to show the best version of themselves, there's still hope and expectation that Scotland can get out of the group."

"Because of the players we have there in the squad, an early exit would be a real disappointment.

"I think the players and manager would be really disappointed if we don't make it through. Because of how well



EXCLUSIVE by RYAN TAYLOR

the team has done in recent times, certainly in qualifying, they have to find a way of getting through."

Steve Clarke's wounded camp now have to perform against Switzerland on Wednesday in Cologne and against Hungary next Sunday in Stuttgart.

And McFadden believes Hearts striker Lawrence Shankland, 28, could be a secret weapon.

He said: "Shankland's hold-up play and link-up play has been great.

"If you give him chances you know he will score goals."

● Audiences can watch and listen to live coverage of Euro 24 across BBC TV, BBC iPlayer, Radio, BBC Sounds and Online



SWISS DON'T MISS: Kwadwo Duah celebrates the opening goal

Duah leaper

KWADWO HAS HIS COUNTRY LEVITATING

KWADWO DUAH announced himself on the international stage as Switzerland served notice in Scotland's group.

The Ludogorets striker only made his debut for Murat Yakin's team a fortnight ago in a friendly with Estonia.

But he showed the poise of a veteran to open the scoring - even though he was wrongly flagged offside before a VAR intervention.

Michel Aebischer's classy finish gave the Swiss a 2-0 half-time lead they thoroughly deserved.

But Hungary were back in the game through Barnabas Varga on 66 minutes and threatened a second only for Breel Embolo to pounce on a mistake late on and beat Peter Gulacsi with a sublime lob for the clincher.

It was the Monaco forward's first international in 18 months and

By Neil Naismith
AT COLOGNE STADIUM, COLOGNE

the goal was reward for his hard work during more than a year of horrendous injury problems.

Manager Yakin was delighted for Embolo, and said: "We knew we made the right decision to bring him. He wasn't available for the last two weeks but the decision to call him up was right.

"He makes us very calm holding the ball up." The Swiss boss was just as thrilled for Duah, 27.

He added: "He is a penalty-box player and we have had the situation with Breel, but we knew we could rely on him."

Ex-Arsenal captain Granit Xhaka ran the game and was man of the match as the Swiss got their

campaign up and running in impressive style.

"We have strong competition within the squad," said skipper Xhaka. "Embolo came on and gave us stability and then, of course, scored the killer goal.

"We saw how many Swiss fans were in the stadium today and the atmosphere was fantastic."

With three points in the bag, Yakin turned his attention to their next opponent, Scotland, on Wednesday in Cologne.

He is not fooled by what happened to the Scots on Friday.

Yakin said: "It's not easy to play against Germany. Wednesday is a completely different game.

"It's important we won our first game but I wasn't so happy with our second half, so we have to play better next week."

Hungary coach Marco Rossi was bitterly disappointed and claimed his team shot themselves in the foot.

He said: "It's hard to correct the kind of mistakes that we made.

"Our players do not make mistakes like this every day."

REF: Slavko Vincic (SV)

MATCH STATS

Hungary	Switzerland
1.34.....	Expected goals.....2.50
46.....	Possession.....54
2.....	Shots on target.....7
3.....	Shots off target.....3
1.....	Blocked shots.....5
2.....	Corners.....6
3.....	Offsides.....2
9.....	Fouls.....13
448.....	Total passes.....459
12.....	Tackles.....12
2	0
2	0



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GROUP D



POLAND v HOLLAND

VOLKSPARKSTADION, HAMBURG › TODAY, KO 2PM › BBC ONE

■ Poland have not beaten Holland in their last 12 meetings, with their last win back in May 1979.



IT'S UP TO YOU: Mbappe with manager Deschamps

Magic Mbappe's in for the Kyl with Euros glory target

AS France faces an uncertain future after president Emmanuel Macron's call for a snap election, the future of Les Bleus has never been more certain.

This is Kylian Mbappe's team now.

At 25, the man widely considered to be the best player on the planet is comfortable in his role as captain, his long-protracted move from Paris Saint-Germain to Real Madrid is finally done and dusted - and in Germany he has only one goal.

"I want to win the Euros," he said.

"I won the World Cup. I won the Nations League. This is the only one that missed me."

After long-time leader Hugo Lloris retired from international football in the wake of the 2022 World Cup, Didier Deschamps ignored the likes of Antoine Griezmann to hand Mbappe the armband.

Some, Griezmann in particular, weren't overly happy. But the move made sense.

A once rocky relationship with some of his teammates - highlighted after their Euros failure against

AUSTRIA v FRANCE

► Dusseldorf Arena, Dusseldorf
Tomorrow, KO 8pm, ITV1

By ALEX RICHARDS

Switzerland in 2021, with Mbappe missing the crucial penalty in the last-16 shootout - has been smoothed over.

In the years since the team has increasingly been built to get the best out of its undoubted superstar.

What is asked of Mbappe in return is that, in the big moments when his country needs him, he steps up.

Just like he did in the World Cup Final in Qatar when he became only the second man - after Geoff Hurst - to score a hat-trick in football's biggest game.

He doesn't, however, look back on that day with any particular fondness - Deschamps' side having been denied successive triumphs by Lionel Messi and Argentina.

"Of course we were hurt, to see that you're close to something," said Mbappe. "Close to the back-to-back. Something amazing.

"Everybody loved the game except for us. We didn't like that but it's part of the game."

KOEMAN'S CALL-UPS CRUCIAL TO SUCCESS

From CHARLIE GORDON in Hamburg

RONALD KOEMAN insists Holland will need their nation's support at Euro 2024 after losing Frenkie de Jong and Teun Koopmeiners to injury.

The Dutch are in a tough group with France, Austria and today's opponents Poland.

"I'm really looking forward to it," said Koeman. "It's a great tournament. We'll have a lot of support and we'll need it."

The Netherlands boss (above) took a pop at his former club, Barcelona in the lead-up to the Euros for "taking a risk" by playing De Jong in April's El Clasico.

The midfielder suffered an ankle injury in the game against Real Madrid and hasn't played since.

Koopmeiners then sustained a tournament-ending muscle injury while warming up for a friendly against Iceland on Monday.

There was hope De Jong would make it back in time to feature in Germany but Koeman pulled the plug in time to bring two replacements on board.

Ian Maatsen was one of the players selected and the Holland boss is confident he can plug the gaps.

"Ian is a multifunctional player," he said. "We can fill all positions.

"We play with three midfielders and we have five in the squad.

"All the other players have already been on holiday for three weeks."

Maatsen, 22, is on the books at Chelsea but he spent the end of last season on loan at Borussia Dortmund, where he started in the Champions League final defeat to Real Madrid.

He was on holiday with his girlfriend when he discovered Koeman needed his services.

"I suddenly received a call and I just had to pack my stuff as quickly as possible and come," said Maatsen.



Trouble Dutch!

MANCHESTER'S STILL HOME FOR FRIMPONG

Simon Mullock
REPORTING

JEREMIE FRIMPONG is the flying Dutchman with a Mancunian accent.

His family feel so at home in the north west of England they have never returned to the Bijlmer district of Amsterdam, where Frimpong and three of his six siblings were born.

But you can still be sure that the 23-year-old Bayer Leverkusen winger, who learned his trade in a decade spent at Manchester City's highly-rated academy, is still pure Oranje.

After playing a key role in Leverkusen's spectacular Bundesliga and German Cup double this season, Frimpong is ready to explode at the Euros when Holland face Poland in Hamburg in their opening group game today.

Frimpong said: "You could call my life turbulent.

"I have moved a lot - but it has just made my life richer.

"My mother is like every mother. She was always cautious and worrying about us. I have three brothers and three sisters and I am the middle child.

"Some were born in the Netherlands, others in Ghana.

"My youngest sister plays basketball and my brother Wesley plays in the youth team at Bolton Wanderers.

"Our father was a sprinter in Ghana who now loves tennis - and every single one of us can run fast."

Frimpong was aged eight when his family decided life would be better in the city

famous for football, music and Coronation Street rather than the high tower blocks of Bijlmer.

Then he started to play the game seriously in local parks before being snapped up by the Blues. Frimpong needed some convincing to join Celtic when the Scottish giants came calling in 2019.

It was only when his agent brother Jeffrey Lemmert told him moving to Scotland would

POLAND boss Michal Probiez believes his side have what it takes to go all the way.

The 51-year-old has told his players "anything is possible" ahead of their clash with Holland, which they will go into without star player

be good for business in the long-term that he made the £300,000 switch.

He soon won the SPL title and the club's Young Player of the Year award before Leverkusen secured his signature for £10million. Frimpong said: "Glasgow seemed so far for a young player like me but I still went. When we moved to England, I soon settled in.

"The same for Scotland and now Germany. I am a strong believer in God and I am grateful for the talent I have been given."

Robert Lewandowski who has reportedly torn a leg muscle.

Probiez (below) said: "When you coach a team, anything is possible in football, so this is not just a statement. We will do everything we can to play well."



RALF: WE CAN MIX IT

RALF RANGNICK has high hopes for his Austria side at Euro 2024 - despite their daunting opener against Kylian Mbappe & Co.

The ex-Manchester United chief, 65, takes charge at his first major international tournament and insists his side have what it takes to mix it with the best.

"With France we might have the strongest opponents of all right at the start," said Rangnick (right). "The first match will be a huge challenge.

"But if we're complete then we're a team that is very hard to beat."



AIMING HIGH: Jeremie jumps for joy after scoring

GROUP E

BELGIUM v SLOVAKIA
FRANKFURT ARENA, FRANKFURT › TOMORROW, KO 5PM › ITV1

■ Belgium and Slovakia are facing each other in a competitive fixture for the first time.

GENERATION GAME

Belgians ready to put 'Golden' past behind them now

LAST DANCE: Kevin De Bruyne, Romelu Lukaku and Jeremy Doku are all smiles



Mark Jones
REPORTING

THEIRS was supposed to be the 'Golden' Belgium generation that won it all.

From Manchester City icons to Chelsea greats, and from multi-million pound transfers to countless Champions League and Premier League titles, Belgian players have lit up the club game over the past decade. But at international level it has been a different story.

And as Kevin De Bruyne and Romelu Lukaku line up for their sixth and potentially final international tournament when they face Slovakia in Frankfurt, they might be wondering where all their old pals have gone.

The answers vary.

After his playing career Vincent Kompany has been relegated with Burnley but promoted to Bayern Munich. Eden Hazard got his dream move to Real Madrid but barely stepped foot on the Bernabeu pitch.

Even Thibaut Courtois is not in Germany despite his Champions League final appearance two weeks ago, having been deemed not fit enough to play by Belgium boss Domenico Tedesco (above).

These are players who were there when Belgium froze in defeat to Wales in the quarter-finals at Euro 2016, flattered to deceive against France in the semis of the 2018 World Cup and barely laid a glove on Italy at Wembley in the final eight of the last Euros.

Throw in a dismal group stage exit at the Qatar World Cup and it feels more olden than golden generation.

And while Belgium have been relying on Lukaku's goals, boss Tedesco says he has another important part to play.

"He plays an incredibly important role both on and off the pitch," the former Schalke boss said. "On the pitch, his goals speak for themselves but there's more to him than that.

"His importance off the pitch is undoubted because he knows lots of young players who he can become a sort of mentor to. He concerns himself with many things like this, which makes him extremely important."

Is there potentially a new golden generation on the cards? They would want to be called anything but, given what happened to the last one.



HERO HANSIK CAN INSPIRE NEW BOYS

MAREK HANSIK is still pulling the strings for Slovakia despite retiring from football a year ago.

The instantly recognisable midfielder with the spiky hair - his country's all-time leading goalscorer and appearance-maker - was the key creative force in a side which reached the last-16 at the 2010 World Cup and Euro 2016. The former

Napoli star called time on his career at the age of 35 last summer after two years with Trabzonspor.

But such is the trust Slovakia boss Francesco Calzona has in him after they worked together at Napoli, he's with the squad in Germany in a support role.

"If I had a son I would want him to be someone like Marek

because he is very humble despite his career as a champion," said Calzona.

"He is straightforward, and everyone loves him."

On the pitch Slovakia look short on creativity but centre-backs Milan Skriniar and David Hancko could prove tough barriers to pass.

MARK JONES



ALL OVER: Hamsik played in Euro qualifying



MOTIVATION: Zinchenko

Olek: We will do it for our country

ROMANIA v UKRAINE

Munich Football Arena, Munich
Tomorrow, KO 2pm, BBC One

By **ADRIAN STILES**

Oleksandr Zinchenko says his Ukraine team-mates will stand tall for their country as it continues to suffer due to the war against Russia.

The Arsenal left-back is one of the leaders in a squad that continues to defy the odds by staying competitive at the highest level.

They kick off Group E in Munich tomorrow against Romania, with Zinchenko promising they're ready to go.

He said: "We don't need extra motivation because we all understand this is the most challenging time for our country.

"We have fans not only watching us on TV or in the stadium but also those risking their lives to defend our freedom.

"Every time we wear the jersey with the Ukrainian emblem it is double or even triple the motivation for us."

With motivation accounted for, Zinchenko says they now have to be ready for what lies ahead in a group that will also see them play Slovakia and Belgium.

"First and foremost, we need to focus on our game and deliver our best performance, both individually and as a team," he said.

"We'll treat Romania with the same respect as we do Slovakia or Belgium.

"Everyone knows how crucial the first game is - it provides a psychological and physical boost.

"At tournaments like these you cannot afford to make too many mistakes because here we have the best national teams, the best players in Europe. They will punish you immediately.

"So we need to stay focused, show our best performance and use every opportunity to score goals."

GROUP A		GROUP B		GROUP C	
GERMANY, SCOTLAND, HUNGARY, SWITZERLAND		SPAIN, CROATIA, ITALY, ALBANIA		SLOVENIA, SERBIA, DENMARK, ENGLAND	
GERMANY 5 Wirtz 10, Musiala 19, Havertz 45+1 pen, Fullkrug 68, Can 90+3 SCOTLAND Rudiger 87og, ... 1	HUNGARY 1 Varga 66 SWITZERLAND 3 Duah 12, Aebischer 45, Embolo 90	SPAIN 3 Morata 29, Fabian 32, Carvajal 45 CROATIA 0	ITALY L ALBANIA L	SLOVENIA 0 DENMARK 0 Stuttgart Arena TODAY, KICK-OFF 5PM (ITV)	SERBIA 0 ENGLAND 0 Arena AufSchalke TODAY, KICK-OFF 8PM (BBC)
GERMANY 0 HUNGARY 0 Stuttgart Arena WEDNESDAY JUNE 19, KICK-OFF 5PM (BBC)	SCOTLAND 0 SWITZERLAND 0 Cologne Stadium WEDNESDAY JUNE 19, KICK-OFF 8PM (BBC)	CROATIA 0 ALBANIA 0 Volksparkstadion Hamburg WEDNESDAY JUNE 19, KICK-OFF 2PM (ITV)	SPAIN 0 ITALY 0 Arena AufSchalke THURSDAY JUNE 20, KICK-OFF 8PM (ITV)	SLOVENIA 0 SERBIA 0 Munich Football Arena THURSDAY JUNE 20, KICK-OFF 2PM (ITV)	DENMARK 0 ENGLAND 0 Frankfurt Arena THURSDAY JUNE 20, KICK-OFF 5PM (BBC)
SWITZERLAND 0 GERMANY 0 Frankfurt Arena SUNDAY JUNE 23, KICK-OFF 8PM (BBC)	SCOTLAND 0 HUNGARY 0 Stuttgart Arena SUNDAY JUNE 23, KICK-OFF 8PM (BBC)	CROATIA 0 ITALY 0 Leipzig Stadium MONDAY JUNE 24, KICK-OFF 8PM (BBC)	ALBANIA 0 SPAIN 0 Düsseldorf Arena MONDAY JUNE 24, KICK-OFF 8PM (BBC)	ENGLAND 0 SLOVENIA 0 Cologne Stadium TUESDAY JUNE 25, KICK-OFF 8PM (ITV)	DENMARK 0 SERBIA 0 Munich Football Arena TUESDAY JUNE 25, KICK-OFF 8PM (ITV)

GROUP D		GROUP E		GROUP F	
POLAND, HOLLAND, AUSTRIA, FRANCE		BELGIUM, SLOVAKIA, ROMANIA, UKRAINE		TURKEY, GEORGIA, PORTUGAL, CZECH REPUBLIC	
POLAND 0 HOLLAND 0 Volksparkstadion Hamburg TODAY, KICK-OFF 2PM (BBC)	AUSTRIA 0 FRANCE 0 Düsseldorf Arena TOMORROW, KICK-OFF 8PM (ITV)	ROMANIA 0 UKRAINE 0 Munich Football Arena TOMORROW, KICK-OFF 2PM (BBC)	BELGIUM 0 SLOVAKIA 0 Frankfurt Arena TOMORROW, KICK-OFF 5PM (ITV)	TURKEY 0 GEORGIA 0 BVB Stadion Dortmund TUESDAY JUNE 18, KICK-OFF 5PM (BBC)	PORTUGAL 0 CZECH REP 0 Leipzig Stadium TUESDAY JUNE 18, KICK-OFF 8PM (BBC)
POLAND 0 AUSTRIA 0 Olympiastadion Berlin FRIDAY JUNE 21, KICK-OFF 5PM (ITV)	HOLLAND 0 FRANCE 0 Leipzig Stadium FRIDAY JUNE 21, KICK-OFF 8PM (BBC)	SLOVAKIA 0 UKRAINE 0 Düsseldorf Arena FRIDAY JUNE 21, KICK-OFF 2PM (BBC)	BELGIUM 0 ROMANIA 0 Cologne Stadium SATURDAY JUNE 22, KICK-OFF 8PM (ITV)	GEORGIA 0 CZECH REP 0 Volksparkstadion Hamburg SATURDAY JUNE 22, KICK-OFF 2PM (BBC)	TURKEY 0 PORTUGAL 0 BVB Stadion Dortmund SATURDAY JUNE 22, KICK-OFF 5PM (ITV)
HOLLAND 0 AUSTRIA 0 Olympiastadion Berlin TUESDAY JUNE 25, KICK-OFF 5PM (BBC)	FRANCE 0 POLAND 0 BVB Stadion Dortmund TUESDAY JUNE 25, KICK-OFF 5PM (BBC)	SLOVAKIA 0 ROMANIA 0 Frankfurt Arena WEDNESDAY JUNE 26, KICK-OFF 5PM (BBC)	UKRAINE 0 BELGIUM 0 Stuttgart Arena WEDNESDAY JUNE 26, KICK-OFF 5PM (BBC)	CZECH REP 0 TURKEY 0 Volksparkstadion Hamburg WEDNESDAY JUNE 26, KICK-OFF 8PM (ITV)	GEORGIA 0 PORTUGAL 0 Arena AufSchalke WEDNESDAY JUNE 26, KICK-OFF 8PM (ITV)

GROUP A	GROUP B	GROUP C	GROUP D	GROUP E	GROUP F																																																																																																																																																																																																																																										
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ROUND OF 16

GAME 37 1A V 2C BVB Stadion Dortmund SATURDAY JUNE 29, KICK-OFF 8PM (Dortmund)	GAME 38 2A V 2B Olympiastadion Berlin SATURDAY JUNE 29, KICK-OFF 5PM (Berlin)
GAME 39 1B V 3A/D/E/F Cologne Stadium SUNDAY JUNE 30, KICK-OFF 8PM (Cologne)	GAME 40 1C V 3D/E/F Arena AufSchalke SUNDAY JUNE 30, KICK-OFF 5PM (Gelsenkirchen)
GAME 41 1F V 3A/B/C Frankfurt Arena MONDAY JULY 1, KICK-OFF 8PM (Frankfurt)	GAME 42 2D V 2E Düsseldorf Arena MONDAY JULY 1, KICK-OFF 5PM (Dusseldorf)
GAME 43 1E V 3A/B/C/D Munich Football Arena TUESDAY JULY 2, KICK-OFF 5PM (Munich)	GAME 44 1D V 2F Leipzig Stadium TUESDAY JULY 2, KICK-OFF 8PM (Leipzig)

SEMI-FINALS

GAME 49 W45 V W46 Munich Football Arena TUESDAY JULY 9, KICK-OFF 8PM (Munich)
GAME 50 W47 V W48 BVB Stadion Dortmund WEDNESDAY JULY 10, KICK-OFF 8PM (Dortmund)
GAME 51 WINNER 49 V WINNER 50 Olympiastadion Berlin SUNDAY JULY 14, KICK-OFF 8PM (Berlin)

QUARTER-FINALS

GAME 45 W39 V W37 Stuttgart Arena FRIDAY JULY 5, KICK-OFF 5PM (Stuttgart)	GAME 46 W41 V W42 Volksparkstadion Hamburg FRIDAY JULY 5, KICK-OFF 8PM (Hamburg)
GAME 47 W43 V W44 Olympiastadion Berlin SATURDAY JULY 6, KICK-OFF 8PM (Berlin)	GAME 48 W40 V W38 Düsseldorf Arena SATURDAY JULY 6, KICK-OFF 5PM (Düsseldorf)



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